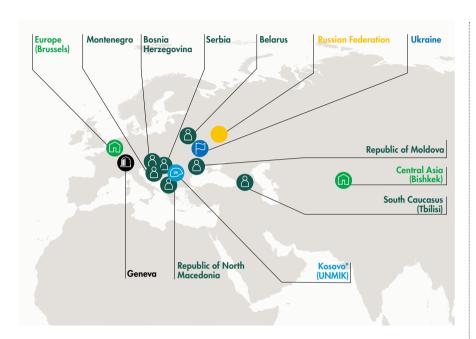
UN Human Rights in Europe and Central Asia



TYPE OF PRESENCE

LOCATION

	Headquarters	Geneva
	Country/Stand-alone Offices/ Human Rights Missions	Ukraine (HRMMU)
	Regional Offices/Centres	Central Asia (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan) and Europe (Brussels, Belgium)
UK	Human rights components of UN Peace/Political Missions	Kosovo** (UNMIK)
8	Human Rights Advisers	Belarus*, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro*, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova*, Serbia and South Caucasus (based in Tbilisi, Georgia and also covering Armenia and Azerbaijan)
	Other types of field presences	Russian Federation



^{**} Hereinafter, all references to Kosovo should be understood in full compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

LEGEND:

Spotlights:







Shifts:















SDGs:

































In 2020, UN Human Rights' work in Europe and Central Asia covered a vast region with 54 countries that include members and candidates of the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States as well as a number of disputed territories controlled by de facto authorities.

Notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, OHCHR maintained strong engagement at country and regional levels from Geneva and through its field presences, including the Regional Office for Central Asia (in Bishkek) and the Regional Office for Europe (in Brussels); the human rights advisers (HRAs) in Belarus, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and South Caucasus; the human rights officers/ project staff in the Russian Federation; the Human Rights Office in the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK); and the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU).

In 2020, OHCHR responded to three consecutive crises in the region, resulting in the development of strategies that affirmed the centrality of human rights for prevention and protection, in accordance with the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights. Faced with post-election violence in Belarus, the Office secured temporary surge capacity to prepare a mandated interim oral update from the High Commissioner and to ensure dedicated support for the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus. In light of renewed hostilities in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, OHCHR took part in the intra-UN consultations to define a common strategy of engagement and develop the terms of reference for an inter-agency mission with the aim of supporting the integration of human rights into humanitarian action. OHCHR also issued statements and press releases and produced internal situation reports through an ad hoc remote monitoring team. Finally, in the wake of post-electoral violence in Kyrgyzstan, OHCHR established an early warning information platform, which enhanced the early warning capacities of the UN Country Team/Resident Coordinator's Office (UNCT/RCO).

UN Human Rights supported the operationalization of the Secretary-General's Strategy in the Western Balkans by contributing to the development of regional projects for support by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). In addition, the Office took steps to strengthen its presence in the subregion by supporting the recruitment of a Senior Human Rights Adviser in Bosnia and Herzegovina, funded by the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), who was deployed in February 2021.

As a member of the Peer Support Group for Europe and Central Asia - a body of the UN Development System that is responsible for the quality assurance of planning and programming documents - OHCHR provided advice to ensure the integration of human rights into Common Country Analyses (CCAs) in 10 countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey and Uzbekistan) and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) in 11 countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan).

OHCHR continued to monitor critical human rights issues related to people on the move, regardless of their migration status, and to pursue advocacy efforts. In September, OHCHR carried out a monitoring mission to Malta to assess the human rights situation of migrants transiting through Libya, with a particular focus on laws, policies and practices related to search and rescue and the human rights protection of migrants at sea.

Throughout 2020, the Office ensured support to missions of the High Commissioner, including to Finland, OSCE/Vienna, Switzerland/Bern and the Vatican. The Office also supported senior-level human rights advocacy through inputs for the High Commissioner's statements and press releases and in relation to human rights strategies and analyses. In line with the Secretary-General's plans to reinforce cooperation with regional organizations, the Office continued to extensively engage with the institutions of the EU on a wide range of policy issues and processes.

OHCHR successfully implemented old and new reporting mandates from the Human Rights Council (HRC) and the General Assembly, including those on the human rights situations in Belarus (reports of the Special Rapporteur and the High Commissioner's interim oral update to the HRC), Cyprus (HRC report), Georgia (oral update/report to the HRC) and Ukraine (regular periodic and thematic reports).

Key agreement in Pristina to promote human rights through data

On 17 January, following months of discussions that were facilitated by UN Human Rights, including at a meeting organized in Geneva, the Ombudsperson Institution of Kosovo (OIK) and the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on human rights indicators in order to harness the power of statistics to advance human rights in Kosovo.

The development of human rights indicators will enable a more targeted collection of information, leading to deeper analyses and the more accurate identification of human rights challenges.

This is a vital step forward in "establishing and nurturing a culture of human rights in public institutions in Kosovo," noted Jerome Bouyjou, the UN Human Rights Representative in Kosovo. "Using and relying on human rights indicators is crucial to promoting effective oversight tools in relation to laws, including, for example, laws on non-discrimination and gender equality," he continued.

As a first step, OIK incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its five-year strategy. On 14 October, a joint working group, composed of representatives of OIK and KAS, met for the first time to discuss the indicators and modalities of cooperation between the two entities, with a focus on the planned 2021 census.

This institutional commitment is in line with the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights and the



Hilmi Jashari, former Ombudsperson (right) and Isa Krasniqi, former KAS Director (left), with the UN Human Rights Representative in Kosovo (centre), at the signing of the MoU between OIK and KAS, on 17 January 2020. © OIK

application of OHCHR's *Human Rights-Based Approach to Data*, which emphasize the importance of human rights indicators in implementing human rights standards and commitments.

In addition to supporting policy formulations, impact assessments, transparency and accountability, human rights indicators contribute to ensuring that No One is Left Behind, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Jerome Bouyjou noted that the use of robust indicators will help formulate targeted recommendations and address identified gaps on the basis of credible and quantifiable evidence. "With an upcoming census in 2021, the timing could not be better to further mainstream human rights into data collection exercises."

BELARUS

Population size¹ 9.45 million		Human Development Index 2 NHRI (if applicable)³ 0.823 (rank: 53/189 in 2019)	
Type of engagement		Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		2018	
Field office(s)		Minsk	
UN partnership framework		United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020	
Staff as of 31 December 2020		2	

XB requirements 2020 US\$688,000

Key OMP pillars in 2020







123 Please refer to Data sources and notes on p. 229

PILLAR RESULTS:



Accountability (A)

A1 - Strengthened provision of legal aid to groups in vulnerable situations, including women victims of violence, Roma and persons with disabilities. Strengthened use of oversight mechanisms for places of detention and increased use of alternatives to detention.







OHCHR contributed to improving oversight, accountability and protection mechanisms that are compliant with international human rights standards, in particular by supporting access to free legal aid for vulnerable groups.

In partnership with the Ministry of Justice and through rounds of consultations with State authorities, CSOs and UN entities, UN Human Rights carried out an assessment of the free legal aid system in Belarus, identifying existing gaps and formulating recommendations. This provides the basis for the development of a road map to improve legal aid provision, including in the context of the deteriorating human rights situation resulting from COVID-19. During the year, OHCHR worked with bar associations, lawyers and two CSOs to provide legal consultation services to 1,543 persons (1,054 women, 489 men), including persons with disabilities and survivors of domestic violence.

The HRA continued advocating for the alignment of the national drug policy and legislation with international human rights standards. In partnership with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, OHCHR carried out a comprehensive assessment of the country's drug policy, which was nearly finalized by the end of 2020.

In addition, the Office conducted a series of online and in-person trainings for members of the State monitoring commissions that exercise oversight functions in places of deprivation of liberty. Political and human rights developments that occurred after the presidential elections, however, led to the suspension of training activities on alternatives to detention and the social rehabilitation of ex-offenders.



Participation (P)

P6 - The UN and the Government consistently consult with human rights and gender equality CSOs when planning, implementing and evaluating programming.



OHCHR facilitated the participation of CSOs in UN responses to COVID-19 and in other UN processes.

UN Human Rights continued to engage with CSOs throughout the year. It helped to facilitate the work of the UN Task Force on human rights and vulnerable communities, supported the participation of CSOs and ensured their recommendations were included in UN responses to COVID-19. More specifically, OHCHR established an online platform that provided organizations with the opportunity to report on the human rights consequences of the pandemic, which in turn contributed to shaping the Office's response. During the pandemic, a Guidance Note on human rights was produced in the Russian language and widely circulated among key partners, including the Government. Letters were sent to the Ministries of Health, Labour and Internal Affairs, outlining detailed recommendations on various issues, such as addressing the needs of vulnerable groups.

Furthermore, the Office organized a series of online consultations for identifying priority areas in its equality and anti-discrimination efforts. Views from a broad range of partners were gathered, including activists working on the social reintegration of ex-offenders, the rights of persons with disabilities and Roma people. In addition, OHCHR and the RCO co-hosted three meetings to discuss the views of human rights organizations regarding the UN's work in the country. After the presidential elections, in August, OHCHR remained in contact with the CSOs. Nevertheless, promoting their engagement in Government processes proved to be challenging as dialogue with State authorities was frequently interrupted. The Office continued to advocate for the protection of civic space and facilitated the engagement of CSOs with the international human rights mechanisms.



Peace and Security

PS5 - Human rights information and analyses are integrated into early warning and analysis systems and influence international and national policymaking, strategies and operations to prevent, mitigate or respond to emerging crises, including humanitarian crises and conflicts.



Following the presidential elections, OHCHR dedicated a significant proportion of its work to developing analyses on the evolving human rights situation in the country in order to inform UN responses.

In particular, UN Human Rights provided targeted inputs to the RCO, supported communication and advocacy efforts with State counterparts and included human rights messages in letters that were addressed to relevant ministries. The activities of the UNCT Task Force on human rights and vulnerable communities, which was co-facilitated by OHCHR, were partially refocused in the second half of 2020 to address the human rights consequences of the post-electoral unrest. Furthermore, discussions were held within the UNCT around the implementation of a Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) in 2021. The HRA provided expert advice on the issue.

In parallel, upon a request from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Office developed a comprehensive analysis of human rights recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms to support the preparation of the country's next Human Rights Action Plan. In its advocacy work with State authorities and other partners, OHCHR continued to refer to recommendations issued by the human rights treaty bodies and other international human rights mechanisms.

CENTRAL ASIA

Type of engagement	Regional Office			
Countries of engagement	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan		
Year established	2008			
Field office(s)	Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), with fiel Nursultan (Kazakhstan); Dushanb and Tashkent (Uzbekistan)			
Staff as of 31 December 2020	14			
XB income	US\$703,904			
XB requirements 2020	US\$2,668,000			
XB expenditure Personnel 72% \$528,774	US\$729,657 Non-persor 17% \$127,141	nnel PSC ⁴ 10% \$73,742		
RB expenditure Personnel	US\$662,761	Non-personne		
86%				

⁴ Please refer to Data sources and notes on p. 231

PILLAR RESULTS:



Accountability (A)

A1 - Governments act to ensure that legislation, policies and State practices with respect to the criminal justice system comply with international human rights standards.



