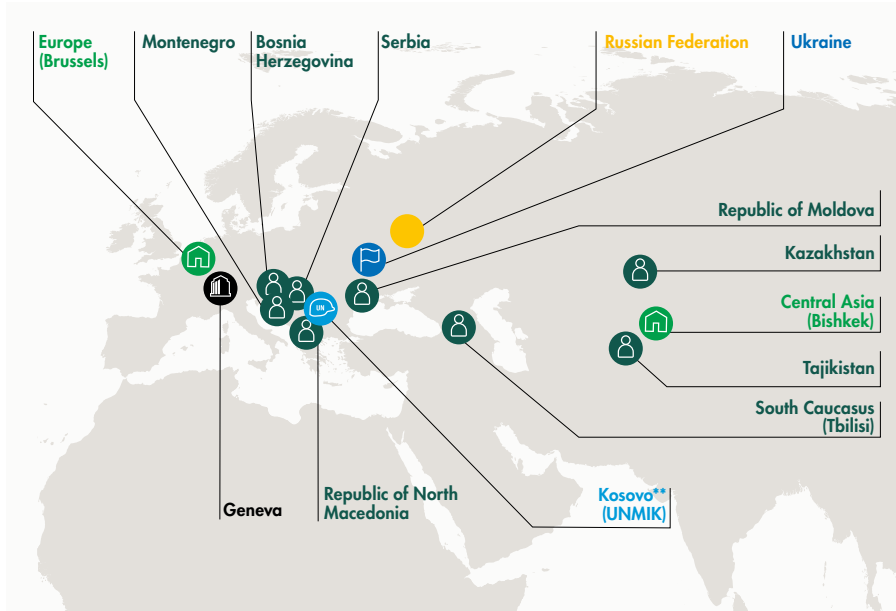


UN Human Rights in Europe and Central Asia



TYPE OF PRESENCE

	Headquarters
	Country/Stand-alone Offices/ Human Rights Missions
	Regional Offices/Centres
	Human rights components of UN Peace/Political Missions
	Human Rights Advisers*
	Other types of field presences

LOCATION

Geneva
Ukraine (HRMMU)
Central Asia (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan) and Europe (Brussels, Belgium)
Kosovo** (UNMIK)
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan***, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, South Caucasus (based in Tbilisi, Georgia and also covering Armenia and Azerbaijan) and Tajikistan***
Russian Federation

* Human Rights Advisers are deployed under the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

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

*** Approved in late 2021 for deployment in 2022.

LEGEND:

Spotlights:

- Disabilities
- Youth
- Women

Shifts:

- Global constituency
- Prevention
- Civic space
- Climate change
- Corruption
- Inequalities
- New technologies
- People on the move

SDGs:



In 2021, UN Human Rights' work in Europe and Central Asia (ECA) covered a vast region comprised of 54 countries that includes members and candidates of the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe (COE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), as well as a number of disputed territories controlled by de facto authorities.

OHCHR strengthened its country presence by deploying a Human Rights Adviser (HRA) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). It is also facilitating the deployment of an HRA in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan in 2022.¹⁴ Following the decision of the Government of Belarus to discontinue OHCHR's field presence (HRA), the Office increased its Geneva-based capacity to ensure sustained human rights engagement and technical support to the UN system. Elsewhere in the region, OHCHR maintained strong country engagement from Geneva headquarters and through field presences, including the Regional Offices for Europe (Brussels) and Central Asia (Bishkek); HRAs in the South Caucasus, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova and Serbia; human rights officers/project staff in the Russian Federation; the Human Rights Office in the UN Mission in Kosovo (Security

Council resolution 1244); and the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

Throughout the year, the work of UN Human Rights in the region has contributed to the implementation of OHCHR's Strategy for the COVID-19 response and recovery and analysis and reporting on the human rights impacts of the pandemic.

OHCHR was actively engaged in addressing international human rights law and international humanitarian law challenges in areas affected by violence and insecurity. It supported the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Belarus with two annual reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, the interim oral update of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Human Rights Council and, in coordination with the Rapid Response Section, the OHCHR mandate on Belarus (HRC resolution 46/20). In the Western-Balkans region, OHCHR supported the implementation of the Secretary-General's Strategy and Action Plan for the Western Balkans: Sustaining peace through trust-building, dialogue and reconciliation by identifying transitional justice as an entry point for joint initiatives and human rights advocacy.

UN Human Rights continued to promote human rights engagement with disputed territories, for example, the issuance of an

OHCHR public report on the impacts of COVID-19 on human rights in Moldova's Transnistria region. UN Human Rights also participated in political processes (Geneva International Discussions on the crisis in Georgia) and facilitated human rights inputs to UN responses and avenues for conflict resolution/prevention processes in the region.

The work of UN Human Rights in the region supported monitoring and advocacy on critical human rights issues related to people on the move, regardless of their migration status. It supported the finalization of the report on *Search and rescue and the protection of migrants in the central Mediterranean Sea* as part of OHCHR's project to assess the human rights situation of migrants in Libya and the neighbouring region. To assess the situation of migrants at the Belarus-EU border, OHCHR deployed a team to Poland (December) and issued a press briefing¹⁵ outlining key mission findings and recommendations.

Through its participation in the ECA Peer Support Group, OHCHR reviewed and provided quality assurance in relation to three Roadmaps, two Common Country Analyses (CCAs) and one United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). OHCHR also successfully implemented old and new reporting mandates from the Human

¹⁴ Tajikistan and Kazakhstan approved in late 2021 for deployment in 2022.

¹⁵ Press briefing notes on Poland/Belarus border, 21 December 2021, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/2021/12/press-briefing-notes-polandbelarus-border>

Rights Council and the General Assembly, including on the human rights situation in Belarus, Cyprus, Georgia, Ukraine and Crimea.

In coordination with the Regional Office for Europe, OHCHR supported numerous OHCHR senior leadership meetings with the EU, culminating with the first European Union-OHCHR annual Strategic Dialogue on human rights between the High Commissioner and the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, held on 12 October, in Brussels. OHCHR also supported advocacy and strategy through UN regional mechanisms, including by representing OHCHR in the regional Issue-Based Coalition on Gender Equality (IBC-GE) and participating in the regional Issue-Based Coalition on large movements of People, Displacement and Resilience.

OHCHR contributed to UN early warning and prevention platforms through inputs and participation in country reviews.

In support of prevention and accountability efforts, UN Human Rights advanced the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces. Guided by OHCHR and field presences across the region, the UN Country Teams (UNCTs) adopted standard operation procedures (SOPs) for HRDDP implementation.

BELARUS

Population size ¹	Surface area ¹	Human Development Index ²	NHRI (if applicable) ³
9.44 million	208,000 km ²	0.823 (rank: 53/189 in 2019)	-
Type of engagement	Human Rights Adviser		
Year established	2018 (closed on 30 June 2021)		
Field office(s)	Minsk		
UN partnership framework	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025		
Staff as of 31 December 2021	0		

XB requirements 2021 **US\$823,000**

Key OMP pillars in 2021



^{1,2,3} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176

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, in compliance with international human rights standards.

Free legal aid support that was provided to vulnerable groups, including victims of violence and persons with disabilities, was suspended following the detention by national authorities of UN staff and NGO partners who were implementing the project. Due to the deterioration in the

human rights situation, external activities were halted, and the field presence was closed on 30 June. Despite the challenging circumstances, the HRA completed a comprehensive expert assessment of the free legal aid system of Belarus and shared it with the Ministry of Justice.

A comprehensive human rights assessment of the drug policy of Belarus was completed. Recommendations were outlined to support the revision of laws, policies and practices in relation to drug policies and encourage a shift away from harsh prison sentences for drug users towards alternatives to incarceration.

A5 – The UN establishes a referral and response system to receive and address human rights complaints.

16

OHCHR contributed to ensuring protection from human rights violations by setting up systems and procedures and building capacities, including of the UNCT.

To increase the capacity of the UNCT to incorporate a human rights-based approach (HRBA) into its programming and project cycle, an HRBA training session was delivered to Heads of agencies. In addition, a series of weekly training sessions were held for senior UN staff and programme managers of various UN agencies. The UNCT and in-country agencies were consequently better equipped to review their programmatic priorities and activities through the application of an HRBA, which is imperative in light of the significant deterioration of the human rights situation in the country. Many agencies subsequently conducted such reviews.

A system to track data, register and respond to complaints was in operation until OHCHR closed in June. This led to the use of the complaints procedures of the UN human rights treaty bodies. For example, between 2020 and the middle of 2021, the Human Rights Committee registered 117 cases from Belarusian nationals. A total of 206 applications are pending consideration.

In July, an HRDDP standard operating procedure (SOP) was drafted and adopted by the UNCT. The HRA drafted a general and preliminary risk assessment, which will form the basis for the implementation of the HRDDP.

Mechanisms

M1 – A National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRF) exists and is operational, thereby facilitating an integrated and participatory approach to reporting to the international human rights mechanisms and implementing their recommendations.

