

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS REPORT – 2025

This publication is an excerpt from the annual report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the *Fundamental Rights Report 2025*. It presents selected critical developments in fundamental rights in 2024, as well as the key findings and FRA opinions from the report's chapters. These cover elections, gender-based violence and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. FRA opinions outline the agency's position and are calls to action. They set out practical ways forward for the European Commission, EU Member States and the Council of Europe, among others, to address the fundamental rights issues raised.

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INTRODUCTION

This overview report is an excerpt from the annual report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the *Fundamental Rights Report 2025*. It presents selected critical developments in fundamental rights in 2024, as well as the key findings and FRA opinions from the report's chapters. These cover elections, gender-based violence and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. FRA opinions outline the agency's position and are calls to action. They set out practical ways forward for the European Commission, EU Member States and the Council of Europe, among others, to address the fundamental rights issues raised.

In 2024, geopolitical changes and both legislative and societal developments put a strain on fundamental rights in the EU. Divisive identity politics played a role in increasing levels of racism and hate. People of various ethnic backgrounds and religious communities suffer as a result. Hate speech and harmful content continue to spread unchecked online. Rapid digital changes and artificial intelligence (AI) developments threaten to exacerbate existing inequalities. Incidents of thousands of people losing their lives at sea and allegations of ill treatment at borders raise alarms about the treatment of asylum seekers and migrants. These trends threaten democratic values and equality, posing a risk to people's fundamental rights.

Despite the challenges faced in 2024, there are positive developments. The EU has introduced legislation to regulate online spaces and AI, seeking to ensure a digital environment that respects fundamental rights. The 2024 European elections marked a pivotal moment for the EU, ushering in a new mandate. The new European Parliament, European Commission and strategic priorities provide a renewed focus for the EU over the next five years.

This overview of the *Fundamental Rights Report 2025* presents selected critical developments affecting fundamental rights in 2024. Research from FRA published in 2024 provides new insights into equality and life experiences derived from surveys of people across the EU.

It summarises findings from research, as well as highlighting new legislation that is important from the perspective of fundamental rights, such as new laws about AI and in the field of migration. These themes emerged from FRA's research and analysis of fundamental rights issues and the work that FRA was doing in 2024. The decision to include certain topics also considered their alignment with the issues that people in the EU care about, according to the latest general population surveys.

SETTING THE SCENE: FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN A CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Fundamental rights under stress

The prevailing socioeconomic conditions, geopolitical changes internationally and conflicts put fundamental rights in the EU under stress. The year was marked by conflict continuing in the Middle East and the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine.

More than 4 million displaced people from Ukraine remain in the EU and are entitled to legal residence and access to work, housing and legal assistance, education and healthcare ⁽¹⁾. War in Gaza raged on and contributed to spikes in antisemitism ⁽²⁾ and anti-Muslim hatred in the EU ⁽³⁾. Its impact can be seen in racism, discrimination and polarisation ⁽⁴⁾. The fall of the Assad regime in late 2024 led some EU countries to reconsider their policies on Syrian refugees and migrants. While some explored returns or voluntary repatriation incentives, others paused asylum decisions. In its conclusions of 19 December 2024, the European Council reaffirmed the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' call for safe, voluntary and dignified returns of Syrian refugees ⁽⁵⁾.

The combined impact of these external challenges in the EU is clear, as 44 % of people in Europe believe that achieving peace and stability would most positively affect their lives, according to recent Eurobarometer survey findings ⁽⁶⁾.

Racism, discrimination, bias-motivated harassment and hate crime are a daily reality for many people. Inequality continues to disadvantage people of various ethnic backgrounds and religions. Respect for equality and non-discrimination are foundational values of the EU, enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the subject of binding obligations under EU law. However, the evidence FRA has collected, presented in this overview, indicates the existence of an ongoing pattern of racism and discrimination. Jews, Muslims, Black people and Roma are significantly affected, as well as migrants and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) people, FRA's research shows. Offensive content targeting these groups online on social media platforms demonstrates this trend and exacerbates it.

Hateful content can spread quickly online and is difficult to regulate, adding to the challenge. Women disproportionately experience the highest volume of online hate, which often manifests as denigration and contains sexualised content ⁽⁷⁾.

Against this background, people across the EU continued to struggle financially in the ongoing challenging socioeconomic conditions. The cost of living is a key concern for the people in Europe, as Eurobarometer's general population survey for 2024 indicates ⁽⁸⁾.

While not everyone is affected in the same way, rising energy prices have a widespread impact on most of the population. Many individuals and households face challenges in managing their expenses, with a growing number struggling to make ends meet ⁽⁹⁾. For example, energy



poverty disproportionately affects those already at risk of poverty and exacerbates existing inequalities for disadvantaged groups. To fight climate change while also considering that many people are struggling amid rising costs, FRA called on the EU and its Member States to ensure their national climate and energy plans align with the 2030 agenda's commitment to 'leave no one behind' ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Finally, in a major global shift, many countries around the world held elections in 2024, electing new leaders and shaking up the world order. Fundamental rights may not feature so highly on the agenda. New leadership brings with it uncertainties, including changes in the new US administration. The European elections in 2024 were also a critical moment of change for the EU as it sets course in a new direction. The new EU priorities and these developments are discussed in the following section.

Fundamental rights in the new EU priorities

2024 was a year of political change for the EU. The elections in June brought in a new European Parliament with new leaders and new members, and a new European Commission and legislature with refreshed priorities for the EU.

Strategic policy documents released by the EU institutions give an indication of what is to come over the next five years in the new policy cycle. The European Council's strategic agenda for 2024–2029 ⁽¹¹⁾, President von der Leyen's political guidelines ⁽¹²⁾ and the mission letters to the commissioners ⁽¹³⁾ also articulate the EU's priorities. Within these documents, there are signs of both increased protection for fundamental rights and areas where there may be setbacks.

The EU has three priorities, according to the strategic agenda, each of which will potentially impact fundamental rights – both positively and negatively ⁽¹⁴⁾. First, the EU is prioritising safeguarding a free and democratic Europe, including through upholding the values of the EU and living up to these values at the global level. This priority goes hand in hand with respect for fundamental rights in the Charter, including the right to freedom of expression (Article 11) and the right to organise under the right to peaceful assembly (Article 12), which are foundational to a democratic society. Chapter 1 of the *Fundamental Rights Report 2025*, ‘Respect for fundamental rights in the electoral process’, discusses upholding democratic values and fundamental rights in more detail.