OHCHR contributed to increasing the compliance of laws and policies with international human rights standards, including in the areas of freedom of expression and movement, torture, countering terrorism and non-discrimination.

In Kazakhstan, the long-term advocacy efforts of UN Human Rights and its partners led to positive legislative changes, including the decriminalization of defamation, a decrease of the membership requirements for political parties and an amendment of registration requirements for workers' unions. Despite the Government's efforts to keep the public informed and engaged, a restrictive law on peaceful assemblies was adopted.

In Kyrgyzstan, the Office supported the development of legislation to combat terrorism and submitted comments from the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. The Office also organized an event on the prevention of violent extremism with government representatives, CSOs and lawyers.

In Tajikistan, draft legislation on equality and non-discrimination was developed with the participation of CSOs. The Office supported the organization of a study tour, to Georgia, for members of the Working Group charged with drafting the law and facilitated consultative meetings with CSOs. It also provided expert advice on international standards. Furthermore, the Office built the capacities of 37 CSO representatives (23 women, 14 men) from different regions on equality and non-discrimination.

In Uzbekistan, OHCHR and the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) trained 200 national actors on access to justice during COVID-19, with an emphasis on fair online trials and access to lawyers. OHCHR and its partners undertook strategic advocacy on human rights-compliant laws and practices, which resulted in the restoration of the right of detainees to meet with their lawyers and relatives. After the Government announced that it would create an Anti-Torture Committee, the Office shared examples of good practices in establishing independent investigation mechanisms to address allegations of torture and ill-treatment.

A1 - Institutions that train judges, law enforcement officials, the staff of security-related agencies, lawyers and other educational institutions. consistently include human rights in their training.



OHCHR contributed to the delivery and institutionalization of human rights training for law enforcement officials and State authorities, including in relation to criminal justice, enforced disappearances, torture investigation, economic, social and cultural rights (ESCRs) and non-discrimination.

In Kyrgyzstan, seven State Training Centres took steps to institutionalize a comprehensive training programme on non-discrimination. The training programme was based on an OHCHR manual on human rights, equality and non-discrimination that was produced in the Kyrgyz and Russian languages. In addition, one of the State Training Centres formally established a human rights centre. UN Human Rights finalized an e-learning course on non-discrimination, which is now available to 47,000 staff members of State agencies, and supported training delivered by the Advocates Training Centre to 60 lawyers on the newly adopted criminal law. Following the implementation of a pilot course in 2019, the Office advocated for the review of a training manual on multicultural education at the tertiary level. The manual was approved by the Kyrgyz Academy of Education in 2020 and is recommended for use in universities. The Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kyrgyzstan has begun testing the manual as part of the training materials for police officers.

In Tajikistan, OHCHR reached an agreement with the Training Centre of the Union of Lawyers on the incorporation of human rights into their training programme for lawyers.

In Turkmenistan, the Office contributed to establishing contacts between law enforcement, the judiciary and State bodies and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID). Two training sessions were organized, in July, to enhance the knowledge of participants on basic concepts of enforced disappearance and the WGEID's working methods.

In Uzbekistan, progress was made in relation to preventing torture and other forms of ill-treatment, in accordance with the OP-CAT. Specifically, OHCHR and the Office of the General Prosecutor's Academy trained 31 teaching and research staff who are involved in drafting policy and legislation on good practices in the development of independent investigation mechanisms on torture. The Office and the Academy also collaborated with OSCE and the National Human Rights Centre to deliver two training sessions on the Istanbul Protocol for prosecutors, lawyers and 25 medical staff working in places of detention. In addition, a manual on torture investigation highlighted decisions issued by the human rights treaty bodies in relation to Central Asia. OHCHR and the ICJ cooperated with the Supreme School of Judges to train teaching 95 judges, prosecutors and CSOs on the justiciability of ESCRs in national courts. Furthermore, OHCHR collaborated with the Chamber of Lawyers to train 25 lawyers on the rights to liberty, a fair trial, freedom from torture, the use of international human rights mechanisms and the application of international human rights law in national courts.

OHCHR and UNDP co-organized a series of eight webinars and one training session for 400 members of the judiciary and high-ranking law enforcement officials on the communications procedure of the Human Rights Committee.

A2 – National human rights institutions (NHRIs) are more effective, independent and interconnected, in accordance with the Paris Principles. They play a leading role in promoting and protecting human rights at the national level and in the region.



OHCHR contributed to ensuring that the work of NHRIs in the region is in compliance with the Paris Principles, including through advocacy efforts and targeted training.

UN Human Rights continued to support collaboration among NHRIs in Central Asia through the regional platform of the Central Asian Support Initiative for NHRIs. It organized an awareness-raising session on the role of NHRIs in the context of COVID-19.

In Tajikistan, OHCHR supported capacity-building activities for 16 staff members of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, representatives of the Statistics Agency, the Presidential Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on human rights indicators and alternative reporting under the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The Office and the Ombudsperson discussed the steps that need to be taken to enhance the NHRI's compliance with the Paris Principles.

In Turkmenistan, the Office of the Ombudsperson increased its human rights

monitoring capacities in the context of COVID-19 by using thematic human rights indicators developed by OHCHR. The Office and UNICEF co-organized a webinar on alternative reporting under CRC and the Ombudsperson included a first alternative report to the human rights treaty bodies on this topic in the 2021 annual workplan.

In Uzbekistan, the NHRI took steps to enhance its public advocacy. For instance, the post of the Children's Rights Ombudsperson was created following the release of the 2019 capacity assessment report, which was jointly prepared by OHCHR, UNDP and the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF). OHCHR supported the Ombudsperson's Office to submit its first application to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and it was accredited with "B" status. OHCHR's advocacy led to the resumption of preventive visits to places of detention by the Ombudsperson's Office in August. Moreover, three civil society experts were trained to use an OHCHR monitoring questionnaire during the NHRI's visits to COVID-19 treatment facilities, a quarantine facility and places of detention. OHCHR's recommendations encouraged the Government to review the practice of requiring a 14-day quarantine stay in a container zone for individuals who crossed the border of Uzbekistan. The NHRI carried out advocacy with the Parliament to ensure eligibility of civil society experts as members of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM).



Participation (P)

P1 - CSOs, human rights defenders (HRDs) and marginalized groups increasingly claim their rights and promote the rights of their constituencies and participate more freely in public life.



OHCHR contributed to the increased use of national protection systems in compliance with international human rights standards by supporting strategic litigation and training programmes for HRDs, persons with disabilities and underrepresented minorities in State institutions.

In Kyrgyzstan, as part of an ongoing OHCHR-supported programme, 23 persons (14 women, nine men, including nine persons from ethnic minorities and six persons with disabilities) completed a three-month internship programme in State and municipal bodies of the Issyk-Kul region on increasing the participation of underrepresented groups in public life. The State Personnel Service proposed the formal establishment of the programme. In addition, OHCHR supported a public hearing for the Osh city budget. Approximately 250 participants, including persons with disabilities and individuals from ethnic minorities, discussed domestic violence and the absence of or barriers to accessing public facilities, clean drinking water and medical services.

The Office held two capacity-building events for government authorities to discuss the drafting and adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation in 2021, including with the support of the Coalition for Equality. OHCHR's advocacy encouraged the Government to accept several UPR recommendations related to discrimination. Further,

14 strategic human rights cases relating to equality and non-discrimination were initiated by lawyers who had completed OHCHR's School for Strategic Litigation. One complainant received compensation for a child who had contracted HIV in the hospital. Other cases are pending. In total, 383 people received legal consultations and legal assistance was provided by three partner organizations for 114 cases in three different regions of the country.

In Tajikistan, the Office held two training sessions on the right to adequate housing in cooperation with the Union of Lawyers and the Independent Centre for Protection of Human rights. A total of 30 lawyers from Dushanbe, the Mountain Badakhshan autonomous region and the Sughd Province enhanced their knowledge about forced evictions and protection mechanisms.

In Turkmenistan, OHCHR, the RCO and UNDP convened two events for CSOs to discuss human rights during the COVID-19 pandemic and develop recommendations on ways to better support vulnerable groups and their recovery.

In Uzbekistan, the Office took steps to build the capacities of 44 new activists on human rights standards, monitoring and reporting, advocacy work and creating and managing CSOs. A total of 17 webinars were organized with the Centre for the Support of International Protection, resulting in the creation of three CSOs and initiatives to support persons with disabilities and women's rights, religious freedom and the rights of prisoners. In addition, OHCHR helped to organize seven seminars on CRPD and the SDGs, involving 180 participants from six Uzbek regions and the capital. Participants discussed challenges faced by persons with disabilities and ways to protect their rights under CRPD and the Law on the Rights

of Persons with Disabilities. Background materials were distributed in the Uzbek language and 20 per cent of the materials were available in Braille, OHCHR and the OSCE organized two high-level events with representatives from the Parliament and the Government, during which organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) outlined recommendations to combat discrimination and ensure inclusivity. The events concluded a one-month media marathon that was supported by the National Media Company "UzReport" to advocate for the ratification of CRPD. All media products were produced in accessible formats by and with persons with disabilities.



Development

D7 – When implementing the SDGs and other development plans, more Central Asian States and UNCTs adopt a human rights-based approach (HRBA) and recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms.



OHCHR contributed to the integration of human rights into the UN and national frameworks for the SDGs and COVID-19 responses in Central Asia.

In 2020, UN Human Rights strengthened the capacity of national stakeholders to integrate human rights into their SDG implementation efforts through the collection of disaggregated data, the inclusion of vulnerable groups and linkages with recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. OHCHR, the International Centre Interbilim and the Open Society Institute organized a regional online forum entitled "Strengthening the right

to housing," which included the participation of four NHRIs from the region and the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context. OHCHR also supported the online meeting of the Second Central Asian LGBT+ online platform and facilitated the participation of activists, CSOs and the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

In the context of COVID-19, OHCHR assisted the UNCTs in the preparation of Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (SEIAs) and Socio-Economic Response Plans (SERPs) by providing expertise on the use of human rights indicators.

In Kyrgyzstan, OHCHR and Equal Rights Trust co-organized an expert briefing for the UNCT on comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation. In Tajikistan, OHCHR co-chaired the UNSDCF results group on human rights and good governance and provided expertise on the application of a human rights-based approach in the CCA and the UNCT 2021-2022 workplan. It also advised on successful engagement with the UPR Working Group, In Turkmenistan, OHCHR raised the awareness of staff from the Office of the Ombudsperson, key State institutions and international partners on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) regarding forced labour, human trafficking and trade unions.