16 17

OHCHR provided support for the establishment and functioning of mechanisms for integrated reporting and the implementation of outstanding recommendations issued by the human rights treaty bodies, the special procedures, the Human Rights Council and the Universal Periodic Review.

To ensure the increased capacity of State officials to engage with the international human rights mechanisms and follow up on their recommendations, the HRA, at the request of the Belarusian authorities, prepared an analysis of past human rights recommendations received. This analysis was shared with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Population size ¹	Surface area ¹	Human Development Index ²	NHRI (if applicable) ³
3.26 million	51,000 km ²	0.780 (rank: 73/189 in 2019)	Status A (2017)
Type of engagement		Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		2021	
Field office(s)		Sarajevo	
UN partnership framework		UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025	
Staff as of 31 December 2021		1	

XB requirements 2021

US\$339,000

Key OMP pillars in 2021



^{1,2,3} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176

PILLAR RESULTS:

Participation

P1 – Enhanced promotion and protection of the rights to freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as the right to participate in public affairs.

16 

OHCHR contributed to the extent to which critical human rights issues/situations raised by OHCHR were taken up in international fora in a timely manner.

The HRA focused on assessing the situation regarding civic space, including freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association and the right to participate in public affairs. The HRA established and developed contacts with CSOs to assess the challenges they face in different parts of BiH and worked with other international organizations to analyse their respective situations

and undertake advocacy. This enabled the HRA to engage some civil society organizations in relation to the international human rights mechanisms and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a view to enhancing their meaningful participation. This resulted in initiating revived engagement of BiH actors with the international human rights mechanisms and focused the attention of several mechanisms on issues being faced in BiH. The HRA also coordinated the development of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech in BiH.

Given the prevalence and the impact of hate speech in BiH, the HRA conducted preliminary research through meetings with institutions and relevant mandates, organizations and individuals involved in monitoring and/or combating the phenomenon (NGOs, media, parliamentarians), victims of hate speech and

other actors. The HRA produced media products on hate speech for the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) and the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG). It also alerted the international human rights mechanisms through a briefing and prepared a UNCT alternative report to CESCR. These alerts highlighted hate speech as a major factor of division and ongoing discrimination and an impediment to reconciliation. Furthermore, the HRA informed the Special Rapporteurs on the right to freedom of expression and on the rights to freedoms of peaceful assembly and of association on developments in BiH.

In August, the UN Executive Committee requested the elaboration and implementation of the UN Plan of Action on Hate Speech in BiH. In November and December, with the support of OSAPG, the HRA coordinated the elaboration of the Plan of Action, which includes monitoring, advocacy and capacity-building initiatives. The document was finalized in December and will be endorsed by the UNCT in 2022. A communications strategy will be employed to raise awareness about the Plan of Action.

Mechanisms

M2 – More systematic and inclusive engagement with the international human rights mechanisms and follow-up to and implementation of their recommendations.

17

OHCHR contributed to the number of substantive submissions to: 1) the human rights treaty bodies; 2) the special procedures; and 3) the Human Rights Council and the UPR by: a) total; b) NHRs I; c) CSOs; d) individuals; and e) UN entities.

The HRA mobilized approximately 20 stakeholders, including the national human rights institution (NHRI), CSOs and the OSCE Mission, to submit alternative reports to CESCR in anticipation of its review of BiH. The HRA provided guidance to a number of organizations that were unfamiliar with the treaty body reporting processes, including an umbrella organization of more than 20 environmental organizations and an organization promoting the participation of citizens, particularly youth, engaged on business and human rights. It also provided them with the opportunity to interact with the international human rights mechanisms. The HRA engaged the RCO and the UNCT in the process and drafted the UNCT alternative report to CESCR. Following the review, the HRA widely disseminated the CESCR concluding observations and initiated discussions on follow-up with civil society and UNCT members, which will continue in 2022. One unprecedented recommendation on BiH was to encourage the Government to address air pollution, which was welcomed by the environmental organization.

In the context of a joint OHCHR-UNDP project aimed at ensuring synergies between the implementation of the SDGs and recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms, the HRA suggested ways to strengthen the Government's capacity to collect and analyse quality human rights data for the purpose of reporting, monitoring and policymaking, including in relation to the SDGs. Initiated in November, the project began with a presentation to the national SDG Council, which outlined concrete ideas on integrating human rights into the SDGs; included a study tour to Geneva that enabled SDG Council members to meet with OHCHR staff working on the UPR, the Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme, the SDGs, human rights data and NHRIs. In addition, a workshop was held to bring together stakeholders working on human rights issues in data collection, reporting and monitoring and a second workshop was convened between the SDG Council and stakeholders with a human rights mandate on the occasion of Human Rights Day.

Moreover, the HRA supported the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence (2 to 10 December) and organized field visits and meetings with civil society actors and members of the international community. The HRA ensured that these meetings included survivors of atrocity crimes and that visits were undertaken to places where such crimes had been perpetrated. Following the Special Rapporteur's visit, the HRA ensured the broad dissemination of his preliminary observations. Building on this visit, the HRA will coordinate the UN's efforts to support transitional justice initiatives in 2022, in line with a request by the Executive Committee.

CENTRAL ASIA

Type of engagement	Regional Office
Countries of engagement	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan
Year established	2008
Field office(s)	Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), with field offices in Nursultan (Kazakhstan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), and Tashkent (Uzbekistan)
Staff as of 31 December 2021	15

XB income	US\$703,800		
XB requirements 2021	US\$1,349,000		
XB expenditure	US\$618,708		
Personnel	Non-personnel	PSC ⁴	
61%	28%	11%	
\$375,782	\$174,799	\$68,127	
RB expenditure	US\$880,993		
Personnel	Non-personnel		
87%	13%		
\$764,932	\$116,060		

Key OMP pillars in 2021

⁴ Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.179

PILLAR RESULTS:

Accountability (A)

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

16 

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**, a number of changes that OHCHR and other partners had advocated for were introduced, which addressed some of the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. For instance, the medical service in penitentiary institutions was gradually transferred from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Health, video surveillance was installed at police stations, and a quota was established to reserve 30 per cent of parliamentary seats for women and youth.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, revision of the criminal law in 2021 was accompanied by limited civil society participation and a lack of transparency. OHCHR expressed concern about provisions that could restrict human rights guarantees, but the Government accepted very few of its recommendations. In June, the Office successfully completed a three-year project aimed at promoting and protecting human rights in the context of preventing and countering violent extremism. In addition, it supported the creation and implementation of an online course on human rights and non-discrimination on the State Personnel Service platform, which is accessible to all State and municipal employees. It also undertook an analysis of judicial practices in relation to more than 700 criminal cases on violent extremism and terrorism, which provided the basis for human rights recommendations that were widely disseminated to law enforcement and State authorities, as well as to civil society at national level.

In **Tajikistan**, draft legislation on non-discrimination was prepared with OHCHR's assistance. The Government is reviewing the draft after discussions with CSOs and ministries, as well as UN agencies, and it is anticipated that it will be submitted to the Parliament for adoption in 2022.

In **Turkmenistan**, closure of the borders led to the cancellation of a training for law enforcement personnel on protection from enforced disappearance and international human rights standards. The special procedures mandate holders who were scheduled to attend were unable to travel to Turkmenistan. During the reporting period, the Government held technical consultations on OP-CAT for representatives of Government and law enforcement agencies who are members

of the working group of the Inter-Agency Commission on Human Rights. Further consultations on Turkmenistan's possible accession to OP-CAT will be held in 2022.

Finally, UN Human Rights supported the Regional Criminal Justice Forum, which was held in Tashkent on 24 to 25 November 2021, by sharing its experiences with monitoring closed institutions during the pandemic, investigating torture-related crimes and facilitating access to qualified legal aid. A wide range of criminal justice stakeholders contributed to the discussions, including policy-makers, representatives of the judiciary, prosecution, legal profession, civil society, academia and international governmental and NGOs.

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.

16

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 investigations, economic, social and cultural rights (ESCRs) and non-discrimination.

In **Kazakhstan**, training for State officials was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, UN Human Rights successfully completed a three-year project, in June, aimed at ensuring the inclusion of human rights in the context of preventing and countering violent extremism. The project built the capacity of experts from six law enforcement and justice training centres in

the area of human rights education. Also in Kyrgyzstan, ROCA supported CSOs in conducting an analysis of law enforcement and judicial practices in cases of violence against women. It also launched a Human Rights School on strategic litigation in cases of violence against women. A total of 15 lawyers (11 women, four men) attended the first training session to improve their knowledge about international human rights mechanisms. The Regional Office will continue the activities of the School in 2022.

In **Tajikistan**, the Office made progress in incorporating international human rights standards into the programme of the Union of Lawyers' Training Centre. As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, the capacity-building training for the judiciary was postponed until 2022.