In addition, the EU’s accession to the European Convention on Human Rights is currently in progress. That will ensure greater consistency in upholding human rights in EU Member States, and in the EU itself ⁽¹⁵⁾, guaranteeing people’s fundamental rights.

The second priority concerns maintaining a strong and secure Europe, including through strengthening security and defence, implementing a comprehensive approach to migration and border management, and preparing for another wave of enlargement. Although security is a necessary precondition for the enjoyment of rights and freedom, there is an indication that changes in this area may put a strain on fundamental rights.

For example, heightened border controls and migration management must be compliant with fundamental rights. The risk of ill treatment at borders is a known issue that FRA has been documenting. The section ‘Migration and asylum at EU external borders’ discusses it in more detail. It warrants close oversight and responses in line with EU and international obligations in striking the right balance between increased security measures and respecting people’s rights to dignity and freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment.

A further security-related development is prioritising the safety of citizens, from both online and offline threats. This could be a step towards addressing the issues of online hate and harmful content on social media, as discussed in the section ‘Racism, hate crime and discrimination’. Safety online is also discussed in Chapter 2 of the *Fundamental Rights Report 2025*, ‘Protecting women who are victims of crime’, in relation to hate posted online, which most often targets women.

The third and final priority focuses on fostering a prosperous and competitive Europe, including through delivering on the green and digital transitions. The focus on competitiveness in the economy may lead to discussion about regulation and obligations, which might present a challenge in upholding fundamental rights. For example, prioritising growth may weaken rights protections for workers or consumers, and the expansion of digital technology in our societies could pose risks to a range of rights alongside concerns about privacy and data protection.

Changes to adapt to and mitigate climate change may affect not only the business world but also those in society who struggle amid rising costs of living. The move towards a just transition will have an impact on jobs in many different sectors and affect people’s livelihoods. Delivering on these objectives means effectively integrating fundamental rights in any

initiatives put forward in these areas to meet policy objectives known as ‘leaving no one behind’. Examples are provided in FRA’s recent publication on ensuring compliance with fundamental rights in the European Green Deal ⁽¹⁶⁾.

As part of the European Green Deal, the EU introduced new rules on human rights, sustainability and responsible business practices ⁽¹⁷⁾. These include the corporate sustainability due diligence directive (CSDDD) ⁽¹⁸⁾, the corporate sustainability reporting directive ⁽¹⁹⁾ and the EU taxonomy regulation ⁽²⁰⁾.

However, proposed changes will have an impact on these rules. Changing political objectives following the European elections and subsequent global events put pressure on these rules. As part of a plan to improve European competitiveness, on 8 November 2024 the European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, announced plans to simplify EU sustainability-reporting rules by consolidating and streamlining them ⁽²¹⁾. On 29 January 2025, the Commission presented the Competitiveness Compass to guide policy during the 2024–2029 mandate, introducing the ‘Sustainability Omnibus’ as the first in a series of simplification omnibus packages. It aims to simplify sustainability-reporting requirements, as well as sustainability due diligence and taxonomy. On 26 February 2025, the first of these simplifications was announced, proposing substantial changes to the CSDDD and corporate sustainability reporting directive.

While presented as a means to alleviate regulatory burdens on businesses, a number of these changes – if adopted – risk weakening human rights and environmental protections. At the time of writing, the competent EU institutions are still discussing these proposals. It remains to be seen how the proposed changes will affect human rights protection under the CSDDD – and the extent to which the changes are consistent with human rights due diligence, as enshrined in the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights ⁽²²⁾ and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development guidelines.

In summary, the new political leadership in various countries, including the EU, is operating in a highly volatile and unpredictable international environment. This introduces uncertainty due to potential policy shifts regarding fundamental rights. The EU’s new priorities may both strengthen and weaken fundamental rights protection. While these new priorities – safeguarding democracy, enhancing security and ensuring a prosperous, competitive Europe – represent a continuation of progress in some areas, they also introduce new challenges. The focus on security and competitiveness, along with broader regulatory simplification efforts, may undermine fundamental rights protections, particularly in areas such as human rights, environmental protection, data protection and AI governance. Aligning these priorities with fundamental rights is a challenge for the forthcoming period.

The remainder of this overview looks at selected key issues for fundamental rights. It focuses on issues that were important in 2024 from a fundamental rights perspective and highlights major legislative developments in 2024 in digitalisation, AI, and migration and asylum. It showcases the new FRA data published in 2024 on the high levels of racism and discrimination. It concludes with a section looking ahead to 2025 and beyond.

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN 2024: MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND FRA RESEARCH

This section presents the major developments in 2024 from the perspective of fundamental rights. It provides an overview of major trends and analysis drawn from data and research that FRA published in 2024, in three areas.

Racism, hate crime and discrimination

Discrimination, often combined with hate and racism, continues to plague today's society, affecting everyone who is seen as different. Hate speech and harassment, including hate crime and physical bias-motivated violent crime, are very real threats. Harassment can include offensive or threatening comments, and threats of violence both in person and in messages received online. There is also a growing risk of the kinds of attitudes behind racist and discriminatory acts becoming normalised.

Black people, Roma and people from different ethnic backgrounds face racist harassment and racial discrimination. People are targeted on account of their religious beliefs, with the war in Gaza prompting rising antisemitism, alongside anti-Muslim hatred in the EU.



Acts like these violate people's fundamental rights, including the right to the protection of their human dignity, the right to respect for their private and family life, the right to non-discrimination and the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Fears, misconceptions and 'othering' fuel discrimination and intolerance, and stand in the way of ensuring inclusive, equal and respectful societies. It is not only these individuals who suffer. Institutionalised racism also has an impact on public trust in institutions. It can lead to rifts in social cohesion and affects the democratic values the EU is built upon.

In 2024, FRA published data highlighting the inequality and discrimination that millions experience across the EU. The results of FRA's surveys asking Black people, Jews, Muslims and LGBTIQ people in the EU about their experiences, published in the last year, show widespread hatred, reflecting systemic racial discrimination. Unequal treatment and discrimination hamper their lives. This section only presents the main research outputs from FRA in 2024 and does not provide an overview of other groups potentially affected in similar ways.

Antisemitism remains a live issue in the EU. The latest FRA survey data on antisemitism, published in 2024, show that Jewish people in the EU today continue to fear for their safety and their security⁽²³⁾. Over a third (37 %) of Jews who took part in the survey say they have been harassed because they are Jewish.