In Uzbekistan, OHCHR supported the drafting of the UNSDCF 2021-2025 with a strong focus on enlarging civic space. In addition, the Office worked with international partners to establish the Human Rights Coordination Group to streamline advocacy initiatives. As a result of these

efforts, the Government adapted SDG Indicator 16.10.1 to the national context and the State Statistics Committee included a question on discrimination against women in the 2020 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey.



Mechanisms

M1 – National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRFs) successfully fulfil their mandates. They engage with the international human rights mechanisms, coordinate reporting and follow-up, consult with relevant national actors and share information with them and the public.



OHCHR contributed to strengthening NMRFs and/or the implementation of recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms.

UN Human Rights continued to strengthen the mandate and capacities of NMRFs and their cooperation with NHRIs, civil society and international organizations in the region. Support was provided to reinforce the NMRF legal frameworks (Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan), train NMRF staff and ministerial focal points on implementing and reporting on recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms (Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and prepare the periodic reports and implementation plans of States (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). OHCHR carried out 12 country-specific activities to enhance the effectiveness of NMRFs, including by eliminating delays in reporting to the human rights treaty bodies, improving consultations and ensuring recommendations are implemented. Moreover,

the National Recommendations Tracking Database (NRTD) was rolled out in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan expressed their interest in piloting the NRTD.

Due to OHCHR's support, Central Asian States had only two overdue reports by the end of the year. The Office assisted with the preparation of State reports to the Human Rights Committee, CESCR and the UPR in Kyrgyzstan, CERD and CESCR in Tajikistan and the first midterm UPR report in Uzbekistan.

The Office continued to advocate for the ratification by Central Asian States of outstanding international human rights treaties. In December, Kazakhstan ratified ICCPR-OP2 and declared its intention to ratify the OP-CRPD and the OP-CRC-IC. In Uzbekistan, the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted in October, came into force in January 2021. The ratification of CRPD was included in the National Human Rights Strategy and the UPR Action Plan.

In Kyrgyzstan, OHCHR organized the first public discussions on UPR recommendations after the UPR review. As a result of these efforts, the country supported 83 per cent of the recommendations (seven per cent more than during the second UPR cycle).

In Tajikistan, the Office offered support to developing the National Human Rights Strategy 2030 through an inclusive process involving CSOs and international organizations. In Uzbekistan, some recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms were incorporated into the National Human Rights Strategy, which was adopted, in June. The National Human Rights Centre was tasked with monitoring the implementation of the strategy and a parliamentary

Human Rights Commission was established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms. As a follow-up to the Human Rights Committee's concluding observations, OHCHR supported the drafting by civil society experts of a draft NGO Code, which was shared with the Parliament and the Government.

Reparations for the mother of a child infected with HIV in Kyrgyzstan

With legal assistance provided by the UN Human Rights Regional Office for Central Asia and its CSO partner, Adilet Legal Clinic, Aigul¹⁶, the mother of a child who became HIV positive during his stay in a hospital, was awarded compensation after a legal battle that lasted more than six years and passed through three court instances.

As Aigul recounts, "In 2010, my son fell and lost consciousness. I took him to the city hospital where he was given a blood transfusion." When his condition did not improve, she took him to the Centre for Maternal and Child Health Protection, in Bishkek. Tests determined that her son had received blood that was infected with HIV. "I never imagined that the hospital where I went to save my son would make him sick for life," she said.

"I went back to the Kyzyl-Kiya hospital (in Batken province), but the hospital had already been informed and they had changed and archived his medical records." Algul continued, "I went to the police, to the Prosecutor's Office - I explained what had happened. They ridiculed me and refused to take my statement. After unsuccessful appeals to local authorities, the General Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation. Finally, in 2014, the Kyzyl-Kiya City Court ruled that my child had been infected with HIV due to the negligence of doctors."

Nevertheless, her son continued to experience discrimination within their community, including when receiving medical care. As a result, they moved to Bishkek. Even in the capital, none of the schools Aigul approached would accept him for enrolment. She became depressed and suicidal.

"Then I took a training from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, where I learned a lot about human rights and how to resist discrimination and fight against stereotypes."

The trainings were held throughout the year and it was here that she met the lawyers of the Adilet Legal Clinic. "With their help, I filed a complaint with the Supreme Court of Kyrgyzstan against the Ministry of Health and the hospital in Kyzyl-Kiya." In December, the Court recognized Aigul's right to compensation for the infection of her child and ordered the defendants to pay her two million soms (approximately US\$23,500).

"I am grateful to the Adilet Legal Clinic, who provided legal assistance through a project of the UN Human Rights Office, and whose staff was with me to the end." Aigul is confident that her case will establish an emblematic precedent that will help others who have been infected to obtain compensation.

"I would like to say to all those who have been victims of negligence and injustice and to children who have HIV and their parents, fight for your rights! Let's prove that people living with HIV are not dangerous to society. The time has come for us to unite and challenge the unfounded stereotypes about HIV/AIDS."

¹⁶ Aigul's name has been changed to protect her identity.

EUROPE

Regional Office		
European Union and member states of the European Union		
2009		
Brussels, Belgium		
8		

XB income	US\$654,200	
XB requirements 2020	US\$2,668,000	
XB expenditure	US\$503,449	
Personnel	Non-personnel	PSC ⁴
41%	47%	12%
\$206,846	\$238,684	\$57,919
RB expenditure	US\$1,009,799	
Personnel		Non-personne
85%		15%
\$854,342		\$155,456

Key OMP pillars in 2020











PILLAR RESULTS:



Accountability (A)

A2 - EU institutions and member states respond more effectively to threats to democracy and the rule of law in the EU.



OHCHR contributed to the expansion of the EU toolkit to tackle rule of law challenges inside the EU. The toolkit now includes: the annual rule of law monitoring report by the European Commission, which combines a regional-level report and 27 country-specific chapters; the rule of law peer review dialogue in

the EU Council; and the rule of law budget conditionality.

Throughout 2020, UN Human Rights engaged extensively with EU institutions, including the Commission, the European Parliament, the Presidencies of the EU Council and various other stakeholders, to promote the application of a human rights-based approach to the new EU rule of law mechanisms. In May, the Office issued a publication entitled The case for a human rights approach to the rule of law in the European Union, which articulates how international human rights law can provide direction for the scope, content and methodology of the Commission's annual report. The Office's clear position on this topic enabled it to continue its advocacy on making linkages between human rights, democracy and the rule of law and the importance of defending civil society space. Despite ongoing differences regarding the scope of the EU rule of law mechanism, the first annual report of the Commission interpreted the rule of law to include media pluralism and institutional checks and balances, such as NHRIs and participatory processes. The preparation of the report involved extensive consultations and the European Council held its first peer review dialogues in November. In December, an agreement was reached on rule of law budget conditionality, linking EU disbursements to member states to their respect for the rule of law.



Non-discrimination

ND1 - The EU expands and implements its policies for equality and protection against discrimination to better reflect international human rights law, especially in relation to Roma, persons with disabilities, older persons, LGBTI persons and women.





OHCHR contributed to strengthening the EU policy framework for equality and protection against discrimination, with an enhanced focus on implementation.

UN Human Rights actively engaged in advocacy in the EU on a range of equality policy issues and ensured the regular dissemination of materials from the UN human rights system during the COVID-19 crisis. The Office also contributed to the consultation process for the European Commission's new Roma Strategic

Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation for 2020-2030. To this end, the Office engaged with Roma organizations and EU institutions, emphasizing the key principles of an HRBA and the importance of a monitoring framework that is more conducive to accountability at the regional and national levels. In addition to the social measures contained in the previous EU framework, the new EU framework includes a focus on equality, participation and addressing anti-gypsyism. It makes linkages with the SDGs and incorporates a strengthened monitoring framework based on OHCHR-inspired indicators.

In 2020, the Office continued to combat racism and discrimination against people of African descent in the EU. In addition to participating in the multi-stakeholder EU High-Level Group on combating racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance for the last three years, the Regional Office promoted the International Decade for People of African Descent and supported advocacy on its key pillars. In cooperation with the European Network of People of African Descent (ENPAD), the Office organized four webinar training sessions on "Fulfilling the human rights of girls and women of African descent in the EU." The programme brought together 64 young activists, experienced human rights advocates and community organizers from 13 EU countries. In September, the European Commission adopted the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025. The Plan includes actions to mainstream equality across EU laws, policies and institutions and to address systemic racism. Calling on all EU member states to adopt national action plans against racism (NAPAR) by 2022, it also incorporates guiding principles to assist member states in doing so, including by drawing on OHCHR practical guidance on NAPARs. Following the adoption of Human Rights Council resolution 43/1 on systemic racism in law enforcement against Africans and people of African descent, OHCHR provided support to the mandated work, including through research and analysis and by laying the foundation for four regional consultations that took place in early 2021. On 2 December, the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery was commemorated at the European level for the first time. To mark the occasion of the Inaugural Commemoration of the European Day for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, the European Parliament organized a virtual event entitled "Recognizing the past, repairing the present, building the future." The Regional Representative moderated afternoon discussions and the High Commissioner for Human Rights delivered the keynote address.

With regard to LGBTI equality, OHCHR supported exchanges of information and strengthened its strategic partnership with the LGBTI regional network, ILGA Europe, and its collaboration with the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. It also contributed to meetings of the European Governmental LGBTI Focal Points Network with advocacy in relation to international human rights standards in anticipation of the European Commission's adoption, in November, of its first LBGTI Equality Strategy.

The Regional Office engaged with the European Commission on other equality policy initiatives, namely, its next 10-year Disability Strategy and its Green Paper on Ageing, both of which will be issued in 2021. Regarding the Disability Strategy, the Office worked closely with the OHCHR Senior Disability Adviser at headquarters and prepared a letter from the High Commissioner to the EU Commissioner for Equality. It also submitted formal inputs to the EU online consultation. In relation to the Green Paper on Ageing, OHCHR advocated for the integration of a human rights perspective, building on its role in monitoring the impacts of the pandemic on older persons in care homes in Belgium and its ongoing collaboration with AGE Platform Europe. In October, OHCHR, AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum co-organized a policy webinar on lessons learned from the pandemic about the human rights of older persons with disabilities in the EU. In December, the Office submitted a written contribution to the online consultation on the Green Paper road map, highlighting the importance of policy coherence between the Green Paper on Ageing, the Disability Strategy and the EU Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan.

In Belgium, UN Human Rights maintained contact with various partners and counterparts in relation to the draft National Action Plan against Racism and the work of the Special Parliamentary Commission on Belgium's colonial past. It also contributed to raising awareness and capacity-building initiatives, notably in relation to the International Decade for People of African Descent and recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms regarding Belgium.

ND6 - The EU and its member states respect the right to information and procedural safeguards in migration processes and work towards ending the detention of children in migration.





OHCHR supported the capacity of the Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights to advise Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, on human rights-compliant policies.