In **Uzbekistan**, UN Human Rights promoted close cooperation of the NHRI with civil society. Specifically, OHCHR hired an independent consultant that participated in the monitoring activities of the Ombudsperson and contributed to its success. The Office assisted the NHRI of Uzbekistan with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) accreditation process. As a result, the Office of the Ombudsperson of Uzbekistan was accredited with "B" Status in January. OHCHR also facilitated the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism from 29 November to 7 December. The focus of the Special Rapporteur's visit, as reflected in her preliminary findings, concern the repatriation and reintegration of women and children who have been returned to Uzbekistan by the Government. This information will be used for future OHCHR activities.

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

10 16 

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.

In **Kazakhstan**, OHCHR's long-term advocacy contributed to drafting a law on the NHRI. Throughout the reporting period, the Office's advocacy focused on ensuring that the draft accommodates recommendations of the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation. While the draft establishes the presence of the institution at the subnational level and ensures functional immunity for the NHRI's staff against threats, harassment and other forms of intimidation, it does not address other recommendations put forward by the Sub-Committee.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, UN Human Rights supported the work of several human rights experts who, together with the Office, advocated for the retention of the existing Law on the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) in Kyrgyzstan, without curtailing the functional independence of the NPM as part of the legal reform. OHCHR continued to advocate with State authorities regarding the adoption of a transparent and consultative approach to the legal inventory process and when drafting criminal justice laws.

In **Tajikistan**, the Office liaised with the Statistical Agency under the President of Tajikistan to strengthen the participation of the NHRI in developing national indicators on the SDGs. As a result, the NHRI was

included in the inter-agency Commission under the Statistical Agency on developing SDG indicators, enabling it to contribute to the inclusion of a human rights perspective in the development of national indicators.

In **Turkmenistan**, OHCHR informed UN partners about the lack of monitoring activities being undertaken by the NHRI, especially in relation to ESCRs. The Office and other UN agencies focused on increasing the monitoring capacity of the staff of the Office of the Ombudsperson and agreed with UNDP and the Asia Pacific Forum that the NHRI should undergo a capacity-assessment before an application is submitted to GANHRI for accreditation.

In **Uzbekistan**, OHCHR developed the capacity of NPM members working with the Office of the Ombudsperson. For example, between 29 November and 1 December, the Office collaborated with the OSCE and the Office of the Ombudsperson in Uzbekistan to deliver a three-day training session on “Monitoring of closed facilities: International standards and practice” for members of a group conducting monitoring visits to closed facilities. The group was represented by members of the Office of the Ombudsperson and NGOs. During the training, 22 participants, including six women and 10 CSO representatives, strengthened their theoretical knowledge and practical skills in this area. OHCHR provided expert support by inviting a member of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and a member of the NPM in Kazakhstan.



Participation

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.

16



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.

At the regional level, UN Human Rights collaborated with EU delegations in Central Asia to co-organize a regional CSO meeting on equality and non-discrimination. The event coincided with Human Rights Day, on 10 December, and sought solutions to deep-rooted discrimination that affects the most vulnerable segments of society. Participants shared their experiences and developed a shared vision of how to address inequality and discrimination in Central Asia.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, OHCHR supported the legal inventory process, which consists of a comprehensive and wide-ranging legal review and reform process that provides human rights analyses of relevant legislation and organizes broad discussions with all interested stakeholders, including organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), CSOs, the media and NHRIs. OHCHR also delivered numerous capacity-building initiatives for civil society in Bishkek and in the regions. In 2021, the Office established a School of Human Rights and Advocacy for Young People with Disabilities. A total of 16 young people from different regions of the country took part in the School and were trained in four training sessions of

three days each. Mentoring by OHCHR experts enabled the participants to receive training and implement eight advocacy initiatives. Four young people with hearing disabilities held a roundtable that included the participation of a Member of Parliament, the Deputy Minister of Education and the Special Rapporteur on minority issues (online). The roundtable was devoted to the issue of access to education for deaf children. The participants made presentations on access to education and highlighted acute areas of concern. Following the roundtable, a working group was created at the level of the Ministry of Education and a number of strategic litigation initiatives were undertaken to advocate for the rights of persons with hearing disabilities. Three participants of the School raised the problem of inaccessibility for persons with disabilities at airports in Kyrgyzstan. They recorded two videos that demonstrated their concerns about the absence of accessible toilets and the lack of ambulifts. As a result of their initiatives, a roundtable was organized with the participation of representatives of the Ministry of Transport and the Manas International Airport in Bishkek. The story of the roundtable resonated with a number of national stakeholders and resulted in cooperation between activists with disabilities and representatives of airports as a way to improve the situation. In Osh, OHCHR organized two guest lectures for students of Osh State University. A total of 80 students took part in two lectures, including 35 women and 45 men, on the fundamental principles and standards of human rights. The Office also delivered a two-day training on human rights and the work of the special procedures for members of the local Osh-based youth NGO “New Rhythm.” All 13 participants were women.

In **Tajikistan**, OHCHR conducted two training sessions and increased the

knowledge of 43 lawyers (13 women, 30 men) on international standards related to the right to adequate housing. The Office also prepared training modules for the Judicial Training Centre, which committed to their incorporation in the training curricula for lawyers. In addition, OHCHR supported three NGO coalitions in preparing alternative reports as part of the third cycle of the UPR, covering the most critical human rights issues in the country.

In **Uzbekistan**, there has been limited progress in aligning laws and policies with standards on the right to participation and the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association and in establishing a safe and enabling environment for civil society. OHCHR continued to conduct advocacy and offer its expertise on this matter, including through participation and presentations delivered at events and activities organized by partners.

UN Human Rights offered online human rights education for civil society representatives from Uzbekistan, which began in 2020. Beginning in January, OHCHR and its NGO partner, the Centre for the Support of International Protection (CSIP), delivered four-day biweekly webinars for a group of 37 civic activists from Uzbekistan (26 women, 11 men) from six regions of Uzbekistan and Tashkent. The webinars were dedicated to different topics, including promoting and protecting the rights of women, forming an active stakeholder environment and building intersectoral social partnerships, developing a partner network and establishing a formal and informal environment for cooperation, and 10 steps to successful advocacy planning.

Responding to multiple requests from civil society, the Office also conducted a three-day training in Kyrgyzstan for 11

young civic activists from Uzbekistan (four women, seven men; two of whom had disabilities), during which the activists increased their knowledge about human rights, the international human rights mechanisms, freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression. At the end of the training, participants assessed that their understanding had increased regarding international human rights law and its linkages with national law. In November, OHCHR supported a training organized by the NGO Ezgulik on “Human rights and international approaches to non-discrimination,” during which OHCHR delivered a presentation on key human rights concepts and the international human rights mechanisms. A total of 18 participants (seven women, 11 men) took the training, including representatives of the Office of the Ombudsperson, the Ministry of Justice, Ezgulik and defence lawyers.

Also in Uzbekistan, OHCHR significantly contributed to the implementation of the Inception Phase of a United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) project, in partnership with other UN agencies. In May, the Office collaborated with UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP to deliver a five-day induction training (in-person and online) for over 50 participants, including persons with disabilities, representatives of OPDs, relevant State authorities and UN agencies. OHCHR delivered one session on equality and non-discrimination in the context of the human rights framework that focused on the provisions of CRPD. Also as part of the UNPRPD project, in October, the Office collaborated with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, OSCE and the National Human Rights Centre to co-organize national consultations on the implementation of the provisions of CRPD in Uzbekistan.



Development

D7 – When implementing the SDGs and other development plans, more Central Asian States and UNCTs adopt a human rights-based approach 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.

UN Human Rights continued to provide support to the regional network of CSOs on the right to adequate housing by co-organizing the second Central Asia Forum on the Right to Adequate Housing in **Kazakhstan**. It also organized a regional meeting of the network where participating CSOs discussed the impacts of COVID-19 on the exercise of the right to adequate housing and future network plans. After the border clashes with Tajikistan, in April, the Office helped the NGO Interbilim in Osh, Kyrgyzstan to fundraise for the NGOs monitoring and reporting work on the right to adequate housing and the right to compensation of affected residents of the border villages in the Batken Province. The Office ensured the widespread dissemination of information from Interbilim about their work and findings. The Office streamlined an information exchange through the mailing list of the Protection Sector under the Disaster Response Coordination Unit in Kyrgyzstan.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, UN Human Rights supported the UNCT to mainstream human rights into the CCA for the new UNSDCF 2023-2026, including by supporting civil society consultations during the drafting of the CCA. The Office contributed to the

UNCT's strategic prioritization retreat and encouraged the inclusion of an HRBA and references to the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms in the UNSDCF. In order to sensitize the Resident Coordinator (RC) and the UNCT about pertinent human rights concerns related to the implementation of CEDAW in Kyrgyzstan, the Office provided inputs to their collaborative confidential oral and written brief to CEDAW. OHCHR also contributed to ensuring that the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) evaluation exercise that was carried out by the UNCT in Kyrgyzstan was inclusive and participatory, including by ensuring that the NHRI and civil society members participated in the process. Throughout the year, the Office worked with the RC and the UNCT to help strengthen their advocacy and deliver key messages on the application of a human rights-based approach in policies and strategies and to ensure that the Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) principle is taken into account. It provided regular human rights updates to the UNCT, including advocacy messages on emerging human rights concerns, such as controversial laws that may have a negative impact on the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms in the country (i.e., amendments to the Law on Non-Commercial Organizations, the Law on Protection from False (Unreliable) Information, the draft Law on the Right to Access to Information, the draft Law on the State Language and planned amendments to the Law on the Public Broadcasting Service). The Office also shared with the UNCT briefing notes on other potential threats to civic space, civil society and public participation in order to inform its advocacy and programming.