Similarly, Muslims experience racism and discrimination, which FRA's research published in 2024 clearly indicates. Almost one in two Muslims (47 %) experience racial discrimination⁽²⁴⁾. Muslim men, women and children experience this frequently in schools, at workplaces and on our streets.

Soaring numbers of incidents of hate targeted at Jews and Muslims are also evidenced by research that the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance published in 2024⁽²⁵⁾.

Racism is not limited to interactions between people in society. Institutionalised racist attitudes can also be ingrained in public services and government policies. Racism exists in public services, such as police forces, that are designed to protect the communities they serve. In 2024, FRA published the first EU-wide report on racism in policing⁽²⁶⁾. It shows that racism in policing continues to be an issue and is widespread across the EU. Racism in policing has far-reaching effects, fuelling social exclusion and harming trust in police forces.

People who identify as LGBTIQ face similar challenges. FRA's survey of LGBTIQ people last year, one of the biggest surveys of its kind in the world, underscored the need for inclusive policies that consider the diversity of LGBTIQ people⁽²⁷⁾. The data, published in 2024, show that many experience harassment and hate-motivated violence, with trans and intersex people facing the worst of it. Almost 50 % of LGBTIQ people who took part in the survey were victims of hate-motivated harassment.

Discriminatory experiences can be more extreme for someone who identifies as belonging to more than one of these groups that typically face discrimination, or also has other characteristics, such as age or gender, resulting in a unique experience of discrimination. By way of example, more than half of Muslim respondents felt they had been discriminated against on more than one ground such as their skin colour, religion and ethnic or immigrant background⁽²⁸⁾. These findings on intersectionality suggest that, although non-discrimination is part of existing laws designed to ensure equality, enforcement is needed to counteract these trends.

Developments to address racism, hate crime and discrimination in 2024

Developments in 2024 represent a small step forward. There have been no major new developments, but initiatives and enforcement attempts build on the existing body of legal standards to prevent racism, hate crime and discrimination.

To address racism, the Commission acts to ensure that racism is punishable by criminal penalties under the framework decision on racism and xenophobia ⁽²⁹⁾. To do this, the Commission launched infringement cases, bringing the total number of infringement proceedings since 2020 to 14 ⁽³⁰⁾. Eight cases have since been closed, and other Member States are making progress although their cases remain open. The Commission's action in this area should encourage countries to align with EU standards.

To tackle hate crime, in 2024, the Commission brought together citizens in the first European citizens' panel on tackling hatred, to discuss the causes of hate in society ⁽³¹⁾. Their recommendations address media literacy and the role of online platforms. The panel is also a strong example of how citizens can play an important role in shaping policies.

Also relevant to the EU and progress in this area is the work of the Council of Europe. It also took initiatives on hate crime in 2024. A new recommendation, adopted by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, includes a wider definition of hate crime so that member states can more effectively prosecute such crimes ⁽³²⁾.

With a view to combating discrimination, in 2024 the European Commission published progress reports about its equality strategies and action plans on antisemitism ⁽³³⁾ and LGBTIQ equality ⁽³⁴⁾, and EU and national action plans against racism ⁽³⁵⁾. This last report states that infringement proceedings remain ongoing against three Member States that do not implement the racial equality directive. This is one example of how these assessments show that, although there has been progress, not all countries have done enough to implement the existing requirements. In addition, in 2025, two of the major EU equality strategies will be renewed: the strategy designed to promote equality for LGBTIQ people and the strategy to fight racism ⁽³⁶⁾. The rise in anti-Muslim hatred in the last year is a further reason to consider this phenomenon and to take action to counter it. Implementing these strategies along with independent monitoring and accountability is crucial to tackle discrimination.

Furthermore, new directives that the EU adopted in 2024 aim to strengthen the role of equality bodies ⁽³⁷⁾. Increasing the independence, mandate, resources and powers of these bodies should make their work to combat discrimination more effective.

To build on the existing data on affected vulnerable groups, FRA is collecting data examining the experiences of Roma people, and the racism, discrimination and hate crime that these communities face ⁽³⁸⁾. These findings will be published in 2025 and be used as evidence in the interim assessment of the 2020–2030 EU Roma framework ⁽³⁹⁾.

Overall, despite small steps forward being made in 2024, the high levels of intolerance seen in FRA's research in 2024 are alarming. The findings show a lack of progress over the years, despite laws designed to prohibit discrimination under the EU treaties, the Charter and EU equality law. For example, related to discrimination, the evaluations of the equality

strategies conducted by the European Commission illustrate areas where Member States seem to fall short. Member States should do more to enforce laws and adhere to the standards that have been set.

To address these issues, FRA reiterates its calls to the EU and its Member States, put forward in its publications. These include practical steps that the EU and Member States can take.

- First, to prevent discrimination, FRA reiterates its call to the European Commission and Member States to enforce existing EU anti-discrimination legislation and policy. They should put in place independent monitoring mechanisms based on robust and regularly collected equality data on all grounds of discrimination and for all areas of life covered by the law. For more detail, see FRA opinion 2 in *Being Muslim in the EU* ⁽⁴⁰⁾.
- Second, to tackle antisemitism, Member States should ensure effective monitoring and appropriate funding of strategies and action plans. For more detail, see FRA opinion 1 in *Jewish People's Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism* ⁽⁴¹⁾.
- Third, to address anti-Muslim hatred, and racism more broadly, Member States should enforce sanctions against racial and religious discrimination, in line with the racial equality directive. For more detail, see FRA opinion 1 in *Being Muslim in the EU* ⁽⁴²⁾.

Digitalisation and artificial intelligence

AI is increasingly used in daily life. Many people, businesses and governments are using it to speed up routine tasks and save time.

While there are endless opportunities and benefits, using AI can negatively affect fundamental rights. For example, technology and algorithms designed to detect and stop the spread of hate speech may be biased and lead to discrimination with the over-removal or under-removal of certain content. This can put people at a disadvantage based on protected characteristics, such as their ethnic background. There have been numerous examples of the pitfalls and dangers of using new technologies, such as gender-biased machine translations and ineffective facial recognition systems ⁽⁴³⁾.

FRA's report on biased algorithms also illustrated these risks, showing that algorithms that may be used for detecting hate speech online are easily biased towards or against certain groups ⁽⁴⁴⁾. These results show that algorithms are not neutral and may lead to discriminatory treatment. They embed societal biases and can perpetuate, reinforce or even create discrimination. Given that AI and related technologies can be used in all areas of life and a variety of ways, all fundamental rights may be affected in various ways.