UN Human Rights joined Frontex's Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights, in January, thereby carving out a space to help strengthen the Forum's capacity to advise on human rights-compliant policies that enhance the implementation of UPR recommendations. This responds to the UN Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights to support member states and other stakeholders in making better use of UPR outcomes. It also allows for daily engagement and building the capacity of Frontex to uphold human rights in the context of European border governance.

Throughout the year, the Regional Office drew attention to applicable international standards for the protection of the human rights of migrants. In cooperation with partners, the Regional Office continued to encourage the increased and accelerated relocation of migrant unaccompanied minors from camps and facilities in EU border countries to other EU member states. This necessitated mutually supportive advocacy and enhanced collaboration with the Council of Europe Special Representative on Migration and Refugees and the migration team of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions.

The new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, which was tabled by the Commission, in September, contains several provisions that are relevant to human rights and proposes the establishment of an independent human rights monitoring mechanism at EU borders. In light of the escalating pushbacks at the EU borders, OHCHR consistently advocated for the creation of such a mechanism and it will continue to prioritize this objective during negotiations of the EU Pact with the European Council and the European Parliament.



Participation (P)

P5 - National, regional and international actors respond more effectively to threats to civic space.



OHCHR's advocacy efforts contributed to more effective actions from EU regional institutions in response to threats to civic space. The European Democracy Action Plan, the EU Strategy for the Effective Implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the EU Digital Strategy, all adopted in 2020, recognize the need to protect civic space in Europe, both offline and online. The EU's seven-year budget 2021-2027 includes a €1.6 billion programme entitled "Justice, Rights and Values," which allocates funds to support European CSOs working on democracy and human rights within the EU.

UN Human Rights raised awareness on the importance of protecting civic space in the EU through monitoring and advocacy across substantive topics. It also mainstreamed empowerment and participation into its advocacy and policy advice to the EU, including through engagement

with the EU rule of law mechanisms and in relation to the EU Disability Strategy, the EU Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan and the European Green Deal agenda. The Office continued to monitor various developments, for instance in Hungary and Poland, as well as the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on civic space. Further, it shared information with the international human rights mechanisms and engaged with regional actors. As a result, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency included a question about online attacks in its survey on civic space in Europe. In addition, its report on civic space includes findings about online harassment of HRDs (experienced by three quarters of the respondents). The EU Commission's 2020 Rule of Law Report, issued in September, mentions the importance of "an enabling ecosystem," including a free and active civil society.

The Office reached out to its civil society partners, NHRIs and equality bodies and their regional networks, shared information and expertise on the protection of civic space and HRDs, relayed key concerns and advocacy messages and called for submissions from the international human rights mechanisms. In December, the Office lent its voice to two major EU civil society events, namely, a policy debate on European venues to protect the right to peaceful assembly in the context of the rule of law framework and the launch of the Civic Space Watch report 2020: Stories from the lockdown, which took place during the Civic Pride Awards.

OHCHR also contributed to the public consultations on the EU's Digital Services Act with a letter from the High Commissioner, highlighting key human rights messages and recommendations. In November, the Office collaborated with the Europe Office of the Centre

for Democracy and Technology (CTD) to organize an online high-level panel discussion on "Protecting democracy in the digital age," which brought together speakers and participants from EU institutions, industries, the UN system and civil society.



D7 – EU institutions make further progress in integrating human rights and a human rights-based approach, into EU external development programming.



OHCHR continued to promote the application of an HRBA to the work of the EU institutions involved in external action and development cooperation and the UNBT.

UN Human Rights continued to collaborate with the Human Rights Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) through dialogues and the organization of several joint events. This included a policy dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and a webinar on "Building back better: How to place human rights at the heart of the COVID-19 response in the global South?" The webinar featured the participation of the EU Special Representative for human rights, the Head of the OHCHR Surge Initiative and the representative of the OHCHR Country Office in Guinea. In December, the 2020 edition of the DEVCO-led EU-NGO Human Rights Forum entitled "The impact of new technologies on human rights" included the High Commissioner, the UN Special

Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and the former UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

In 2020, the Regional Office and other members of the UN Brussels Team (UNBT) submitted inputs to the EU's third Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action (2021-2025) (GAP III). The joint submission was presented by the European Commission and the EU High Representative/Vice-President, in November, and endorsed by the German EU Presidency and 24 EU member states in December. It was well received by the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS). In the UNBT's joint submissions to the EU Green Deal consultations, the Office consistently stressed the importance of protecting human rights in all EU external action under the Green Deal, including trade and development assistance.

D7 - The EU and UNBT increasingly integrate a human rights-based approach into their work on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2 5 8 10 15 16 17

OHCHR contributed to an increased understanding of the linkages between human rights and the People, Planet and Prosperity Pillars of the 2030 Agenda, both within the EU and in relation to EU external action.

With respect to social rights in the EU, UN Human Rights sent a formal written submission to the EU consultation process regarding the forthcoming EU Action Plan on the implementation of the EU Pillar of Social Rights. Specifically, the Office advocated for the process to be anchored in international human rights standards and the SDG framework and for a better reflection of the findings and recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms in the European Semester of the European Union. Together with ILO, OHCHR co-organized a webinar on "Strengthening social protection in the EU," in the wake of COVID-19, which brought together over 120 participants, including high-level panelists from the Cabinet of the EU Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights and social partners. The Office also helped to facilitate the virtual visits of the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights to EU institutions, which began in November, as the EU and its member states were negotiating COVID-19 recovery plans.

OHCHR undertook an active role in the new UNBT Task Force on the EU's Green Deal in order to more fully engage with EU institutions. In addition to seniorlevel meetings, the Task Force contributed three submissions to the EU consultations on the then-draft 2030 Climate Targets, the draft Climate Adaptation Strategy and the Zero Pollution Action Plan, emphasizing the importance of integrating human rights guidance issued by the international human rights mechanisms. The Office also contributed to the report of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) (a subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs) on the impact of climate change and the protection of environmental HRDs.



PS3 - EU external action is increasingly underpinned by international human rights norms and standards.



OHCHR contributed to a renewed commitment to international human rights norms in EU external action, as expressed in the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2020-2024) and the EU's third Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action (2021-2025).

In 2020, UN Human Rights increased its engagement with EU institutions in Brussels that are focused on EU external action, notably in peace and security, and provided greater support to the Office's engagement at headquarters and in field presences. The Office enhanced its working relationship with the EU Council Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM), DROI and EEAS and strengthened its relationship with the EU Special Representative for human rights and his Office. UN Human Rights supported several briefings and/or meetings between COHOM and EEAS with UN Human Rights staff members and UN special procedures mandate holders, including the Chief of OHCHR's Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division, the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea and the Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Somalia. In November, the Office collaborated with the European Commission and EEAS to co-organize an online event on human rights in multilateral action, with a panel composed of the Chief of OHCHR's Human Rights

Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division, the OHCHR Regional Representative for East Africa and to the African Union and the Head of the Human Rights Unit of the EU Delegation in Geneva.

OHCHR chaired the UNBT Task Force on the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy. Following the adoption of the Plan, in November, the Office organized two briefings with EEAS for members of the UNBT: the first on the Action Plan and the second on the new EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime that the EU adopted in December. The Regional Office also participated in the UNBT Task Force on the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and will strengthen its collaboration with the OHCHR Regional Office in Addis Ababa for triangular engagement with the EU and the African Union on human rights priorities.

REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Population size¹ 2.08 million	Surface area ¹ 26,000 km ²	Human Development Index ² NHRI (if applicable) ³ 0.774 (rank: 82/189 in 2019) "B" Status (2011)	
Type of engagen	nent	Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		2007	
Field office(s)		Skopje	
UN partnership framework		United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020	
Staff as of 31 December 2020		1	

Key OMP pillars in 2020







¹²³ Please refer to Data sources and notes on p. 229

PILLAR RESULTS:



Non-discrimination (ND)

ND1 - National mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of CRPD are effective, adequately resourced and comply with international standards.



OHCHR contributed to enhancing the functioning of oversight, accountability and protection mechanisms that conform with CRPD standards.

UN Human Rights carried out capacity-building activities with the Office of the Ombudsperson following its 2018 designation as the entity responsible for developing and operationalizing a national monitoring framework for CRPD in cooperation OPDs. At the beginning of 2020, the monitoring framework was incomplete and no initiatives had been undertaken to facilitate the meaningful participation of OPDs in the monitoring process. The HRA intensified its engagement and advocacy efforts with all national partners to support the

participation of OPDs and CSOs in the monitoring functions. To gauge interest, the Office of the Ombudsperson conducted a nationwide survey and received support from the Office to develop a questionnaire and ensure broad participation. Approximately 20 OPDs and CSOs answered the survey. They expressed an interest in joining the monitoring framework and contributed to gathering information on key issues of concern for persons with disabilities. An event will be organized in April 2021 to launch the national monitoring framework.

OHCHR continued supporting the National Coordination Body for the implementation of CRPD, providing guidance to its Secretariat on improving coordination, consultations and reporting on the operational plan to implement CRPD recommendations. OHCHR also contributed to the UNCT's efforts to increasingly include disability in its processes and programmes. It organized the dialogue and reporting process around

the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) accountability scorecard for disability inclusion. The Office organized two broad consultations to inform the UNCT's application to the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UNPRPD MPTF) and prepared a UNCT-wide Disability Inclusion Action Plan for 2020-2021.

ND3 - National laws on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) protect women from SGBV and comply with international human rights standards.



OHCHR contributed to improving the level of compliance with international human rights standards of laws and policies on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and protection against gender-based violence (GBV).

UN Human Rights led the UNCT's collective efforts to implement the Secretary-General's strategy to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) at the country level. The HRA mapped corporate PSEA policies of various entities and drafted a comprehensive PSEA Action Plan that was endorsed by the UNCT in July. The Action Plan provides a coherent approach to promoting an organizational culture of speaking up and reporting any sexual misconduct and establishing structures to ensure that victims are fully assisted and protected.

OHCHR followed up on the work initiated in 2019 to support the Working Group established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to draft the Law on Prevention and Protection against Gender-Based Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. More specifically,

OHCHR provided ongoing expert advice to ensure its compliance with international human rights standards and the integration of all aspects related to prevention, protection and the reintegration of victims. The Office continued to chair the UNCT Human Rights and Gender Theme Group with UN Women, thereby contributing to building awareness around legislation and policy frameworks on gender equality and gender-based violence.

the most recent recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms in relation to the Republic of North Macedonia and linked them to UNSDCF-specific outcomes. The matrix will be part of the Cooperation Framework and will continue to guide the UNCT towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Another positive result was the assessment of the country's SERP as a good example of human rights inclusion.

the 2019 State Party report, with specific information on the situation of vulnerable children and harmful practices. The Committee will consider the report in February 2021. In parallel to these efforts, the Office continued to offer support to the NMRF, including in relation to the submission of the State Party report under the Convention against Torture.



D8 – The State collects reliable data systematically and in a timely manner on the situation of women and groups at risk of discrimination.