In **Turkmenistan**, OHCHR provided advisory support to the RC and the

UNCT in mainstreaming human rights into the development agenda. The Office contributed to the human rights dialogue with the Government and the identification of human rights priorities for 2021, resulting in the development of a joint UN-Government working plan. The Office supported the mainstreaming of human rights into the CCA update of the UNSDCF 2021-2025 and co-facilitated thematic human rights, gender and youth groups within the UNCT. In addition, the Office assisted with the preparation of the UNCT submission to CESCR and CEDAW and ensured the integration of follow-up information. OHCHR facilitated the UNCT in Turkmenistan's country-level dialogue on the implementation of the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights. As a result, the UNCT identified priority areas and planned key actions to advance the implementation of the Call to Action with other stakeholders in 2022.

In **Uzbekistan**, OHCHR participated in the CCA update to ensure that human rights were mainstreamed into the document. Through its advisory role in the Human Rights and Inclusion Task Force of the UNCT, the Office supported and promoted the application of a human rights-based approach in the programming of UN agencies, in close consultation with civil society and vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities. For example, with support and advice from the Human Rights and Disability Unit in Geneva, OHCHR advocated with UNFPA and UNDP for the inclusion of the Washington Group Questions on persons with disabilities in the 2023 census (both agencies are supporting the national authorities in preparing for the census). In November, OHCHR and the RCO in Uzbekistan conducted a two-day training for the UNCT Youth

Advisory Board on "Human rights and international approaches to equality and non-discrimination." As a result of the training, 15 young people (nine women and six men, three of whom were persons with disabilities) between 18 and 30 years of age, increased their knowledge about the human rights-based approach, international human rights mechanisms and international legal approaches to equality and non-discrimination.



Mechanisms

M1 – National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up successfully fulfil their mandates, 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.

16 17

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

During the reporting period, UN Human Rights contributed to capacity-building for the staff of NMRFs and ministerial focal points on the implementation, reporting and follow-up to the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms (**Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan**) and expert support for the preparation of State reports on the implementation of those recommendations (**Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan**). Several national and regional events were organized for States from Central Asia to share good practices in implementing the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms.

The Office carried out 21 country-specific activities, which focused on developing and strengthening the effectiveness of NMRFs and the national human rights focal points, overcoming delays in reporting and follow-up to the international human rights mechanisms, enhancing synergies with other branches of government, improving the consultation process and establishing national mechanisms for the effective implementation of the outcomes of the international human rights mechanisms. Capacity-building and expert support in relation to the reporting process included work on the elaboration of the State Party reports to CRPD, CEDAW and CAT in **Kyrgyzstan** and the UPR and CEDAW follow-up reports in **Tajikistan**.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, the Office cooperated with the Coordination Council on Human Rights (CCHR) Secretariat to organize several events on State reporting to the human rights treaty bodies and participation in constructive dialogues (CAT, CEDAW and CRPD). OHCHR informed a constructive dialogue between the delegation of Kyrgyzstan and CEDAW by submitting a detailed briefing based on OHCHR's early warning and prevention reports. Before reviewing Kyrgyzstan's third periodic report, CAT received a briefing and additional information that was based on OHCHR's early warning and prevention reports and human rights programmatic work. In addition, OHCHR supported the meeting of the Council on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to reactivate its role as the National Monitoring Mechanism under CRPD.

In **Turkmenistan**, OHCHR and UNICEF co-organized the first public discussions on an alternative report of the Ombudsperson to CRC and participated in open consultations with children. In

Uzbekistan, the Office contributed to strengthening the information management capacity of the National Human Rights Centre (NHRC) by organizing a workshop for its staff and ministerial focal points on how to effectively work with the international human rights mechanisms. As a result of ROCA's advocacy, Uzbekistan ratified CRPD in June. OHCHR also contributed to public discussions on a CRPD national action plan that engaged experts and OPDs. The President reiterated the commitment to ratify the OP-CAT and the Government is working on preparations for ratification, including strengthening the capacity of the NPM under the Ombudsman of Uzbekistan.

With substantive support and inputs from OHCHR, the UNCTs of Central Asia submitted confidential submissions to CEDAW, CAT, CESCR, CCPR and CRC. In addition, the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms were largely reflected in the CCAs for **Kyrgyzstan**, **Turkmenistan** and **Uzbekistan**. As a result of OHCHR's efforts, and in spite of the pandemic, Central Asian States have only one overdue report (CRPD, Kyrgyzstan) which should be submitted during the first half of 2022.

M3 – Increased use of the outcomes of the international human rights mechanisms by policymakers, legislators and the judiciary.

5 16

OHCHR contributed to a number of selected policy areas where the level of compliance of legislation/policy with international human rights norms and standards has significantly improved.

In **Kazakhstan**, OHCHR's long-term work on adapting indicators resulted in including human rights indicators into a government plan of priority action on human rights and the 2020-2030 Legal Policy Concept Paper. In collaboration with the Bureau for National Statistics, the Office completed the work to link OHCHR's illustrative indicators with national SDG indicators. The Plan of Priority Action on Human Rights provides for the gradual introduction of national human rights indicators. The Office will continue this work in 2022.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, the Office provided technical assistance on drafting the National Action Plan of Human Rights for 2022-2025. In **Turkmenistan**, OHCHR cooperated with the UNCT and supported the Government to develop the second National Human Rights Action Plan for 2021-2025. The Action Plan covers civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and underlines civil society development as a priority. In **Tajikistan**, OHCHR supported the Government in developing a draft National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights and a National Action Plan on Human Rights through a participatory process. There have been a number of delays in the adoption of these documents.

In **Uzbekistan**, following the creation of the parliamentary joint commission on human rights, OHCHR provided advice on strengthening cooperation with the Parliament. In June, the Office cooperated with UNDP in Uzbekistan and the IPU to co-organize a parliamentary forum on the ratification of OP-CAT and CRPD and the implementation of the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. In November and December, OHCHR worked closely with UNDP in Uzbekistan to deliver presentations to law enforcement officials on the prevention of torture and the provisions of OP-CAT. The series of hybrid lectures were organized as a part of an online human rights course developed by the NHRC of Uzbekistan. The course is aimed at improving the understanding of police officers, penitentiary service staff and prosecutors about human rights and the international obligations of Uzbekistan on the prevention of torture. During the reporting period, the course was taken by close to 200 law enforcement officials.

In **Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan**, the Office focused its efforts on pursuing the implementation of the views of the human rights treaty bodies in relation to individual complaints.

EUROPE

Type of engagement	Regional Office
Countries of engagement	European Union and member states of the European Union
Year established	2009
Field presence(s)	Brussels
Staff as of 31 December 2021	9

XB income	US\$500,800		
XB requirements 2021	US\$914,000		
XB expenditure	US\$402,035		
	Personnel	Non-personnel	PSC ⁴
	47%	42%	11%
	\$187,478	\$168,305	\$46,252
RB expenditure	US\$1,102,604		
	Personnel	Non-personnel	
	80%	20%	
	\$886,035	\$216,569	

Key OMP pillars in 2021



⁴ Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.179

PILLAR RESULTS:

Accountability (A)

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

10 **16** 

OHCHR contributed to enhancing oversight, accountability or protection mechanisms that conform to international human rights standards.

OHCHR contributed to the adoption by the European Commission of stronger language on rule of law backsliding

by submitting a comprehensive analysis during the Commission's consultations for the 2021 rule of law report. OHCHR's submission was based on relevant findings issued by UN human rights mechanisms and the Office, from 2018-2021, in relation to all 27 EU member states. It also highlighted engagements and common messaging with partner organizations, such as the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). Building on the submissions for and reactions to its second 2021 rule of law annual report, the European Commission expanded its methodology for the forthcoming 2022 rule of law report.

The objective is to craft a more effective response to rule of law challenges that are taking place in the context of mounting challenges and an increasingly polarized landscape. The outcomes of OHCHR's roundtable on the "Protection of journalists, media freedom and pluralism," held on 10 December, will feed into the upcoming UN-EU Dialogue on the same topic in February 2022.

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.