Social media and online platforms rely on such algorithms to moderate content online. When these platforms do not moderate harmful content, people are at greater risk. There are major challenges in detecting and removing hate speech from social media. FRA's research found that women are most often the targets of hate posted online ⁽⁴⁵⁾. Examples of this can include misogyny, abusive content and threats.

These examples show that AI and similar technologies used on online platforms can have real-world consequences. Regulation of online platforms is necessary because they can easily have an impact on fundamental rights including non-discrimination, gender equality, and personal data and privacy, alongside freedom of expression.

In recent years there has been a drive for more regulation, and protecting fundamental rights has been one of the main impetuses behind it. Developments in 2024 are highlighted in the following section.

Developments to regulate digital technologies in 2024

There were significant developments in 2024 regarding the regulation of digital technology and online spaces. Major new legislation to regulate online platforms came into force in 2024 in the shape of the Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽⁴⁶⁾. The DSA regulates the conduct of online service providers and platforms, including social media platforms. Importantly, platforms must remove unlawful content that is posted online, such as hate speech. Hateful content online can have an impact on people's mental health.

One example is in the evidence from FRA's recent survey on the experiences of Jewish people. Over 90 % of survey respondents have seen antisemitic content online and 15 % say it negatively affected their mental health ⁽⁴⁷⁾. The new laws under the DSA will enable the EU to hold platforms to meet higher standards of transparency and accountability and should have a big impact as social media platforms grow and evolve or change their policies.

The DSA can support combating the spread of disinformation and election interference or manipulation, if implemented effectively. Protecting fundamental rights online means protecting both the right to freedom of expression and information and the right to non-discrimination. This remains an area in which FRA will continue to work in 2025 and 2026 to provide for a better understanding of interferences with those rights in the online sphere.

Another significant legislative achievement in 2024 was the adoption of the Artificial Intelligence Act ⁽⁴⁸⁾. The AI Act is a welcome and timely development that will support the safeguarding of fundamental rights. It prohibits AI from being used for the harmful exploitation of vulnerabilities, being used in predicting individual criminal behaviour or being used in social scoring.

It also categorises certain AI usage in areas relating to education, employment, law enforcement and migration management as high risk and requires providers and certain deployers to assess their systems in relation to fundamental rights. Fundamental rights impact assessments under the AI Act should, when implemented correctly, play a major role in ensuring rights compliance. FRA is involved in providing input in the development of these impact assessments.

FRA will also help ensure the effective implementation of the AI Act by providing evidence and guidance. It is one of five permanent members assigned to the AI Act's advisory forum, outlined in Article 67 of the act. FRA is also working on AI projects focused on assessing high-risk AI, remote biometric identification and digitalisation of justice. Results are expected to be published in 2025 ⁽⁴⁹⁾.

In parallel to the regulatory efforts on AI by the EU, the Council of Europe adopted the first-ever international legally binding treaty in this field, the Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law ⁽⁵⁰⁾. The European Commission signed the convention on behalf of the EU. Several states also signed it, including

Council of Europe member states and non-members, such as the United States. In addition, the Council of Europe is working on several initiatives that tackle the protection of human rights when using AI. It adopted guidance on impact assessment methodology for AI in 2024 ⁽⁵¹⁾. It is working on more detailed guidance on promoting equality and preventing discrimination in the field of AI ⁽⁵²⁾.

Both the AI Act and the DSA are important achievements, but it remains to be seen how these provisions will be applied in practice. In early 2025, there was pushback from the United States on regulation related to concerns on innovation and competitiveness. Technology developers also introduced changes in early 2025 on fact-checking. Similar changes in future could have an impact on compliance. Evaluating the implementation of both pieces of legislation will be the main task of oversight bodies in the coming years. Similarly, changes in how online platforms operate, such as changes in content moderation rules or fact-checking, may pose a challenge to regulation under the DSA. Innovation in this space is likely to continue to pose a challenge to regulation.

To address these issues, FRA reiterates its calls to the EU and its Member States put forward in its publications. These include practical steps that the EU and Member States can take.

- First, regarding the risk to women online evidenced by FRA’s research, one example of action that could be taken is that online platforms should pay particular attention to misogyny online. Very large online platforms should consider misogyny as one of the systemic risks in the context of the risk assessment and mitigation measures that the DSA requires. For more detail, see FRA opinion 1 in *Online Content Moderation – Current challenges in detecting hate speech* ⁽⁵³⁾.
- Second, to increase the protection of fundamental rights when using AI, impact assessments should be used. In addition, accountability systems should be put in place to monitor and address any negative impact. For more detail, see FRA opinion 3 in *Getting the Future Right – Artificial intelligence and fundamental rights* ⁽⁵⁴⁾.
- Third, there remains a need for more knowledge, awareness and resources to check for bias in AI algorithms, as well as access to data and datasets. For more detail, see FRA opinion 6 in *Bias in Algorithms – Artificial intelligence and discrimination* ⁽⁵⁵⁾.

Migration and asylum at EU external borders

Migration remains a priority for the EU and a highly topical issue across many Member States. Most people who come to the EU come to visit and to work or study. Some come to Europe seeking safety and fleeing from harm.

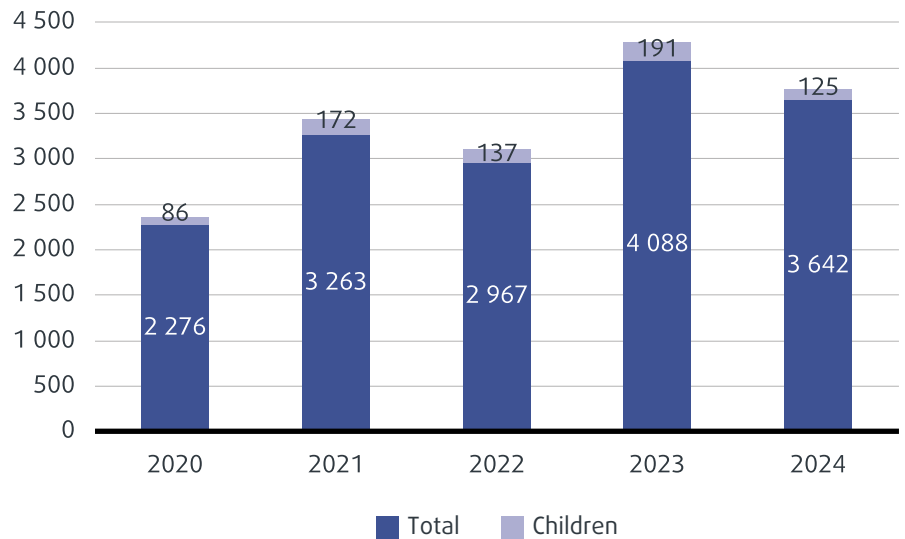
The reality is that many people either die at sea or go missing while trying to reach Europe. There are many developments related to migration that are potentially concerning from the perspective of fundamental rights. Given FRA’s work in this area, this section focuses on deaths at sea, ill treatment and other rights violations at borders, which remain a serious concern.