16 17

OHCHR contributed to improving the compliance with international human rights standards of selected UNCTs, CSOs and government programmes and processes.

UN Human Rights continued to build the capacities of the UNCT, government partners and CSOs on a human rights-based approach to data and the benefits of its application. Technical advice was provided on human rights indicators to enhance UNCT programming and UNCT activities in support of the national SDG process. This included the process leading to the Republic of North Macedonia's first VNR, which took place virtually at the High-level Political Forum in July.

In particular, the HRA supported the mainstreaming of human rights into the development of the CCA, the new UNSDCF 2021-2025 and the SERP. The Office updated an internal matrix with

Mechanisms (M)

M2 - Civil society engages systematically with the international human rights mechanisms.



OHCHR supported the engagement of CSOs with the VNR process and reporting under CRC through expert advice, advocacy and capacity-building efforts.

UN Human Rights continued working with CSOs to strengthen their capacity to systematically engage in the reporting and follow-up process on recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms in a coordinated way through formal and informal coalitions. The Office hosted quarterly meetings with human rights CSOs to inform them about the activities of the international human rights mechanisms. OHCHR also supported a network of CSOs, which advocates for the sexual and reproductive rights of marginalized groups, and helped them to submit a 'spotlight report' that independently assesses progress in this area as a complement to the country's first VNR report. In addition, the Office facilitated the engagement of the NHRI and CSOs with the Committee on the Rights of the Child, resulting in the submission of an alternative report to

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Population size ¹ 4.03 million	Surface area ¹ 34,000 km ²	Human Development Index² 0.750 (rank: 90/189 in 2019)	NHRI (if applicable) ³ "A" Status (2018)
Type of engagement		Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		2008	
Field office(s)		Chisinau	
UN partnership framework		United Nations Partnership Framework 2018-2022	
Staff as of 31 December 2020		8	

XB requirements 2020

US\$859,000

Key OMP pillars in 2020









123 Please refer to Data sources and notes on p. 229

PILLAR RESULTS:



Participation (P)

P6 - Vulnerable rights-holders, notably persons with disabilities, participate more frequently and more fully in forming public policy and drafting laws, including by taking public office.



OHCHR supported the meaningful participation of rights-holders, especially from vulnerable groups, in public processes linked to the COVID-19 response.

UN Human Rights supported the creation of an NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights, which included 56 national and local NGOs, including from the Transnistria region. The HRA facilitated meetings of the 12 Task Force thematic groups. This provided members with opportunities to exchange good practices, discuss human rights concerns and solutions. A needs assessment conducted among Task Force members as well as results of their discussions contributed to policy and programme design and implementation and was conducive to a better understanding of the needs of vulnerable groups during the pandemic. In addition, its analytical work on progress in implementing recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms shed light on interlinkages between the implementation of recommendations and human rights-based responses to COVID-19. The needs assessment was also used to guide OHCHR in the development of nine guidance notes (including four in easy-toread format and two in Braille) on human rights in the context of the pandemic. Topics covered the rights to health, work and social protection, the rights of older persons and persons with disabilities and human rights-compliant restrictive measures and communications. The guidance notes, along with nine localized human rights indicators that were developed with

seed funding, became an integral part of the SERP, were used to advocate for human rights-based responses with State authorities and will support the drafting of a human rights impact assessment of COVID-19 in 2021.

The Office continued building the capacities of representatives of vulnerable groups in the Transnistrian region with a particular focus on advocacy for the inclusion of human rights in public agendas. In collaboration with UNDP, three meetings were held with 100 persons (67 women, 33 men) to enhance their knowledge and gather views on possible response measures on various issues, such as the right to health and the rights of persons with disabilities during the pandemic.

In addition, UN Human Rights conducted media campaigns on COVID-19associated stigma, in coordination with WHO and the European Union, through the production of four videos, four podcasts and 40 visuals. It mounted a campaign on vulnerable groups in the Transnistria region through eight media products. The Office led a campaign entitled "Recover better together: Human rights for all," with support from the RCO and six UN entities. The campaign featured members of vulnerable groups who shared their reflections on ways to improve the human rightsbased response to the pandemic and was promoted through 14 videos, six online events, five media op-eds and 15 posts on social media. This culminated with the online End-Of-Year Human Rights Talk "Moldova and COVID 19: Ensuring a human rights-based approach to response and recovery measures." During the highlevel event, the Ministers of Education and Health, NHRIs, CSOs and UN partners discussed their COVID-19 responses from a human rights perspective.

Non-discrimination (ND)

ND1 – Laws, policies and practices more effectively prevent and prosecute discrimination against women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other minorities.



OHCHR continued its advocacy efforts to support the increased compliance of legislation and policy with international human rights standards.

Following extensive advocacy undertaken by UN Human Rights, the Transnistria de facto authorities approved the creation of an intersectoral working group that is mandated to draft a regional human rights framework. OHCHR developed a road map for this process, which the de facto authorities supported, based on an approach that includes the participation of CSOs. The HRA will further strengthen the capacities of members of the working group in 2021 through training initiatives.

In parallel, OHCHR trained 28 HRDs (20 women, eight men) and members of CSOs in the Transnistria region to increase their capacity to advocate for the rights of underrepresented groups and act as human rights trainers. The Office conducted an assessment of the human rights situation of Roma in the region, which served as a basis for launching a dialogue between Roma CSOs and de facto authorities on access to education, work and social protection. The assessment was also used to develop a road map and action plan for establishing the first institution of Roma community mediators.

UN Human Rights continued to support the Group for Parents of Children with Disabilities. The Group conducted an online campaign to mark the tenth anniversary of the ratification of CRPD, which

led State authorities to undertake a commitment during a high-level event to ratify the OP-CRPD in 2021. In addition, the HRA helped to develop a set of standards for legal aid entitled Quality Standards for Legal Aid for Persons with Disabilities and ensured their compliance with international human rights law.

The Office continued to train media professionals and promote a more inclusive and non-discriminatory national media narrative, focusing on human rights in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, 30 media and communications staff from State institutions increased their knowledge about pro-diversity and pro-equality approaches to media work.

UN Human Rights worked successfully towards mainstreaming human rights into the work of UNCT members and key documents. It developed a guidance document on the application of a human rights-based approach to SEIAs, which is being used by various UN entities and became an integral part of the SERP. UN Human Rights also ensured that human rights were included in the theory of change for disability inclusion, the CCA and the SERP, the latter of which was considered to be a good example of human rights mainstreaming by the UNSDG Task Team on Leaving No One Behind, Human Rights and the Normative Agenda. Moreover, OHCHR contributed to the increased engagement of the UNCT and CSOs with the international human rights mechanisms, resulting in UNCT joint submissions to CAT and CEDAW, the submission of alternative reports to CEDAW by CSOs and consultations with CSOs and other relevant stakeholders during the drafting process of the State Party report to CERD.



Mechanisms (M)

M1 - A national mechanism implements and reports on outstanding international human rights commitments in an integrated and participatory manner.



OHCHR continued supporting the two key national human rights mechanisms established in 2018 by facilitating the mid-term evaluation of the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) and building capacities for enhanced engagement with the international human rights mechanisms.

Following the 2018 approval of the NHRAP and the establishment of the Permanent Human Rights Secretariat as the mechanism for coordinating implementation, UN Human Rights developed a road map on the interlinkages between the NHRAP, nationalized SDG targets and the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms as well as a methodology to collect data and assess achieved results under the NHRAP. This contributed to the successful mid-term evaluation of the NHRAP and to mainstreaming human rights into the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process.

OHCHR continued building the capacities of the members of the National Human Rights Council (the NMRF) and its focal points, including on the NRTD. The Office's advocacy efforts led to the first meeting of the NMRF, in September, with the participation of State institutions, NHRIs and CSOs representing vulnerable groups, during which participants were consulted on the mid-term review of the NHRAP. Furthermore, OHCHR supported the development of standing operating procedures (SOPs) for the use of the NRTD.



Accountability (A)

A1 - Law enforcement institutions have substantially improved systems and procedures that protect the human rights of women, persons with disabilities, Roma and other minorities and victims of torture and ill-treatment.





OHCHR contributed to improving systems and procedures to protect the human rights of persons with disabilities and others by providing expert advice to develop human rights-based curricula.

Building on the work carried out in previous years to train staff from residential institutions for persons with disabilities on the prevention of torture and ill-treatment, UN Human Rights supported the development of a new educational curriculum and the design of training materials to enhance the capacities of staff from the National Social Assistance Agency (NASA), particularly those who provide assistance to persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in residential institutions and through community services. The new curriculum adopts a human rights-based approach to disability, focuses on the elimination of stigma and discrimination and seeks to enhance support for independent living and community life. It will be rolled out in 2021 through training of trainers activities.

Finally, OHCHR pursued its work with the Carabinieri, a law enforcement agency, to support the development of an extensive human rights curriculum, including a chapter on the use of force and the prevention of torture and ill-treatment. The Office will initiate a training of trainers programme in 2021.

Defending the rights of Roma and older persons in the Transnistria region

In 2020, Dmitry Chechel and Margarita Kirichenco applied for a 10-month human rights training of trainers programme that was organized in the Transnistria Region by UN Human Rights in Moldova. Together with 26 other HRDs and CSO representatives, they were selected to enhance their knowledge, from October, about international human rights standards and mechanisms, a human rights-based approach, monitoring, reporting and advocacy work. Both Dmitry and Margarita were inspired to participate in the training programme after receiving assistance during the year.

Dmitry has a severe disability and lives in the Transnistria region. During the pandemic, the already limited access to specialized health care in the region became more challenging for persons with disabilities, especially individuals like Dmitry who require ongoing medical care and access to medicine and rehabilitation services.

Margarita is an ethnic Roma woman. She lives in Tiraspol, in the Transnistria region, with her two children and her dependent grandmother. She works in a pharmacy and is the family's sole provider. COVID-19 created various challenges as her children had to attend online education without adequate space or equipment.

In response to the pandemic, UN Human Rights established an NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights and conducted a needs assessment, in April, of 56 CSOs working to assist members of vulnerable groups. In June, UN Women took steps to identify beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance based on the needs assessment conducted by OHCHR. Margarita and Dmitry were among 1,200 persons who received a food and hygiene package. This assistance enabled Dmitry to save money that he used to purchase medicine and medical services. In July, Dmitry realized that there were other persons more vulnerable than him and decided to increase his previous engagement with the CSO, We are Volunteers. He became the volunteer coordinator and provided assistance and counselling to older persons. The support Margarita received encouraged her to become a volunteer as well. She assisted the CSO, Shatior over Dniester, to deliver 150 food and hygiene packages to Roma persons living in different areas of the Transnistria region.