Through its active role in promoting equality, following up on Human Rights Council resolution 43/1 and combating discrimination against Roma people, OHCHR supported the implementation of multi-year Strategies and Action Plans that were adopted in 2020 in relation to non-discrimination policies. In March, the Council of the EU adopted a recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, which takes OHCHR's advocacy into account and urges EU member states to adopt Roma National Strategies by the end of 2021. By the end of the year, 11 countries had presented or adopted their plans. The recommendation also includes indicators that are modelled on OHCHR's anti-discrimination indicators. In 2022, the European Commission

and CSOs will jointly assess progress made in implementation at the national level. Finally, the EU appointed the first EU Anti-Racism Coordinator during the reporting period and the Commission issued its first draft guidelines on National Action Plans against Racism (NAPARs) for EU member states, drawing inspiration from OHCHR's handbook

In January, as part of the broader consultation process for the preparation of the High Commissioner's report pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 43/1, the Office organized four regional consultations with regional organizations, NHRIs, equality bodies and civil society, including organizations of people of African descent in Europe, and one follow-up restitution event, after the publication of the report and interactive dialogue at the Council. Furthermore, OHCHR participated in a meeting of the subgroup on NAPARs in the margins of the first EU Summit against Racism and contributed to the consultation process on drafting guidance to EU member states for the development of NAPARs. OHCHR continued to engage bilaterally through the delivery of statements at meetings and seminars. For instance, the High Commissioner for Human Rights participated in the first High-level European Conference on "Protection from racial discrimination and related intolerance," which was organized by the Portuguese Presidency of the EU in April.

In October, OHCHR participated in a meeting of the Equinet Working Group on Policy Formation to feed into efforts by equality bodies to address institutional racism more effectively. In December, OHCHR participated in a public meeting, organized by Equinet, on "Tackling institutional racism - The potential of equality bodies."

In early 2021, OHCHR participated in an Equinet seminar for staff members of equality bodies on the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation. The Office also addressed attendees of the launch event of CHACHIPEN, a new project on a truth and reconciliation process to combat antigypsism/anti-Roma discrimination in Europe, in anticipation of the 50th International Roma Day, which was celebrated in March. In July and August, OHCHR led an initiative with Roma civil society groups to gather insights into challenges and opportunities identified in the implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework at the national level, including by conducting extensive consultations, research and analysis.

Finally, political momentum continued to build with regard to older persons with the publication of the EU Commission's 2021 Green Paper on Ageing. The publication helped to direct increased attention to the issue of ageing and the challenges and opportunities presented by this demographic change taking place across the EU. OHCHR contributed to this momentum through the coordination of a joint submission by the United Nations Brussels Team (UNBT) on the Green Paper on Ageing, which reflects perspectives and recommendations elaborated by OHCHR and the UN human rights mechanisms, as well as ILO, IOM, UNHCR, UN Women and WHO.

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.

The EU Pact of Asylum and Migration, which was proposed by the European Commission in 2020, continued to be negotiated by the European Parliament and the EU member states. In the context of a negotiation process that was marked by limited progress, the European Commission took advantage of opportunities to move forward on various initiatives proposed in the Pact, such as the EU Strategy on Voluntary Return and Reintegration and the EU Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling for 2021-2025. UN Human Rights pursued its advocacy efforts to promote the establishment of independent monitoring mechanisms in EU member states. Meanwhile, Frontex took steps to fulfil its responsibilities outlined in its 2019 Regulation, including the operationalization of the Standing Corps and the establishment of numerous policies and procedures to safeguard human rights in Frontex activities.

As a member of the Frontex Consultation Forum on Fundamental Rights, UN Human Rights continued to provide expertise in this regard. For instance, it participated in the recruitment of an independent Fundamental Rights Officer, the training of newly recruited fundamental rights monitors on human rights

monitoring, the development of a procedure to report alleged human rights violations and the adoption of a Frontex Fundamental Rights Strategy and Action Plan. The Office disseminated guidance on monitoring human rights in the context of migration and contributed to the review of training curricula for Frontex Standing Corps and Border Guards in EU member states. The Office also organized a discussion to raise awareness about the UPR for members of the Consultative Forum and staff of the Frontex Fundamental Rights Office. Finally, OHCHR participated in a Consultative Forum mission to Greece. This resulted in increased references to international human rights standards and documentation in Frontex's internal documents and policies, while also laying the foundation for sounder policies and procedures, stronger monitoring mechanisms and increased structural coherence in relation to EU migration governance. Nevertheless, ongoing challenges in the regional context were an impediment to the effective translation of these efforts into quantifiable regional results.

OHCHR continued to undertake advocacy efforts to promote independent human rights monitoring mechanisms, including through issuing public statements, organizing an expert meeting, contributing to a handbook from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on this issue and preparing and disseminating a 10-point guide on the creation of an independent and effective national border monitoring mechanism in Greece, together with ENNHRI and UNHCR. In addition, OHCHR undertook more in-depth engagement during the EU-OHCHR Strategic Dialogue. Concrete follow-up activities are envisioned for 2022, including the first EU-OHCHR expert-level dialogue on migration and human rights, in January.

Development

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



OHCHR contributed to the extent to which UN common country programmes (i.e., UNDAF) has satisfactorily integrated international human rights norms, standards, principles and recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms.

OHCHR published and disseminated *Dignity for all: Realizing social rights in the EU* to key EU counterparts. OHCHR's participation at the FRA Fundamental Rights Forum involved strong and consistent messaging about the importance of a human rights-based recovery. Interventions by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights stressed the value of implementing human rights-based measures, including the SDGs, for a sustainable recovery. The Office also actively contributed to the UNBT's Task Force on the Green Deal, through which it jointly engaged with the EU Commission on a number of Green Deal files, including the Zero Pollution Action and the Commission's "Fit for 55" proposal to adopt and revise legislation and policies that will facilitate a 55 per cent reduction of carbon emissions in the EU by 2030.

In its engagement on the role of cities and human rights, OHCHR contributed to the FRA publication *Human rights cities in the EU: A framework for reinforcing rights locally*. The Office provided an analysis of international human rights standards and the SDGs in relation to the

framework, which aims to provide guidance for cities seeking to integrate human rights into their policies and processes. In 2022, OHCHR will further engage with the FRA and partners on this issue, with a view to ensuring the implementation of the framework.

Finally, the Office delivered a training to European NHRIs on the application of an HRBA to recovery and resilience plans. This contributed to building the capacity of European NHRIs to analyse national COVID-19 recovery plans through a human rights lens and enable them to strengthen their advocacy at the national level. OHCHR committed to updating the United Nations Checklist for a Human Rights-Based Approach to Socio-Economic Country Responses to COVID-19 to provide improved assistance to NHRIs. ENNHRI and OHCHR continued their collaboration to better equip NHRIs in this area and to provide space for them to discuss an HRBA recovery, resulting in a dedicated checklist for NHRIs, released in March 2022.

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

OHCHR contributed to the number of selected State institutions/programmes demonstrating significant improvements in their compliance with international human rights norms and standards.

EU institutions continued to make progress in integrating human rights and an HRBA into external development programming. In June, the EU Parliament and Council formally adopted the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI – Global Europe Instrument) for 2021-2027. This

instrument makes it an obligation for the EU to apply a human rights-based approach in all its cooperation work and assist partner countries in implementing their international human rights obligations. This approach must be guided by the principles of Leaving No One Behind, equality and non-discrimination. During the first half of the year, the Commission's Director-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) held consultations and briefings for regional and global challenges programming, in which OHCHR participated. In addition, the Office facilitated a briefing for INTPA on the application of a HRBA to data. During the September launch of its updated HRBA toolbox, which featured OHCHR as one of the keynote speakers, DG INTPA publicly acknowledged the usefulness of OHCHR's materials and tools for the updating exercise. The NDICI and toolbox are applicable to both EU grants and loans.

Finally, the European Commission Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, which was adopted by the Commission in March, includes a component on international cooperation to support disability rights outside of the EU. OHCHR joined forces with the European Development Forum, the Global Disability Alliance Secretariat and others, including WHO and ILO, to organize the European Disability Summit, which is scheduled for February 2022. The Summit will focus on disability-inclusive international cooperation within the broader European region.



Participation

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

OHCHR contributed to the extent to which critical human rights issues/situations raised by OHCHR have been taken up in international forums in a timely manner.

As the European Parliament and the European Commission took positive steps to recognize and begin addressing rising challenges faced by civil society, HRDs, journalists and the media in EU countries, OHCHR contributed to awareness-raising and advocacy on these matters. It consistently promoted the UN Guidance Note on the protection and promotion of civic space, as well as the UN guidelines on the meaningful implementation of the right to participation in its interaction with EU stakeholders. It further supported the enhanced integration of civic space matters in the European Commission's annual rule of law report, including through submissions to the Commission's stakeholders' consultation, and cooperated with the FRA and regional civil society networks. On the occasion of Human Rights Day, the Office held a civil society consultation on the protection of journalists, media freedom and pluralism in the EU. Its outcomes contributed to the preparation of the UN-EU high-level dialogue on this issue, which was held in February 2022.