In 2024, 3 642 people died or went missing while attempting to cross by sea to Europe, the International Organization for Migration estimated. This is a slight decrease from 2023 (4 088), due to fewer departures from Tunisia and Libya ⁽⁵⁶⁾.

Figure 1 shows these numbers over the last five years. There has been a slight overall upward trend, though the number for 2023 is unusually high. This illustrates the risks associated with perilous sea crossings and that loss of life at sea remains high. This indicates that preventative measures are still needed to prevent future tragedies.

Similarly, in 2024, 82 people died or went missing in the English Channel, an increase of 66 % over 2023 ⁽⁵⁷⁾.

FIGURE 1 – ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF DEATHS AT SEA, MEDITERRANEAN AND ATLANTIC ROUTES, 2020-2024



Source: FRA, 2025, created using data from the International Organization for Migration.

Part of the problem stems from a lack of adequate search and rescue capabilities to help people in distress at sea. Attempting to get to Europe by crossing the Mediterranean Sea by boat is dangerous. Civil-society organisations play a key role in saving lives and mitigating the hardships that migrants and asylum seekers experience. Yet civil-society organisations are penalised for their work, as FRA’s 2024 report on search and rescue operations highlighted ⁽⁵⁸⁾. This limits the capacity of these organisations and leaves a deficit in the available search and rescue functions operating in the Mediterranean Sea.

EU countries have several responsibilities to prevent people from dying at sea, and to investigate reports of violations at borders. People crossing the EU’s external borders can face challenging circumstances, with migrants being mistreated by border guards or other officials. Practices involving stopping asylum seekers at the border and forcibly returning them to the country they entered from without carrying out an individual assessment violate fundamental rights ⁽⁵⁹⁾.

Under the Charter, EU countries are legally obliged to respect human dignity, protect the right to life and prevent ill treatment. An important aspect of this is their responsibility to investigate when things go wrong. When there are indicators of human rights violations, including violations of the right to life and personal integrity, investigations must be conducted.

However, many investigations are ineffective, which casts a negative light on border management authorities’ operations. Investigations can be ineffective partly due to a lack of political will. FRA’s 2024 publication

Guidance on Investigating Alleged Ill-treatment at Borders provides evidence of ineffective investigations⁽⁶⁰⁾. It sets out 10 steps to promote prompt and effective national investigations into incidents of ill treatment at borders. Unfortunately, fundamental rights violations often go unreported, and therefore cannot be investigated.

Developments in asylum and migration in 2024

In 2024, several legislative instruments were adopted as part of a new pact on migration and asylum. It sets out new rules harmonising asylum procedures and cooperation between Member States, which come into force in mid 2026. The legal acts comprising the pact are published in the EU's Official Journal⁽⁶¹⁾.

The pact revises procedures for those who apply for asylum at border crossing points, those rescued at sea and those who are apprehended after having crossed the border in a way that is deemed irregular. National authorities must screen new arrivals to verify their identities and carry out security checks as well as health and vulnerability checks. A faster border procedure will examine asylum applications at the EU's external borders. Rejected asylum applicants will be channelled into fast-track return border procedures. The border procedures for asylum and return must respect strict timelines⁽⁶²⁾.

The new rules also raise some fundamental rights risks, largely associated with the speed of the border procedure.

Monitoring compliance with fundamental rights is one of the promising aspects of the new pact. Accurate monitoring is considered to be an effective way to uphold and protect rights. The new rules require Member States to have an independent mechanism to monitor compliance with fundamental rights during the screening of new arrivals and when assessing asylum claims at external borders. The screening regulation⁽⁶³⁾ and the asylum procedure regulation⁽⁶⁴⁾ set out these rules. Both of those are pieces of legislation that constitute the pact. Member States must ensure that monitoring bodies are independent and provided with adequate resources.

To make these monitoring activities effective, FRA published practical guidance for Member States to assist them in setting up national independent monitoring mechanisms for the screening and asylum border procedures⁽⁶⁵⁾. FRA published the guidance as part of its role in the pact, outlined in the regulations⁽⁶⁶⁾.

In 2024, the EU and Member States increased their efforts to make returns more effective. This concerns third-country nationals (i.e. people from non-EU countries) with no legal right to remain in the EU. The EU and Member States suggested amending the rules on returns to speed up and simplify the return process⁽⁶⁷⁾.

Related to this, some Member States proposed creating 'return hubs' in non-EU countries. These are places in countries outside the EU, which would temporarily host people who have been ordered to leave, until either the Member State or the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) organises their return to where they were originally. FRA analysed the fundamental rights risks this entails⁽⁶⁸⁾.

The implementation of EU return policies is a very sensitive area from a fundamental rights perspective. Several fundamental rights guaranteed in the Charter are at stake and must be respected in any initiatives to increase the effectiveness of returns. Without sufficient safeguards, returning third-country nationals could lead to violations of rights such as protection from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, the right to asylum, *non-refoulement* and the prohibition of collective expulsions. It may also interfere with rights to liberty, the rights of the child, human dignity and access to effective judicial remedies. One example is that the European Committee of Social Rights of the Council of Europe found that the expulsion of children in an irregular migration situation violates the European Social Charter when it is carried out without providing them with any assistance⁽⁶⁹⁾.

Nonetheless, there are positive developments in 2024 from a fundamental rights perspective. The appointment of a new Commissioner for the Mediterranean in the EU offers a new opportunity to reinforce action and prevent future tragedies at sea.

Evaluations of how the Schengen area works have repeatedly highlighted the importance of fundamental rights protection at borders ⁽⁷⁰⁾. They also highlight the need to uphold the principle of *non-refoulement*, which is also part of the Charter: the principle under international law that people like refugees and asylum seekers cannot be forced to return to a place where they may be at risk of severe harm. These evaluations show promise as a tool to address gaps in the implementation of safeguards embedded in the Schengen rules.