By the end of 2020, Dmitry recognized that he had gained considerable knowledge about human rights and the responsibilities of duty-bearers. He plans to apply this knowledge to promote the rights to health, work and a decent standard of living by becoming a professional HRD and trainer. He also began working with Glin, a CSO, which advocates for the rights of patients. Margarita noted that she acquired an increased capacity to assist other Roma persons to address the inequalities they face and enjoy the rights to health, education and work without discrimination. In addition to coordinating the education and health component of the work of Shatior over Dniester, she plans to become a Roma community mediator in the future.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Population size¹ 145.93 million		Human Development Index ² NHRI (if applicable) ³ 0.824 (rank: 52/189 in 2019) "A" Status (2014)
Type of engagem	nent	Human rights staff (Other type of field presence)
Year established		2008
Field office(s)		Moscow
UN partnership f	ramework	-
Staff as of 31 Dec	cember 2020	5

XB requirements 2020 US\$1,014,000

Key OMP pillars in 2020









123 Please refer to Data sources and notes on p. 229

PILLAR RESULTS:



Participation (P)

P6 - Human rights higher education programmes expanded and institutionalized in the Russian Federation and selected Commonwealth of Independent States countries.





OHCHR contributed to improving the narrative on human rights by raising awareness about and integrating human rights into university curricula across the Russian Federation.

UN Human Rights continued to support the first Master's programme in the field of human rights in the Russian Federation, namely, the Human Rights Master's Programme Consortium, through the development of the curricula and the elaboration of teaching materials. The Office provided expert advice to the authors of three new and four updated textbooks, including on business and human rights, the environment and climate change. It further contributed to the organization of professional development courses on human rights and the SDGs for 18 teaching staff (ten women, eight men) from eight Master's Programme Consortium universities, with participation from high-profile lecturers.

In addition, the Office facilitated the access of students and teachers to key reference materials, including through five resource centres in Consortium universities. The pool of OHCHR communication resources on the impacts of and responses to COVID-19 was integrated into an online platform used by Russian universities. The Office also facilitated access to training opportunities, including seven webinars and events that focused on the human rights of ethnic minorities, issues linked to new technologies and five lectures that were organized by the Office with the Federal Ombudsperson's Office.

Throughout the year, the Consortium pursued discussions regarding its objective to expand the Programme to the southern regions of Russia. The decision to expand the Programme has been supported in principle and will be formalized after COVID-19-related restrictions on in-person meetings are eased.



D2 – Business actors effectively implement the UNGPs.



OHCHR contributed to raising awareness and enhancing capacities on the UNGPs, including by strengthening its partnership with three major representatives of the business sector.

UN Human Rights continued to promote the implementation of the UNGPs and underline the risks of business-related human rights abuses, which increased in the context of COVID-19, particularly with regard to decent work and social protection. The Office strengthened its partnership with two major representatives of business, namely, the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RUIE) and the UN Global Compact National Network. Both of these entities have a keen interest and role to play in the improvement of corporate respect for human rights.

To mark UN75 and Human Rights Day, OHCHR organized a videoconference with the Global Compact National Network and the RUIE on the topic "Respect for human rights as a corporate

responsibility indicator." One of the speakers was a member of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises. The 122 participants, representing businesses, State institutions, civil society and international organizations, enhanced their knowledge about the HRDDP. More specifically, they noted that country-specific challenges require better regulation, effective enforcement of existing rules and contextual, bottom-up and inclusive initiatives. In 2021, OHCHR will support the Global Compact National Network to carry out an institutional analysis of business and human rights in the Russian Federation, focusing on coherence and the degree of compliance of national policy/legislation with the UNGPs.



Mechanisms (M)

M2 - Awareness of and knowledge about the use of the international human rights mechanisms increased among NHRIs and government representatives.



OHCHR contributed to enhancing awareness and the use of international human rights mechanisms, including through capacity-building and outreach activities.

UN Human Rights continued to build capacities to enhance engagement with the international human rights mechanisms. In cooperation with the Federal Ombudsperson's Office and the Centre for Human Rights Education, OHCHR organized an in-person and online workshop on international human rights mechanisms, which was attended by human rights commissioners from all 30 regions of Russia. A keynote speech on discrimination, the role of the human

rights treaty bodies and the practices of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was delivered by Professor Alexev Avtonomov, Vice-Rector of the Institute of International Law and Economy and former Chair of the Committee. Participants gained knowledge on a variety of issues, including the critical role of NHRIs in strengthening the national human rights protection system.

OHCHR also produced and disseminated information among the general public and essential partners to enhance awareness of and knowledge about the international human rights mechanisms and their recommendations. The OHCHR field presence maintained the Russian version of OHCHR's main website, with a focus on COVID-19 issues and the translation into Russian of OHCHR materials. including a general guidance note, eight thematic notes, 20 statements and press releases issued by the High Commissioner and 35 special procedures media products. During the year, approximately 400 new web pages were created that posted 151 web stories and 126 news updates, with more than 500,000 views. By the end of the year, the Office had produced a compilation of Russian language materials from OHCHR and the UN about COVID-19 and human rights, including guidance and policy briefs related to vulnerable groups. It also updated the Russian language compilation of UN documentation on women's rights and gender issues, which was distributed to national partners.



Non-discrimination (ND)

ND1 - NHRIs and CSOs significantly strengthen their anti-discrimination work, with a particular focus on domestic violence, gender equality, disability and the rights of indigenous peoples, in compliance with international human rights standards.

5 10 16

OHCHR contributed to increasing awareness on the compliance of legislation/ policy with international human rights standards in relation to the rights of women, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.

Throughout the year, UN Human Rights raised awareness about the human rights situation of members of vulnerable groups. It used social media to disseminate information and reached out to strategic partners to share knowledge. including thematic guidance notes, in Russian, on the impacts of COVID-19. The Office created and published five stories and contributed to 12 campaigns on racial discrimination, gender, migration, journalists, violence against women, youth, indigenous peoples, UN75 and building back better in the context of the pandemic. OHCHR also participated in an expert seminar on the rights of indigenous children in the Arctic context, organized by the Association of Ethno-Cultural Centres and Organizations for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage (Republic of Karelia).

To celebrate International Women's Day and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Office joined forces with essential partners and organized round-tables to discuss challenges and solutions on selected topics. Participants included representatives from the UN, the Council of Europe, CSOs, HRDs and academia, State Duma deputies and staff from the Federal Ombudsperson's Office, journalists and medical doctors. On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Moscow city Ombudsperson, the Forum of Moscow Women and OHCHR organized an event on "The rights of women in a modern megapolis," highlighting gender equality at work and in society, social protection, family life and violence against women. Furthermore, an expanded United Nations Gender Theme Group meeting was devoted to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. Participants in both events stressed the need to address violence against women in the context of COVID-19. On the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, OHCHR and UNIC dedicated a round-table on inclusive approaches to COVID-19 responses. Participants noted the importance of long-term actions aimed at including persons with disabilities in social and economic policies.

SERBIA

Population size¹ 8.74 million	Surface area ¹ 88,000 km ²	Human Development Index ² NHRI (if applicable) ³ 0.806 (rank: 64/189 in 2019) "A" Status (2015)	
Type of engagement		Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		1996	
Field office(s)		Belgrade	
UN partnership framework		United Nations Development Partnership Framework 2016-2020	
Staff as of 31 December 2020		4	

XB requirements 2020 US\$765,000

Key OMP pillars in 2020









123 Please refer to Data sources and notes on p. 229

PILLAR RESULTS:



Non-discrimination (ND)

ND1 - The Government adopts or reforms five policies, laws or practices that prevent or sanction discrimination in a manner that ensures they comply with human rights standards. In doing so, it pays particular attention to the rights of women, persons with disabilities, LGBTI persons, Roma, migrants and refugees.





OHCHR contributed to improving the level of compliance of policies and legislation with international human rights standards by providing expert legal advice to key partners.

Throughout the year, UN Human Rights delivered technical guidance to a variety of partners, including public authorities, the NHRI, CSOs, criminal sanctions services and the RCO/UNCT on the inclusion of human rights in COVID-19 responses. The HRA also maintained strong partnerships with the Prime Minister's Team for Social Inclusion and the newly appointed Ministry for Human Rights. Civil society partners consistently relayed UN guidance, resulting in the improved compliance of measures adopted by the Government with international human rights standards. Furthermore, an interactive and real-time mapping of needs and risks in substandard Roma settlements informed the delivery of immediate emergency support to inhabitants in the context of COVID-19.

The new National Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of Persons with Disabilities was adopted after a policy gap of five years. OHCHR facilitated the consultative process, which led to the development of a text that is largely compliant with CRPD standards, and supported public discussions around the

Strategy's Action Plan. In addition, the Office advocated for the inclusion in the Strategy and Action Plan of a proposal on the creation of an independent monitoring mechanism for the implementation of CRPD. To this end, it provided expert guidance to the NHRI in taking the first steps towards the formal establishment of such a national mechanism, in line with article 33 of CRPD. This was further discussed on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, jointly organized by the NHRI and OHCHR. Moreover, a final draft of the new Anti-Discrimination Strategy was produced in June.

Partnerships to advance advocacy efforts around youth rights were strengthened and resulted in the preparation of the Report on Youth Rights in Serbia. The report was written by young people, through a participatory process, and it was published in March 2021. OHCHR also supported an eight-month online campaign on COVID-19 and youth, resulting in more than 9,000,000 hits on social media from March to December. The campaign attempted to better understand the effects of the pandemic on youth and communicated risks in youth-friendly language, including through testimonies that were presented by young people of different backgrounds.



Participation (P)

P6 - Organizations of persons with disabilities, organizations of national minorities and other human rights CSOs are more visible, are consistently included in relevant policy and decision-making and engage more frequently with UN mechanisms and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



OHCHR enhanced the level of meaningful participation of rights-holders, especially youth, in selected public processes.

UN Human Rights provided continuous support to the Platform of Organizations for Cooperation with UN Human Rights Mechanisms, which includes 20 leading diversified CSOs that work together on regular reporting, monitoring and follow-up. Together with the OSCE Mission to Serbia, the Office offered expert guidance on engagement with international human rights mechanisms, public authorities and other stakeholders. In 2020, the Platform was well represented in different discussion and decision-making forums that were convened by the NMRF.

The HRA also provided guidance to CSOs to ensure their increased participation in the processes for the nationalization and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This included co-hosting training sessions on human rights and the 2030 Agenda with the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) and co-organizing a global webinar on SDGs and LGBTI rights with the Rainbow Academy. As civic space continued to shrink, support from UN entities was of critical importance for the monitoring of human rights by CSOs, including in the context of COVID-19. In particular, support from UN Human Rights resulted in the preparation of over

40 thematic reports, statements or communications that were submitted by CSOs to the Government, the courts or the international human rights mechanisms. Advocacy efforts undertaken by CSOs helped to raise awareness on the impacts of emergency measures on human rights. Furthermore, the Office continued to support the empowerment of youth leaders as human rights advocates, resulting in their enhanced participation in reporting and monitoring activities as well as communication initiatives in the context of the pandemic.