Peace and Security

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

16

OHCHR contributed to the number of selected policy areas where the level of compliance of legislation/policy with international human rights norms and standards has significantly improved.

OHCHR continued to work with EU stakeholders on the integration of human rights into the EU's engagement on peace and security. In 2021, political buy-in was secured in the key areas of the EU-UN-African Union tripartite engagement (on compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as well as for the integration of human rights actions into the UN-EU priorities for 2022-2024 developed under the UN-EU Partnership on conflict and crisis management). This was done through establishing or strengthening engagement with non-traditional partners, including the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) directorates at the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

OHCHR continued to advocate for the development of an EU internal due diligence policy and the integration of compliance measures in relation to EU assistance actions. This included two workshops/seminars on methodologies for risk management, in June and October, for 42 UN and 38 EU staff members. Following the event in June, a

joint workplan was agreed upon between the Integrated Approach for Security and Peace Directorate (ISP)/EEAS and the Regional Protection Programmes (RPPs)/OHCHR. Advocacy also continued with member states and EU representatives (EEAS, INTPA and the Parliament), including during meetings between EU representatives, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights. In a significant development, the EEAS/OHCHR cooperation on human rights and international humanitarian law risk management is now reflected as a joint UN/EU priority in the context of the UN-EU partnership on crisis management for the 2022-2024 cycle.

Furthermore, OHCHR continued to engage with the UN Brussels Team Africa Task Force in preparation for the review of the Africa-EU Strategy, which is expected to be adopted in February 2022. Messages on human rights integration were conveyed to member states and EEAS/INTPA representatives during OHCHR's high-level visits. In addition, as a result of engagement with EEAS and member states, language on compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law and trilateral UN-AU-EU cooperation was integrated into the peace and security component of the Kigali communiqué. The language is expected to be reflected in the new partnership and will represent an important basis for OHCHR's work in peace and in the foreseeable future.

OHCHR strengthened its working relationship with the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) through the regular provision of inputs for DROI's urgent resolutions. The Office also supported three briefings on Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo

and the Sahel. OHCHR is working to strengthen its relationship with SEDE to ensure the integration of human rights into its work. To that end, the Assistant Secretary-General on Human Rights briefed a joint session of DROI and SEDE on the situation in the Sahel, together with the Ambassador of France, at the Security Council, on 15 November.



Mechanisms

M2 – Rights-holders and CSOs, national human rights organizations and equality bodies increasingly engage with the international human rights mechanisms and use their outcomes to address challenges in the area of inequality, especially those that are working with children/youth, women, migrants, Roma, persons with disabilities, LGBTI and older persons.

17

OHCHR contributed to the number of substantive submissions to: 1) the human rights treaty bodies; 2) the special procedures; and 3) the Human Rights Council/UPR by NHRIs, CSOs, individuals and UN entities.

In its engagement with CSOs, Equinet and ENNHRI, OHCHR consistently focused on increasing their awareness of the international human rights system and promoted their understanding of how to better engage with the system. More specifically, OHCHR organized a consultation with Roma CSOs, which included information on engaging with the international human rights system.

The Office also undertook outreach with CSO members of the Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights in relation to migration and pushbacks, including by highlighting relevant findings of the

international human rights mechanisms. The Regional Office organized a webinar on the right to mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, together with OHCHR’s Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme.

Finally, OHCHR undertook a number of activities with ENNHRI in order to enable its members to increase their engagement with the international human rights system. This included a training on the application of a human rights-based approach to recovery and resilience plans, contributions to the consultations on ENNHRI’s Annual Strategic Plan, and participating in or facilitating OHCHR’s participation in various ENNHRI Working Groups (i.e., economic, social and cultural rights and the ENNHRI Legal Working Group).

REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Population size ¹	Surface area ¹	Human Development Index ²	NHRI (if applicable) ³
2.08 million	26,000 km ²	0.774 (rank: 82/189 in 2019)	“B” Status (2011)
Type of engagement		Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		2007	
Field office(s)		Skopje	
UN partnership framework		United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025	
Staff as of 31 December 2021		1	

XB requirements 2021 **US\$110,000**

Key OMP pillars in 2021



^{1,2,3} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176

PILLAR RESULTS:

Non-discrimination

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.

The HRA intensified its engagement and advocacy efforts with national partners, including NHRIs, persons with disabilities and their representative organizations and civil society, in order to enhance disability-inclusive development and the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities. The HRA supported the NHRI (Ombudsperson) in the creation of

a CRPD-compliant national monitoring framework by designing and implementing a nationwide advocacy campaign, which resulted in more than 20 OPDs and CSOs joining the national monitoring framework. The CRPD national monitoring framework was formally launched in April. The HRA continued providing strategic guidance to this mechanism to encourage the meaningful and effective participation of persons with disabilities and the promotion, protection and monitoring of their rights. Several online consultations were organized with members of the mechanism regarding challenges caused or exacerbated by the pandemic that negatively impacted on persons with disabilities, including their rights to vote, education, employment and independent living and their ability to undertake professional development opportunities.

The HRA continued leading the UNCT dialogue, implementation and reporting initiatives under the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS). More specifically, the HRA contributed to strengthening the UNCT's knowledge about the human rights-based approach to disability by developing, jointly with UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, a UNPRPD joint programme entitled "Building diverse society: Equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities through systemic reform."

ND3 – National laws on gender-based violence (GBV) protect women from GBV 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 against gender-based violence.

In January, the Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GBV Law) was adopted after more than two years of preparatory work. The adoption of this legislation serves as an important milestone in promoting the autonomy of women and girls and safeguarding their right to a dignified life that is free from fear and violence. The HRA provided the drafting working group with expert advice to ensure the Law's compliance with international human rights standards and the integration of all aspects related to prevention, protection and the reintegration of victims. The Law is aligned with the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention, CEDEW's general recommendations and other international human rights standards.

The HRA also supported the implementation of the GBV Law by advising on the inclusion of a holistic, victim-centred approach in secondary legislation outlining prevention, protection, support and criminal justice responses. Moreover, the HRA provided expert advice and actively participated in the drafting process of new legislative initiatives on improved access to justice, criminal law amendments to curtail violence against women and girls and compensation for GBV victims, as part of the new draft law on state-funded compensation of victims of violent crimes.

The HRA offered normative guidance to UNCT members (UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNHCR), State and non-State actors in establishing protocols for the safe operation of shelters and referral centres and the provision of immediate assistance and support for survivors/victims. The Government has prioritized this assistance and support in response to the growing "shadow pandemic" of violence against women. Particular emphasis has been placed on addressing the intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and the negative gender stereotypes associated with GBV.

As a result of the HRA's advocacy, authorities joined the Blue Heart Campaign; a global initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to raise awareness about the risks and devastating consequences of trafficking in persons. The vast majority of trafficking victims are women and girls.

The HRA and UN Women continued to co-chair the UNCT Human Rights and Gender Theme Group and conducted training for UN staff, civil society and women's organizations, which enhanced their understanding of key aspects of gender discrimination and of the intersectionality that predominantly affects

marginalized women. The HRA also prepared background information and briefing notes for discussions related to international human rights and gender equality standards. Donor coordination meetings were used as a platform to increase the understanding of the UNCT and international partners about the national legislative and policy developments related to GBV and gender equality and their compliance with relevant guidance issued by the international human rights mechanisms.

The HRA led the UNCT's efforts to operationalize the Secretary-General's strategy to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) at the country level. Chairing the PSEA inter-agency network, the HRA continued to streamline the implementation of the UNCT PSEA Action Plan, which provides for a coherent approach in promoting an organizational culture of speaking up and reporting on sexual misconduct, community outreach and mechanisms for victim referral and assistance.

Development

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



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

The HRA continued to build the capacities of the UNCT, government partners and CSOs on applying a human rights-based approach to data and the benefits of its application. Technical advice on human rights indicators was provided to support UNCT programming, as well as UNCT activities to support the national SDG process. In particular, the HRA supported the mainstreaming of human rights into the CCA, the UNSDCF 2021-2025 and the COVID-19 Socio-economic Response Framework (SERF), with a focus on policy and legal developments, the governance system, gender, access to justice, institutional capacities and Leaving No One Behind.

The HRA produced a comprehensive matrix of international human rights mechanisms related to the outcomes of the UNSDCF on inclusive prosperity, quality of services for all, a healthy environment and good governance. The matrix proved to be a useful tool for the UNCT's programming, implementation and advocacy efforts in achieving the SDGs.

In order to promote the SDGs and contribute to the integration of a human rights-based approach in national policy-making and implementation processes,

the HRA collaborated with staff from the RCO, provided training to more than 40 national stakeholders, including government officials, NHRIs, CSOs, OPDs and students, highlighting the centrality of human rights in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mechanisms

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



OHCHR supported the engagement of CSOs with the Voluntary National Review (VNR) and the CRC reporting process through expert advice, advocacy and capacity-building efforts.