The new pact on asylum and migration notably includes a requirement for Member States to establish independent mechanisms to monitor fundamental rights during the screening and the asylum border procedure. This is promising from a fundamental rights perspective, as it provides an opportunity for external evaluation of how well people's rights are being respected throughout the process.

In conclusion, many developments related to migration are potentially concerning from the perspective of fundamental rights. Given FRA's work in this area, this section focuses on deaths at sea, ill treatment and other rights violations at borders, which remain a serious concern. As some rules in the pact on migration and asylum raise new risks for fundamental rights, fundamental rights monitoring will be essential. Efforts to make returns more effective and efficient are likely to continue in 2025, so this remains an area for vigilance, depending on their application and implementation. Capacity for search and rescue remains critical, while civil society's activity has been reduced as a result of restrictions imposed by some Member States on its work.

To address these issues, FRA reiterates the calls its publications have made to the EU and its Member States. These include practical steps that the EU and Member States can take.

- First, to ensure sufficient search and rescue capacity, Member States and Frontex should collectively ensure that enough appropriately equipped naval assets are deployed where shipwrecks are most likely to occur. For more detail, see FRA opinion 3.1 in the *Fundamental Rights Report 2024* ⁽⁷¹⁾.
- Second, to stop non-governmental organisations from being criminalised when they help migrants in rescues at sea, any rules on facilitation should exclude punishing those who provide humanitarian assistance. This should apply to rescuing refugees and assisting them in seeking safety, as well as providing food, shelter, medical care and legal advice to migrants. For more detail, see the final FRA opinion in 'Criminalisation of migrants in an irregular situation and of persons engaging with them' ⁽⁷²⁾.
- Third, to improve investigations into alleged violations, Member States should investigate all allegations of fundamental rights violations at borders promptly and effectively. For more detail, see FRA opinion 3.2 in the *Fundamental Rights Report 2024* ⁽⁷³⁾.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025 AND BEYOND

During 2024, there was significant pressure on fundamental rights. Economic and social rights were already strained by rising inflation, further disadvantaging people already affected by inequality and those who are at risk of poverty. Continuing geopolitical uncertainties and international conflict have had a spillover effect on fundamental rights in the EU. Global events have a felt impact in Member States, surfacing discrimination and racism.

Intolerance of groups who are different from the majority population remains critically high. Targets of hate are most frequently women, LGBTIQ people, people from minority backgrounds and ethnicities, and religious groups. Cumulatively, these challenges signal a worrying trend in consistent violations of individual fundamental rights. Racism and discrimination have profound and far-reaching impacts on society. The reality of gender-based violence also indicates an extreme manifestation of gender inequality.

To counter these trends, in 2024, the EU and Member States have sustained their attention on policy areas critical to fundamental rights. Prior to the European elections, the EU sought to finalise its legislative and policy agenda, much of which was geared towards enhancing protection for fundamental rights. New legislation merits close observation to ensure it does not negatively affect rights. For instance, new laws in the areas of migration include safeguards that will need to be implemented and monitored to ensure they are respected.

Legislative changes in digitalisation and AI are significant markers of progress. The new DSA presents a meaningful opportunity to regulate online spaces, counter disinformation and online hate, and prevent discrimination. It includes a responsibility to assess potential negative effects on fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression, privacy and non-discrimination. The AI Act is a landmark legislative development that should support innovation in this emerging technology in a way that is transparent and conscious of the risks to fundamental rights associated with using AI.

These developments build on the existing protections that the EU and Member States have set up for fundamental rights, in many mechanisms and pieces of legislation. How countries respond, and how quickly the EU and its Member States make progress on their shared objectives, will together determine how well individual rights continue to be respected and nurtured.

In other areas, changes in legislation may have the opposite effect. Legislative developments in areas such as corporate sustainability due diligence are, at the time of writing, affected by the European Commission's deregulation and simplification proposals introduced in early 2025. Although these changes aim to simplify the regulatory framework for businesses, they may also weaken human rights and environmental protections.

This reflects a broader trend whereby the simplification of regulatory frameworks, intended to enhance competitiveness, can come at the expense of fundamental rights safeguards. As these reforms unfold throughout 2025, balancing efficiency with strong rights protections will remain a key challenge.

In 2025, the geopolitical situation is likely to be so volatile that it will be difficult to predict which issues may be challenging for fundamental rights. It will be crucial for those working in fundamental rights to monitor the situation, although the following are likely to continue to be important from the perspective of fundamental rights.

First, the new EU priorities give greater significance to internal security. The implications of this for fundamental rights deserve close attention. For example, to protect rights, fundamental rights must be built into the development of a new internal security strategy.

Second, the new DSA has the potential to ensure a safer online environment and protect people against unlawful hate speech. How the EU and Member States use new laws to regulate online platforms and social media companies and assess their compliance with the rules in the new act should have a big impact.

Third, inequality remains an issue of key importance, as is evident from the levels of gender inequality, racism and discrimination recorded in 2024. Action to prevent discrimination against different groups should be taken. Notably, several EU equality strategies and plans are coming to an end in 2025. They include major strategies on anti-racism, gender equality, LGBTIQ equality and Roma equality. Although these strategies may be ending, the protection they provide, and the initiatives to combat discrimination under them, should continue. Greater enforcement of existing laws would be warranted against this backdrop of discrimination and racism, to protect people in society.

Beyond this, 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of the proclamation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights celebrates its 75th anniversary. These milestones call for reflection and renewing commitment and resolve.

In conclusion, as the EU manages the challenges ahead, upholding fundamental rights will be crucial. Amid new EU priorities, challenging economic and social strains persist. Compounded by geopolitical uncertainties in 2025, safeguarding both economic and social rights and democratic values should be prioritised.

Tensions in society have surfaced over the last few years, and people of all walks of life continue to face discrimination in their daily lives. Discrimination particularly against religious communities, ethnic minorities, women, LGBTIQ individuals and other groups highlights the urgent need for ongoing commitments to counter intolerance.

Developments in 2024 are a record of progress despite the odds. At the EU level, numerous legislative developments were rolled out, many of which enhance or include safeguards for fundamental rights. This is most obvious in relation to digitalisation, and in ensuring fundamental rights are protected online as well as offline. Although technological advancement moves at a pace that is difficult to keep up with, new legislation on digital technology and AI is a signal of readiness to respond quickly to the digital world.