The new Government's establishment of a designated Ministry for Human Rights opened avenues for vulnerable groups to have an impact on policies and support reform in a number of areas, such as equal access to rights for LGBTI persons and persons with disabilities. The Office and civil society partners enhanced the advocacy capacities of a group of self-advocates with intellectual disabilities about human rights and CRPD. As a result, the group organized the first public event on this issue and held meetings with the Minister for Human Rights and the Equality Commissioner.



Mechanisms (M)

M1 - The NMRF verifies that recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms are implemented. It uses human rights indicators.



OHCHR contributed to the enhanced functioning of the mechanisms for integrated reporting and/or the implementation of recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms.

The newly created Ministry for Human Rights and Social Dialogue took over the functions of the NMRF Secretariat. This institutional change, coupled with COVID-19, generated delays. Nevertheless, Serbia finalized its first UPR mid-term report, in December, with support from UN Human Rights. Representatives of all government sectors, the NHRI and the judiciary participated in the drafting process of the report. Civil society actors participated as observers. A joint UN mid-term report was prepared and a mid-term report was submitted by the Platform of Organizations for Cooperation with UN Human Rights Mechanisms. In addition, the Office provided technical assistance to expand the use of human rights indicators, in line with recommendations issued by the human rights treaty bodies. The NMRF produced a draft Action Plan for the implementation of UPR recommendations.



Accountability (A)

A1 – The judiciary more often and more comprehensively references international human rights law in domestic decisions.



OHCHR promoted the increased use of international human rights law and jurisprudence in court proceedings and decisions by providing technical assistance to the State Judicial Academy.

UN Human Rights continued supporting the State Judicial Academy in its efforts to increase the understanding of binding international human rights norms and their application in domestic proceedings. The Office redesigned and updated the online database, created in 2018, on the Judicial Academy's web portal to support the direct application of international human rights law in judicial proceedings. To this end, it improved cross-referencing between the norms of the international human rights treaties and their interpretation by their respective monitoring bodies, relevant case law of the European Court of Human Rights and domestic legislation and court rulings.

Finally, with support from the Judicial Academy and OHCHR, the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court of Cassation continued to develop case law markers to monitor references to and the application of international human rights treaty law. Progress was slower than foreseen due to COVID-19 and the related state of emergency.

SOUTH CAUCASUS

Type of engagement	Human Rights Adviser (based in Georgia); Human rights staff (based in UNCT Azerbaijan)	
Countries of engagement	Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia	
Year established	2007	
Field office(s)	Baku (Azerbaijan) and Tbilisi (Georgia)	
UN partnership framework	United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020 (Armenia); UN- Azerbaijan Partnership Framework 2016-2020; United Nations Partnership for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 (Georgia)	
Staff as of 31 December 2020	8	

XB requirements 2020

US\$1,110,000

Key OMP pillars in 2020









Participation (P)

P4 - In at least one country, persons with disabilities make increasing use of national protection systems.







OHCHR helped to increase the use of national protection systems in Azerbaijan that are compliant with international human rights standards, including by providing free legal advice, and supported the adoption of compliant legislation on persons with disabilities in Georgia.

One of the highlights of the year was the adoption, in Georgia, of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UN Human Rights increased its advocacy efforts at the beginning of the year and

provided assistance and guidance during the drafting process. The HRA conducted a preliminary study on the extent to which Georgian legislation protects the rights of persons with disabilities, assessed its compatibility with CRPD and developed recommendations for the Government and the Parliament. This contributed to the adoption of legislation, on 14 July, that is largely in line with international standards and increases protection for persons with disabilities. Following the adoption of the law, OHCHR advocated for the ratification of the OP-CRPD. It also met with the Human Rights Secretariat in the Prime Minister's Office to discuss the preparation of a draft regulation to establish a coordination mechanism, as envisaged by article 33 of CRPD, with a strong role for CSOs. The legal community increasingly used

protection opportunities created by the law. More specifically, OHCHR provided assistance to the Georgian Bar Association and the State Legal Aid Service, including through the design of a training curriculum for lawyers. In addition, the Office cooperated with a group of legal experts to assess if the Government's COVID-19 restrictions took into account the needs of persons with disabilities. It subsequently issued a set of recommendations for the Government in 2021. Finally, OHCHR supported the Ministry of Education and Science and three colleges to organize online courses on employment during the pandemic. A total of 20 persons with disabilities participated in the courses.

In Azerbaijan, UN Human Rights continued to provide free legal assistance to members of vulnerable groups, with support from the European Union. In order to offer this service and to assist people affected by COVID-19 and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Office cooperated with the Ombudsperson and the Bar Association to reinforce its work in Baku and deploy lawyers to other regions (Barda, Imishli, Gabala, Masalli and Sheki). As a result, 982 individuals (486 women, 496 men), including unemployed persons, persons with disabilities, older persons, pensioners and internally displaced persons (IDPs) received legal assistance during the year. The services demonstrated a clear linkage between political rights (access to justice) and protection of social and economic rights, with a focus on family law, social security, labour and property rights and the rights to health and education. Since 2018, a total of 1,777 persons have been assisted through these services, many of who are based outside of the capital. This assistance has encouraged the development of a pro bono culture among private legal professionals, supported the elaboration of a civil legal aid system in the country and contributed to prevention efforts.

OHCHR continued supporting the legal aid resource centre through capacity-building and outreach activities designed for CSOs, journalists, lawyers and representatives of the UN system and the diplomatic community. Topics included the right to freedom of expression during the parliamentary elections, women's rights and gender equality.



A1 - The National Human Rights Action Plan in Georgia continues to comply with international human rights standards and is periodically updated to reflect recommendations issued by the international and regional human rights mechanisms. The High School of Justice, the police academy and the Legal Affairs Committee in Parliament, as well as the Bar Association and its Training Centre in Georgia, deepen their knowledge of international human rights standards.

16

OHCHR contributed to the increased compliance of several key national institutions in Georgia with international human rights standards, including the Human Rights Secretariat and the Office of the State Inspector.

UN Human Rights continued to engage with the newly created Office of the State Inspector, which is mandated to conduct investigations of human rights violations allegedly committed by law enforcement officials. In recent years, the Office and CSOs strongly advocated for the establishment of this institution as a measure of prevention and to build public confidence in the Government. In 2019, OHCHR

supported the initial stages of its creation. As the load of cases under investigation increased in 2020, the Office provided capacity-building assistance and expert advice aimed at strengthening its independence, including through legislative amendments and ensuring the separation between investigative and prosecution functions. A total of 15 investigators (three women, 12 men) participated in training on topics such as the right to life, the obligations of State authorities, the effectiveness of investigations and the right to privacy in the context of secret surveillance and communication tapping. Furthermore, the HRA raised awareness within the international community about the work of the institution, supported its strategic planning and provided guidance on personal data protection.

OHCHR assisted the Human Rights Secretariat in the Prime Minister's Office with the elaboration of the National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan and the National Strategy for the Integration of National Minorities. In particular, it ensured their compliance with international human rights standards and the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. In June, the Office and the Human Rights Secretariat co-organized a high-level inter-agency Human Rights Council that was chaired by the Prime Minister. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the inclusion of human rights in the country's response to COVID-19 and for the NHRI and CSOs to identify human rights concerns that were observed during the pandemic. A first draft of the National Human Rights Strategy was written over the summer. In the Fall, the HRA organized an online meeting with the Human Rights Secretariat and key stakeholders to discuss comments and the finalization of the process.

In addition, UN Human Rights, IOM and UNHCR co-organized training sessions to build the capacities of 12 staff members of the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to investigate hate-motivated crimes. Pursuing its long-standing cooperation with the Georgian Bar Association, the Office delivered two online training sessions to 48 lawyers (28 women, 20 men) on human rights in the context of emergency measures and two in-person trainings on international human rights standards for 43 members of the Georgian Bar Association from Western Georgia.

A5 – The UN assistance efforts in the justice sector of the South Caucasus substantially integrate international norms and standards and the processes for discussing these issues are further institutionalized by the UN and the governments of the region.



OHCHR contributed to mainstreaming human rights standards into UN common country programmes and COVID-19 response measures in the region.

UN Human Rights facilitated the mainstreaming of human rights into CCAs and UNSCDFs in all three countries by organizing a series of workshops and conferences. In October, the Cooperation Framework was finalized and signed in Georgia. The HRA also supported the UNCT's efforts to assist the Government of Georgia in developing its response to COVID-19, including by providing expert advice and recommendations on legal aspects of emergency measures and their impacts on social and economic rights and the rights of ethnic and religious minorities.

In Azerbaijan, OHCHR increased the knowledge of national stakeholders about the impacts on human rights of COVID-19 and responses, particularly for vulnerable groups. The Office conducted 14 online briefings and translated and distributed nine targeted guidance notes and statements that were produced by OHCHR, the human rights treaty bodies and the special procedures. Specific training activities were also organized with the Ombudsperson's Office and its four regional centres on the role of NHRIs in integrating human rights into preparedness and response efforts. A total of 104 participants attended the training. OHCHR also contributed to UNDP and UNICEF initiatives to assess the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, including through the use of thematic human rights indicators and by ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the assessments.



ND7 - Officials, journalists, lawyers, university and high school students increasingly advocate for and work to create inclusive and diverse societies.



OHCHR contributed to increasing the level of engagement of judges, government officials and students in combating discrimination on the basis of religion and sexual orientation.

UN Human Rights continued its advocacy efforts in Georgia to combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The Office and other partners drafted a statement on behalf of the international community to commemorate the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.

Ambassadors from 21 countries and representatives from the European Union, the Council of Europe and the European Union Monitoring Mission endorsed the UNCT statement's call for equality of LGBTI persons. Furthermore, OHCHR and the Supreme Court co-organized a training session for judges on minority rights and combating discrimination on the grounds of religion and sexual orientation and delivered a training of trainers to three judges of the Appellate Court on these topics.

Throughout the year, OHCHR assisted the State Ministry of Reconciliation and Civic Equality to develop a Strategy on Civic Equality and Integration (2021-2025), which will guide the Government's efforts to ensure equality for all of its citizens before the law and in practice. The HRA organized a summer school on business and human rights for 20 university students (18 women, two men) on topics such as combating discrimination in the private sector.

In addition, OHCHR continued advocating for better protection of the rights of religious minorities. The Office monitored the case of three high school graduates who were scheduled by the Ministry of Education to take the National Graduation Exams on a day that their religion prohibits work. OHCHR carried out targeted advocacy with State authorities and engaged with defence lawyers, who filed an urgent case in the local court. In a groundbreaking decision, the court compelled the Ministry of Education to administer the test to the students on an alternative date. This represents one of the first cases in which a Georgian court handed down a decision in favour of religious minorities on the grounds of freedom of religion or belief.

In Azerbaijan, UN Human Rights provided assistance with the development of a human rights curriculum for a Master's degree at Baku State University. The Office created a working group with university representatives and legal practitioners to assess gaps in existing programmes and propose a new curriculum based on international good practices for human rights education.