The HRA continued working with CSOs in order to strengthen their capacity to systematically engage in the reporting process and follow-up on recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms in a coordinated manner, including through formal and informal coalitions. The HRA conducted regular dialogues with human rights CSOs to keep them abreast of the activities of the international human rights mechanisms. It also sought to explore opportunities for joint advocacy and actions, in accordance with the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights, which was translated into Macedonian in 2021.

The HRA supported the NHRI and CSO coalitions to engage in a constructive dialogue with the international human rights mechanisms, notably CRC, following the submission of the State Party report in March 2019. With OHCHR's assistance, the Ombudsperson submitted a comprehensive alternative report that sheds light

on the situation of vulnerable children and harmful child practices, particularly in the context of the pandemic. It also participated in the CRC Pre-session Working Group, in February, together with CSOs.

Finally, the HRA strengthened the capacities of NHRIs, OPDs and CSOs by organizing a training on CRPD and facilitating engagement through several thematic consultations with the CRPD Committee. In February, the Ombudsperson, 20 OPDs and persons with disabilities participated in the Europe and Central Asia regional online consultations to develop guidance on the right to independent living and to ensure deinstitutionalization, in accordance with CRPD. The HRA mobilized the UNCT to observe the regional consultations and coordinated the drafting of a joint written submission that highlights the inherent dignity and freedom of choice of persons with disabilities and actions to be taken to improve the provision of support services that are essential for independent living in the community.

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Population size¹	Surface area¹	Human Development Index²	NHRI (if applicable)³
4.02 million	34,000 km ²	0.750 (rank: 90/185 in 2019)	Status A (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 2021		8	

XB requirements 2021

US\$1,117,000

Key OMP pillars in 2021



^{1,2,3} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176

PILLAR RESULTS:

Development

D8 – Data on education, employment and justice are more consistently available and are disaggregated by disability status and type.



OHCHR contributed to enhancing the capacity of relevant State structures to ensure the availability of data including disaggregated data.

Following extensive facilitation and support by the HRA in Moldova, the National Statistics Office, the People's Advocate Office and the Equality Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that confirms their commitment to cooperate on strengthening data collection, disaggregation, dissemination and analysis in the context of ensuring human

rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As part of the MoU, 18 representatives of the three institutions participated in a three-day workshop, “Human rights-based approach to data and indicators for SDG and human rights reporting in Moldova,” that was organized by OHCHR and the Human Rights Indicators and Data Unit. A concrete action plan was agreed upon that includes development and piloting of the methodology for contextualizing human rights indicators and building the capacity of public servants to apply an HRBA to data. The action plan will be implemented in 2022 with support from the HRA.

Non-discrimination

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.

The HRA conducted an in-depth study on the impacts of COVID-19 on human rights in Moldova, with a focus on women and vulnerable groups, such as older persons, Roma and persons with disabilities, children, migrants and detainees. The findings of the report were shared with State authorities, CSOs, NHRIs and development partners and contributed to defining programme interventions, advocacy initiatives and the drafting of the CCA and the UNSDCF. The study will provide the basis for numerous interventions in 2022.

In partnership with UN Women, the HRA strengthened knowledge on protection measures against COVID-19 and how to build resilience to stress through training that was delivered to 50 representatives from the NGO Task Force on COVID-19 and Human Rights. As a result, approximately 4,100 persons in vulnerable situations benefited from material support.

Due to the advocacy efforts undertaken by the HRA and CSOs, OP-CRPD was ratified. As the UNCT disability inclusion focal point, the HRA supported the functioning of the UN Disability Inclusion Task Force, the drafting of the UNCT Theory of Change (ToC) on the implementation of CRPD and drafted the checklist

on accessible and inclusive disability communications. Furthermore, 23 trainers from the National Social Assistance Agency and Temporary Placement Centres strengthened their expertise on the application of an HRBA to disability and social services through a five-day training of trainers (ToT) that is based on training curricula and a programme developed by OHCHR. Furthermore, the assessment and development of recommendations for a CRPD-compliant regulatory framework in the Transnistria region was initiated. The first draft will be discussed in 2022.

Consultations with de facto authorities (DFA) were undertaken to advocate for CSOs' participation in the drafting of a Human Rights Framework. As a result, DFA and CSOs will jointly participate in the development of the Framework, based on a matrix prepared by the HRA. In addition, the DFA expressed its commitment to supporting the institution of Roma mediators and establishing local-level cooperation among Roma mediators and the DFA based on a road map and plan of action developed by the HRA.

Furthermore, training provided to Roma mediators by the HRA resulted in improved access to education, social assistance, labour, documentation and health services for the Roma community.

ND7 – By 2021, public discourse and media reports are more inclusive and non-discriminatory.



OHCHR supported significant improvements to the narrative on selected human rights issues.

The HRA increased the knowledge and capacity of journalists and media professionals to promote diversity and equality in the media. As a result, journalists and media professionals on both banks of the Nistru River produced human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive media materials that also elaborated how to prevent hate speech and apply an HRBA, with a focus on vulnerable groups.

Following the training of 10 lecturers from the Journalism Faculty of Moldova State University on the role of mass media in ensuring inclusive communication and the application of an HRBA to journalism, an agreement was established regarding the integration of human rights into the curricula of the Journalism Faculty.

The HRA collaborated with the UN Information Centre, the People's Advocate Office, the America House Chisinau and the Equality Council to organize five public lectures, seminars and workshops for more than 1,365 youth participants from Moldova proper and Transnistria region. The youth increased their knowledge about human rights, equality and non-discrimination, freedom of opinion and expression, the importance of participation in decision-making processes and existing mechanisms for participation.

Accountability

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 continued to contribute to protection against human rights violations.

The HRA increased the ability and capacity of relevant State actors to work on ethnic minority issues in a human rights-compliant inclusive manner through capacity-building and training activities. In line with international recommendations, support for the drafting process of mid-term national programmes and action plans on minority issues, including Roma, will continue in 2022. If successful, these programmes/plans will contribute to the increased enjoyment of human rights by minority groups.

The HRA also contributed to the development of standards, the training curriculum and materials for the Carabinieri and the National Legal Aid Council, which will be finalized following an internal review and approval process.

As a result of legal training organized by the HRA for staff of residential institutions, persons with disabilities living in residential institutions have increased access to legal aid services to help them resolve legal issues related to representation of persons with disabilities who inherit goods, persons with disabilities with a psychiatric diagnosis and documentation of persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, standards on legal aid for persons with disabilities were developed and are being validated by the National Legal Aid Council. A training for lawyers is planned for 2022.

Mechanisms

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

16 17

OHCHR provided support to integrated reporting and/or implementation of outstanding recommendations issued by the human rights treaty bodies, the special procedures, the Human Rights Council and the UPR.

In partnership with the Permanent Human Rights Secretariat, State Chancellery/Government of Moldova, the HRA contributed to increasing awareness about the principles of an HRBA, international human rights mechanisms and mainstreaming the rights of minorities into policy development. Capacity-development was supported through the training of 60 representatives from State institutions, including relevant ministries, local public authorities and local structures of the National Human Rights Council.

In partnership with the Treaty Body Capacity-Building Programme, the State Chancellery of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the HRA trained 20 representatives from State institutions to strengthen their knowledge of the Convention against Torture and its reporting process. The training also led to the development of the State Party response to the list of issues prior to reporting issued by CAT.

With support from the HRA, the Permanent Human Rights Secretariat initiated consultations on the National Report of the Republic of Moldova for the 3rd cycle of the UPR and the status of implementation of the National Human

Rights Action Plan (NHRAP). More specifically, the HRA engaged approximately 100 representatives of State entities, NHRIs, CSOs and development partners in consultations that sought to analyse progress in the field of human rights and identify priorities for future interventions to strengthen the implementation of human rights at the national level.

Following two online training sessions on human rights monitoring that were conducted by the HRA and the Permanent Human Rights Secretariat, more than 100 representatives from local structures of the Moldova National Human Rights Council increased their awareness about the international and national human rights monitoring system and their roles and responsibilities in promoting the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights as local human rights coordinators and representatives of local human rights commissions.

With the support of the HRA, an inclusive consultation was held by the Human Rights Secretariat of the State Chancellery and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to discuss progress achieved, ongoing challenges to the implementation of recommendations issued by the CEDAW Committee and additional priorities to ensure their implementation. More than 80 participants took part in the consultations, including State authorities, NHRIs, CSOs and development partners.

Participation

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



The Office supported the meaningful participation of rights-holders, especially women and discriminated groups, in selected public processes.