Actions by the EU outlined in this overview are markers of progress to protect fundamental rights. The main report discusses these milestones and actions by Member States, providing greater detail on major developments in 2024. Despite the challenges, these developments are steps in the journey towards fostering a just and equal society based on respect for fundamental rights.

The following sections are excerpts from the main report, the *Fundamental Rights Report 2025*, providing the FRA opinions on each of the areas covered in the chapters. These opinions set out FRA's position and call for the European Commission, Member States and others to take practical action to address the issues raised in each chapter.

This excerpt is intended to provide policymakers, governments, lawmakers and civil-society organisations with a concise summary. FRA is an authoritative source of trusted, reliable information and research on fundamental rights in the EU. Therefore, the main *Fundamental Rights Report 2025* and this accompanying overview and FRA opinions provide a useful evidence base for practitioners in the field and all those involved in protecting and upholding fundamental rights.

FRA OPINIONS

This section provides the FRA opinions as excerpts from the chapters of the *Fundamental Rights Report 2025*. For the full research and evidence behind the opinions, please see the main report.

RESPECT FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

2024 was a year of many elections. Alongside the European Parliament elections, elections at the municipal, regional and national levels took place in 19 Member States and the three EU candidate countries that are also FRA observer states.

Democracy is a founding value of the EU (Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union). Free and fair elections are a crucial part of democracy, but also a way for citizens to exercise their fundamental rights.

The *Fundamental Rights Report 2025* chapter discusses the fair and safe conduct of elections, including election campaigns, from a fundamental rights point of view, focusing on the online sphere. It also discusses the inclusiveness of elections in 2024.

It proposes a range of actions to deal with these challenges to ensure the security of fundamental rights throughout the electoral cycle.

FRA opinions

EU law, such as the DSA, has started to be enforced in relation to elections already, and other legislation such as the AI Act and political advertising regulation, if properly enforced at both the national and the EU level, will play a growing role in contributing to the integrity of future elections.

Although Member States took significant measures, and the Commission took a proactive approach to dealing with the potential misuse of online platforms to manipulate elections in 2024, there is evidence of the use of disinformation, the growing use of AI and the use of other techniques to attempt to exert undue influence on the conduct and outcome of elections in the EU. Indeed, one such case even resulted in the annulment of the first round of a national presidential election.

FRA OPINION 1

The European Commission and the Member States should ensure sufficient resources are available to implement and enforce the provisions of the DSA, AI Act and political advertising regulation. Applying and enforcing EU legislation, among other measures, can ensure the integrity of future elections in the EU. It can ensure elections are protected from manipulation by domestic or foreign actors and ensure respect for fundamental rights such as freedom of expression.

EU Member States should cooperate with the European Commission to ensure mutual learning. They should share promising practices and guarantee that new challenges, such as the use of AI, are addressed. This cooperation will help them respond effectively to the challenges associated with these transnational phenomena such as manipulation and undue influence.

The recent DSA requires large online platforms operating in the EU to put in place reasonable, proportionate and effective mitigation measures, such as changing algorithmic systems or the design of their services, or modifying their content moderation processes, in particular in respect of illegal hate speech or cyberviolence. Enforcement of such provisions is limited so far and may be hampered by lack of capacity, lack of political will and lack of compliance by online platforms.

EU law requires the criminalisation of some forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia. The 2024 European Parliament elections witnessed cases of harmful rhetoric, including elements of racism, misogyny, xenophobia, and discrimination against Muslims. Incidents of intimidation persisted throughout the campaign and increasingly took place online, backed up by acts of political violence that contributed to the polarisation of the political climate.

EU primary law grants EU citizens the right to vote and stand for elections in the European Parliament but also at the municipal level in their state of residence. In addition, Member States need to respect their obligations under international human rights law, including the European Convention on Human Rights, which in Article 3 of Protocol No 1 enshrines the right to free elections, as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which require the removal of obstacles to electoral participation on the grounds of disability, sex and race/ethnicity. In addition, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights protects the broader right to political participation.

The current composition of the European Parliament suggests that membership of the parliament does not reflect overall societies in terms of the inclusion of women, people with disabilities, young people and other minorities, such as people at the intersections of these or other minority categories. This risks negatively affecting its legitimacy and reducing the effectiveness of its work by not enabling it to tap into the lived experiences of members of all the different groups that make up European societies. These concerns are not limited to the EU level but are in some contexts also a challenge at the national and subnational levels.



FRA OPINION 2

The European Commission and EU Member States should deal with threats of violence and intimidation during elections using national and EU law. The DSA is one option of law that they can use to deal with threats. In doing so, they should balance any action with the right to freedom of expression and other fundamental rights.



FRA OPINION 3

EU Member States should use their legal and policy tools at the national level to improve the inclusivity of elected bodies in the EU.

Member States should consider introducing legally binding measures such as gender quotas or making the financing of political parties and/or campaigns dependent on measures to promote equality and inclusion. They should address sexism, racism and discrimination related to political activities, including online. Member States should seek assistance from the European Commission, exchange promising practices, and seek the advice of experts and relevant civil-society groups to ensure the measures they adopt are both equitable and effective.



FRA OPINION 4

EU Member States should lift restrictions on the rights to vote and stand for elections and make voting facilities and election materials fully accessible for people with disabilities. They should increase rights awareness and offer greater opportunity for political participation. Member States should improve how the political participation of people with disabilities is measured. To do so, they should draw on indicators that FRA has developed.

The EU itself and all its Member States are bound by the UN Convention on the Rights Persons with Disabilities, which guarantees to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others. The ability of people with disabilities to participate in political life has improved in the last decade.

Despite this, as FRA found in its 2024 report on the political participation of people with disabilities, based on indicators developed by FRA, there are still barriers to their participation based on legal capacity. These include obstacles to voting for people with visual, hearing and intellectual disabilities, a lack of data collection on accessibility of buildings, a lack of web accessibility and difficulties in accessing private media coverage of elections. Problems with the accessibility of polling stations for people with disabilities appear to have persisted in the 2024 elections in a number of Member States.

EFFECTIVELY PROTECTING WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

Violence against women remains a widespread reality in Europe, and victims continue to face obstacles in obtaining protection and accessing justice.

The *Fundamental Rights Report 2025* chapter provides an overview and analysis of the most recent EU data on the prevalence and nature of gender-based violence, based on survey data from Eurostat, FRA and the European Institute for Gender Equality published in 2024.

Alongside the empirical data, the chapter describes relevant legislative and policy developments at the international and national levels. A major milestone was the adoption of the EU directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence in May 2024.