UKRAINE

Population size¹ 43.73 million	Surface area¹ 604,000 km ²	•	NHRI (if applicable) ³ "A" Status (2014)
Type of engagement		Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU)	
Year established		2014	
Field office(s) UN partnership framework		Kyiv; field offices in Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kramatorsk, Luhansk, Mariupol and Odesa United Nations Partnership Framework 2018-2022	
XB income		US\$6,806,005	
XB requirements 2020		US\$6,379,000	

Key OMP pillars in 2020

XB expenditure





US\$4,720,956



123 Please refer to Data sources and notes on p. 229

PILLAR RESULTS:



Accountability (A)

A1 - State institutions hold to account a higher proportion of those who are responsible for grave violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.



OHCHR contributed to increasing the compliance of State institutions and programmes with international human rights standards, including in relation to the administration of justice.

UN Human Rights continued advocating for the investigation of the 2014 killings and violent deaths at the Maidan protests and in Odesa. To increase evidence-based

knowledge and awareness about obstacles to the impartial administration of justice, it issued two briefing notes that highlighted the lack of progress in the investigations and prosecutions, with infographics and targeted recommendations provided to the Government and the international community. The HRMMU also advocated for accountability in a high-profile case of police violence which included torture, ill-treatment and rape.

Persistent and coordinated advocacy efforts undertaken by the HRMMU resulted in progress made in enhancing accountability for serious human rights and international humanitarian law violations. For instance, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine repealed Criminal

Code article 375, which infringed on the independence of judges. The Cassation Criminal Court of the Supreme Court modified its practices to help ascertain that plea bargains are voluntary. The Office of the Prosecutor General made a commitment to tackle unlawful warrantless arrests in relation to "continuous crimes" and to cease charging individuals with terrorism who are linked with armed groups of the self-proclaimed republics in eastern Ukraine. At the same time, a draft law was developed to amend the in absentia prosecution procedure, which is expected to facilitate the prosecution of those responsible for serious international human rights law and international humanitarian law violations. Furthermore, the State judicial administration annulled requirements linked to digital signatures, improving access to online court hearings in the context of COVID-19. The European Court of Human Rights referred to the HRMMU's findings in its emblematic judgment on the right to liberty pending trial, which is expected to change national practices on arrest and pretrial detention.

In 2020, OHCHR published a report on Human Rights in the Administration of Justice in Conflict-Related Criminal Cases in Ukraine, which examines human rights violations in criminal proceedings and processes related to the armed conflicts in eastern Ukraine and Crimea.17 The report is based on information gathered from 2014 to 2020 and provides comprehensive recommendations for the Government, including on the right to a fair trial. It was launched during an online event with over 80 representatives

¹⁷ All references to Crimea should be understood in compliance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/192.

of civil society and the international community, which was live streamed on the HRMMU's Facebook page to reach a broader audience. More than 50 media articles made reference to the report.

In the context of the 2020 local elections, the HRMMU increased its efforts to raise awareness among its partners of issues of concern and the potential for violence. Despite tensions between supporters of different political parties, the combination of early warnings, preventive advocacy and coordinated actions of other stakeholders resulted in overall peaceful elections. The actions of law enforcement agencies present were assessed by the HRMMU as adequate and sufficient for providing security.



PS3 - State authorities and non-State actors promote and protect the human rights of populations living in territories affected by conflict.





OHCHR contributed to increasing the level of compliance of legislation/policy with international human rights standards on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

UN Human Rights is the only entity (at the national and international level) that has maintained a comprehensive record of conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine, which is disaggregated by sex, since the conflict began in April 2014. The HRMMU's advocacy, including its public reports, ad hoc and monthly updates, briefings, statements and protection by presence activities, had a deterrent effect and influenced the behaviour of parties to the conflict, contributing to an 11 per cent decrease in civilian casualties in 2020, compared to 2019. While an increase in civilian casualties was noted at an earlier stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, in March, high-profile public engagement efforts undertaken by the HRMMU, in early May, are believed to have contributed to subsequent decreases. At the end of the year, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the National Strategy for the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts until 2030, which the HRMMU had been advocating for since 2018. The Strategy has been submitted to the President's Office for final endorsement.

The HRMMU contributed to improving the understanding of State and non-State actors about violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. It issued two periodic public reports and an update, which mainstreamed women's rights and detailed recommendations for addressing human rights and international humanitarian law challenges, including in conflict-affected eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Using data gathered through its monitoring activities, the HRMMU drafted the Secretary-General's interim and final reports on the human rights situation in Crimea. The reports were prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 74/168 and included data and analysis on the unlawful military conscription of men into the Russian armed forces. A briefing note on documented violations in social housing in Crimea was also released.

Similarly, the HRMMU contributed to raising awareness on the human rights impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic by releasing three briefing notes and a dedicated thematic report on people in vulnerable situations, such as homeless persons, older persons, Roma and persons with disabilities. Public reporting and consistent advocacy helped raise the awareness of authorities about groups and individuals particularly in need and in danger of being left behind.

Ongoing fact-based advocacy and common messaging with the UN and other partners resulted in the coming into force of Cabinet of Ministers resolution 1157 in February. This simplifies the freedom of movement of children under the age of 16 between Crimea and mainland Ukraine if they are accompanied by at least one parent and removes the requirement for a notarized approval from the second parent. It also allows children residing in Crimea, from 14 to 16 years of age, to travel alone between both areas if they are students in mainland Ukraine. Similarly, the National Bank of Ukraine amended a resolution to end the discriminatory exclusion of Crimean residents from the full spectrum of banking services. Finally, the HRMMU and the Resident Coordinator (RC) stepped up their early warning advocacy on hate speech and incitement to violence against Roma, thus contributing, on two occasions, to the prevention of an escalation of tensions and attacks against Roma.

PS3 - State authorities adopt and implement laws and programmes that prevent sexual violence from occurring in the context of conflict, violence and insecurity. They investigate and prosecute cases of sexual violence.





OHCHR helped to strengthen oversight, accountability and protection mechanisms to ensure their compliance with international human rights standards by providing expert legal advice on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). UN Human Rights continued leading efforts to prevent and address CRSV and achieved significant progress in terms of policy and law development, including by strengthening investigation processes. In cooperation with UN Women, UN Human Rights developed a set of recommendations for State officials to ensure that initiatives to prevent, respond to and combat CRSV are in line with international criminal law and international humanitarian law. This resulted in the drafting of Law No. 2689, which provides for the implementation of provisions of international criminal law and international humanitarian law regarding criminal prosecution for international crimes, including sexual violence. The HRMMU provided technical comments on the Ministry of Social Policy's draft national action plan for implementing Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. It also contributed to the development by UN Women of an early warning indicators matrix that will help the Government promote comprehensive approaches to preventing and responding to CRSV.

In the context of COVID-19, the HRMMU prepared a joint UNCT submission to the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, which contributed to raising the awareness of all stakeholders on the increase of domestic violence against women during the pandemic. Together with UN Women, the HRMMU organized a training session for women human rights defenders (WHRDs), which provided an opportunity to gather views from across the country on specific challenges faced by WHRDs in their work.

PS3 – The UN's early warning systems and strategies in Ukraine integrate and update human rights information and analysis.





OHCHR supported the application of human rights-based approaches to UN responses to COVID-19, the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan and other key UN documents and programmes.

UN Human Rights continued supporting the integration of human rights into the work of the UNCT. It coordinated the activities of the UNCT Human Rights Working Group, including joint submissions to the international human rights mechanisms, the elaboration of the national human rights strategy, its action plan and a methodology to assess their implementation, and the elaboration of recommendations to the Parliament regarding a draft law on minorities. Moreover, the HRMMU regularly updated the Working Group about human rights issues and efforts, activities relating to the international human rights mechanisms and other matters of common interest, thereby contributing to ensuring a UN "Delivering as One" approach.

The HRMMU provided inputs to the UNCT's assessment of the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 in Ukraine by analysing the human rights impacts of the pandemic, with a focus on vulnerable groups, and ensured that human rights were mainstreamed into the UN response plan. The HRMMU also supported the integration of human rights concerns, as identified during its monitoring work, into the joint work of the UNCT/ Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. In particular, the HRMMU highlighted issues linked to COVID-19 restrictions on freedom of movement in

the conflict zone in light of the closure of the contact line from late March until mid-June. Approximately 60 per cent of the persons who regularly crossed the contact line before the lockdown were women who were significantly affected by restrictive measures. The HRMMU ensured that specific challenges linked to the protection of civilians and human rights were integrated into the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for Ukraine and the HCT protection strategy.

In parallel, the HRMMU engaged with the international human rights mechanisms and submitted joint UNCT reports to CESCR, CEDAW and CRC. A joint UNCT report was also submitted to a group of 12 special procedures as a contribution to their thematic reports to the General Assembly and Human Rights Council on the impacts of COVID-19 on the enjoyment of human rights in Ukraine.

Finally, the HRMMU contributed to the UN social cohesion campaign to raise awareness on issues linked to the enjoyment of social and economic rights by residents of the self-proclaimed republics in eastern Ukraine. The HRMMU updated a set of briefing notes that were submitted to the Government and the Parliament on various topics, including: the payment of pensions to IDPs and persons residing in territory that is controlled by armed groups; the freedom of movement across the contact line in eastern Ukraine; the birth registration of children born in armed group controlled territory; and the inclusion of IDPs. In addition, the Human Rights Working Group Task Force on hate speech, led by the HRMMU, drafted a common action plan addressing hate speech, which was later endorsed by the UNCT in May. Since then, the HRMMU has monitored and compiled hate speech incidents recorded

by UNCT partners on a quarterly basis for the Resident Coordinator.



Mechanisms (M)

M1 – The Government of Ukraine implements recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms that affirm international human rights principles, standards and good practices.







OHCHR supported the final drafting of the National Human Rights Strategy and its Action Plan (NHRAP) as a national mechanism for integrated reporting and the implementation of outstanding recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. The Office also contributed to the monitoring and evaluation methodology on the implementation of the strategy and action plan.

By providing technical advice and supporting the drafting process of the new NHRAP, UN Human Rights contributed to shaping the Government's human rights policy, thereby ensuring its compliance with recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. The HRMMU established a dedicated task force and coordinated inputs from UN entities, consequently increasing the credibility and impact of the UNCT in relation to the Government. The UNCT proposed a series of amendments, including on issues linked to remedies and reparations to civilian victims of the conflict, the right to a fair trial and accountability, gender mainstreaming at the national and local levels and ensuring non-discrimination, with special attention paid to members of vulnerable groups, such as LGBTI persons, Roma and persons with disabilities, and the promotion of social cohesion. After several revisions, the NHRAP is expected to be finalized in 2021. Several recommendations put forward by the HRMMU and the UNCT were incorporated into the latest version of the NHRAP.