Cyberviolence against women is highlighted in several parts of the chapter as a concrete example of violence against women.

FRA opinions

The Istanbul Convention, the victims' rights directive (VRD) and the newly adopted directive on combating violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence all contain requirements that oblige states to adopt targeted measures aiming to facilitate reporting by women victims of violence (Articles 27 and 28 of the Istanbul Convention; Articles 4-5 of the VRD; Article 14 of the VAW directive), alongside requirements to protect and support women victims of violence (Articles 18-25 of the Istanbul Convention; Articles 8-9 of the VRD; Articles 15-21 and 25-33 of the VAW directive).

The latest EU-wide survey conducted by Eurostat, FRA and the European Institute for Gender Equality shows that violence against women remains widespread. At the same time, it indicates that only 13.9 % of women who have experienced physical violence or threats, and/or sexual violence, reported their experiences of violence to the police. More broadly, 26.7 % of women contacted healthcare services, social or other support services, or the police following an incident of violence.

Under-reporting has a range of reasons, including a lack of confidence that the police will investigate the matter. It means that women victims of violence are often not in a position to access support and protection. Continued low rates of reporting violence to the police and other authorities lead to questions around the effectiveness of national authorities in investigating and punishing this type of crime, as women do not feel able to come forward to report abuse and seek redress.



FRA OPINION 1

EU Member States should enhance structures that facilitate crime reporting and offer support to women victims of violence in line with their legal obligations. For example, they should set up alternative reporting options, such as third-party reporting, and proactively disseminate information on support and services. The police and other public services should be trained in victim-appropriate responses to encourage women to report crimes, use support services and get access to justice. Training should also cover handling of cyberviolence cases.

FRA OPINION 2

EU Member States that have ratified the Istanbul Convention should criminalise sexual violence using consent-based definitions of rape and other forms of sexual violence. FRA reiterates this call previously presented in the *Fundamental Rights Report 2023*.

Article 36 of the Istanbul Convention requires states parties to criminalise any acts of a sexual nature that take place without the consent of one of the people involved. Consent must hereby be given voluntarily and be assessed in the context of the surrounding circumstances. The adoption of consent-based definitions of sexual violence in the Member States is progressing. In the *Fundamental Rights Report 2023*, FRA noted that a few Member States had adopted new legislation and legislative proposals in this respect. In 2024, three Member States introduced consent-based definitions of sexual violence in their national laws.

This is in line with contemporary understandings of sexual violence, which do not rely on force or similar features. The Pelicot trial in France, involving the repeated rape and sexual abuse of an unconscious woman, sparked a global debate, underlining the need for consent-based definitions of sexual violence.

FRA OPINION 3

EU Member States should review their laws and policies to ensure they meet the requirements of the directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence. They should transpose it without delay and pay particular attention to requirements on online reporting options, securing electronic evidence and measures to remove certain online material.

The newly adopted directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence contains specific provisions dedicated to criminalising forms of cyberviolence (Articles 5–8). It also contains requirements in relation to online reporting of cybercrimes (Article 14), securing electronic evidence (Article 15) and measures to remove certain online material (Article 23). The DSA, which entered into force in 2024, can support the fight against cyberviolence, for example through orders to act against illegal content (Article 9) and notice and action mechanisms that can be used to report potentially illegal content (Article 16).

High rates of misogyny were demonstrated by a 2023 FRA report on online content moderation. FRA's 2014 survey on violence against women found that one in five young women (aged between 18 and 29) had experienced sexual cyber harassment. These findings are supported by more recent Eurostat data, which show that young women have a higher chance of encountering hostile messages targeting people because of their sex.

In some Member States, research has been conducted or is under way to better understand the challenges of addressing forms of cyberviolence within their legal systems, paving the way to incorporate the directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence. In others, steps have already been taken to adopt or amend legislation criminalising forms of cyberviolence.



IMPLEMENTATION AND USE OF THE CHARTER AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The European Commission is monitoring the fundamental rights implications of EU expenditure. Its 2024 annual report on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union shed light on the funding of activities related to fundamental rights and the need to respect the Charter when using EU funds. At the national level, it is still to be seen how monitoring and complaint mechanisms will be used to ensure that all EU-funded activities are fully Charter compliant. There is also room for more emphasis on the application of the Charter in other contexts.

FRA opinions

Member States are approaching the implementation of the common provisions regulation, including its provisions on the Charter, in different ways. Evidence suggests that there is a need for further capacity building for the fundamental rights actors involved in the process, to ensure that the available procedures are fully used and that all use of EU funds covered by the regulation is fully in line with the Charter.

In the context of considering fundamental rights during the legislative procedure in the Member States, issues were reported as to the involvement of national human rights institutions, equality bodies and ombuds institutions. These appear to be due to insufficient time reserved for consulting fundamental rights bodies, resources and meaningful ways of considering their opinions in the consultations.



FRA OPINION 1

The European Commission should encourage EU Member States to share best practices in the implementation of the Charter horizontal enabling condition. These are set out under the common provisions regulation. This should be done with the participation of national bodies competent for fundamental rights.

FRA OPINION 2

EU Member States should continue providing training on the Charter to public administrations involved in the management of EU funds.

Member States should increase the awareness of the complaint mechanisms available in their national systems to ensure respect of the Charter in the implementation of EU funds.



FRA OPINION 3

EU Member States should ensure, when considering fundamental rights in the legislative process, that national human rights institutions, equality bodies and ombuds institutions participate effectively and are consulted in a meaningful way. This includes, for example, providing timely information about legislative proposals, giving enough time to provide comments to the proposals and providing feedback when comments are not considered.



FRA OPINION 4

EU Member States should enhance their efforts to promote the application of the Charter among all levels of public administration, including the subnational level. They should deliver awareness-raising and training activities, using the 25th anniversary of the proclamation of the Charter as an opportunity.

FRA OPINION 5

The European Committee of the Regions could consult its members and explore avenues to increase the application of the Charter at the regional and local levels.

FRA OPINION 6

The European Commission should continue to fund training and capacity building on the Charter for local, regional and municipal authorities. It should keep encouraging the integration of the Charter into human rights training by national human rights institutions, civil society and legal professional networks as important intermediaries. The Charter focal points could play a role in these awareness-raising efforts.

→ Awareness raising and training on the Charter is flourishing, thanks to EU-funded opportunities, but differences among the Member States in knowledge on the Charter continue to exist. There appear to have been only a few initiatives promoting the Charter among public administrations, in particular at the subnational level.

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