The HRA strengthened the capacity and knowledge of 30 CSOs (22 women, eight men) representing 16 CSOs from the Transnistria region on human rights, the rights of vulnerable groups and the local and international human rights framework. This was made possible through participation in 11 training of trainers webinars, 17 small thematic group webinars and four study visits of experienced CSOs and municipal institutions on the right bank. As a result, participants undertook initiatives to promote and advocate for the rights of vulnerable rights-holders (persons with disabilities, survivors of domestic violence, Roma, people living with HIV). As part of these initiatives, they submitted advocacy papers to duty-bearers, drafted collective claims on integrating provisions of CRPD into the local regulatory framework and produced media publications and informational sessions for rights-holders.

Additionally, the HRA facilitated the participation of CSOs and vulnerable rights-holders (persons with disabilities, Roma, ethno-linguistic minorities) in the evaluation of the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms.

MONTENEGRO

Population size¹	Surface area¹	Human Development Index²	NHRI (if applicable)³
0.63 million	114,000 km ²	0.829 (rank: 48/189 in 2020)	B Status (2016)
Type of engagement		Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		2021	
Field office(s)		Podgorica	
UN partnership framework		United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2017-2022	
Staff as of 31 December 2021		1	

XB requirements 2021**US\$234,000****Key OMP pillars in 2021**^{1,2,3} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176**PILLAR RESULTS:**

Non-discrimination

ND8 – The new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2023-2027) fully integrates the human rights-based approach and furthers the Leave No One Behind commitment outlined in the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.



OHCHR contributed to the integration into the UN common country programmes of international human rights norms, standards and principles, as well as the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms.

The HRA contributed to the integration of human rights elements into the CCA. The HRA led the drafting of the CCA's human rights chapter and co-led the Results Group on democratic governance. The CCA details the challenges

being faced by marginalized groups in exercising key civil, economic and social rights and root causes thereof. An agreement was reached with the Government on the UNSDCF's overarching outcomes, which include an increased emphasis on the promotion and protection of human rights. Other outcomes relate to human rights issues within the economic, environmental, social protection, education, health and labour spheres, with a focus on marginalized groups.

In mid-December, the UNCT adopted an internal action plan to combat hate speech under the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech. Drafted under the leadership of the HRA, the Plan of Action will promote respect for principles of non-discrimination, address discrimination against particular groups and encourage the implementation of recommendations issued by CEDAW, CERD and CRPD in 2017. It will be implemented in 2022-2023.


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 conflict.



OHCHR contributed to the increased integration of human rights into the humanitarian response.

Through the monitoring and analysis of incidents and trends of divisive speech, hate speech and hate crime and gaps in the legal and policy framework, the HRA supported discussions and public advocacy of the RC, the UNCT and in the context of missions undertaken by the OSAPG and the DPPA. Discussions were held with the Prime Minister and other members of the Government, the President's Office, Members of Parliament, the NHRI and civil society, including religious leaders and the media. Overall, there is a concern that hate speech has increased and combined with a lack of dialogue, this poses a risk to the current stability in the country.

PS6 – United Nations’ support to national and regional security forces, law enforcement agencies and non-State actors integrates human rights and complies with the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy.

5 

OHCHR provided support to the UN to integrate international human rights norms, standards and principles into their work and ensure their compliance with the HRDDP.

With support from the HRA, the UNCT adopted a standard operating procedure, in November, on the implementation of the HRDDP in Montenegro. Six resident and non-resident agencies that support the police, migration officers, the army and the prison service agreed to conduct a joint preliminary risk assessment, in 2022, of all institutions that are currently receiving UN support.



Mechanisms

M3 – Policymakers and legislators make use of outcomes issued by international and regional human rights mechanisms (strategy on inclusion of persons with disabilities, media legislation).

5 **16**  

The number of selected policy areas where the level of compliance of legislation/policy with international human rights norms and standards has significantly increased.

With support and inputs from the HRA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR and IOM, the Government adopted the new Roma and Egyptian Inclusion Strategy for 2021-2025. The Strategy draws upon recommendations issued by the UPR, CRC, CEDAW, CERD and CRPD to combat discrimination and negative social attitudes, improve access to education, undertake measures to combat child marriage and other forms of violence against women and girls, trafficking and forced labour and improve access to health care and employment. Specific measures are included to strengthen standards related to non-discrimination, an adequate standard of living, education, health, employment, housing, social protection, political participation and legal identity.

The HRA, UNICEF and UNDP also provided the Government with technical support to facilitate the integration of key UN human rights recommendations and indicators into a draft strategy on the promotion of equality and the protection of persons with disabilities from discrimination. The strategy is based on CRPD and seeks to implement recommendations issued by its committee, in 2017, regarding health, education, social protection, accessibility to information, infrastructure and enhanced monitoring. UNDP

provided the Department on Disability in the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights with a national consultant to support the design of the strategy.

Members of the Roma and Egyptian communities, as well as persons with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities, the NHRI, UN agencies and other representatives of the international community, participated in the development of both strategies.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Population size ¹	Surface area ¹	Human Development Index ²	NHRI (if applicable) ³
145.91 million	17,098,000 km ²	0.824 (rank: 52/189 in 2019)	Status A (2021)
Type of engagement		Human rights staff (Other type of field presence)	
Year established		2008	
Field office(s)		Moscow	
UN partnership framework		-	
Staff as of 31 December 2021		5	

XB requirements 2021

US\$926,000

Key OMP pillars in 2021



^{1,2,3} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176

PILLAR RESULTS:

Participation

P6 – Human rights higher education programmes are 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.

OHCHR continued to support the Consortium, which developed and published a co-authored Glossary on Human Rights for students enrolled in the multidisciplinary Human Rights Master's Programme. The curricula were strengthened with the publication of four case law textbooks: *Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights*;

International protection of the rights of children; Business and human rights; and the International protection of social, economic and cultural rights.

OHCHR regularly provided publications and reference materials related to human rights protection to the resource centres of Consortium universities in five regions of Russia, including Moscow. In addition, information on COVID-19 was regularly shared with the universities that are part of the Consortium. The pool of OHCHR communication resources around the COVID-19 response and its impact was integrated into online platforms and used as a resource by Russian universities.

Despite COVID-19-related restrictions, OHCHR was able to organize the annual Summer School in Kazan City. The Summer School is an integral part of the Human Rights Master's Programme, with a thematic focus on youth engagement

with human rights. The main partners were the Kazan Federal University and the Office of the Ombudsperson of the Republic of Tatarstan, with support from the Government of Tatarstan. The week-long event brought together 130 students from universities in eight regions of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Participants had the opportunity to interact with 30 lecturers from eight countries (hybrid format of in-person and online), including eminent national and international professors, practitioners, human rights defenders and four UN experts. Participants also benefited from lectures delivered by the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation, members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, as well as representatives of UN agencies in Russia. The Summer School was bilingual (Russian and English) with an interactive approach. Theoretical lectures were supported by experience-sharing workshops. The programme featured two interactive panel discussions that were led by Ombudspersons from three regions (St. Petersburg, Perm region and the Republic of Tatarstan, and representatives of UN agencies (IOM, FAO, UNIC, OHCHR). A moot court competition was held in partnership with the Plaidier les Droits de l'Homme of Strasbourg. A total of five teams of Consortium students participated in the competition. The final round was held in the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tatarstan.

OHCHR provided support to ensure that national partners had access to international expertise by inviting students and teaching staff to human rights-related webinars and conferences. During the reporting period, students attended eight webinars. Five of the webinars focused on development issues and the SDGs and three focused

on international humanitarian law and the importance of the updated International Committee of the Red Cross Commentaries on the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

The research visits of the Consortium students and their participation in the Venice School of Human Rights, as well as the scheduled internships in State ministries, were cancelled due to the pandemic. Nevertheless, the total number of enrolled students in 2021 was 82 (33 women, 49 men) and 75 students (39 women, 36 men) graduated from the programme.

In 2021, the Consortium approved the accession of two new members, namely, the Southern Federal University (Rostov) and the Siberian Federal University (Krasnoyarsk), thereby expanding the project to Siberia and the South of Russia.



Non-discrimination

ND1 – National human rights institutions 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 about the compliance of legislation/policy with international human rights standards in relation to the rights of women, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.

In cooperation with the Federal Office of the Ombudsperson and the Centre for Human Rights Education, OHCHR organized in October a workshop on the international human rights mechanisms for newly appointed regional human

rights commissioners. The workshop, held in a hybrid format, focused on strengthening the national human rights protection system using international human rights instruments and mechanisms. The workshop also included the functioning of treaty bodies as effective mechanisms in addressing human rights protection issues, with a focus on discrimination and the work of CERD. More than 80 participants attended the event, including human rights commissioners and their staff, from 25 regions in Russia. The personnel of the National Centre on Human Rights, operating within the Office of the Ombudsman in the Republic of Kazakhstan, participated in the event online.

In cooperation with the Moscow City Ombudsperson and the Forum of Moscow Women, an NGO promoting women's movements, OHCHR organized a roundtable on “Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world,” on the occasion of International Women's Day. The event was held in a hybrid format at the Moscow State Centre of Medical-Social Rehabilitation. Participants focused on the leading role of women who are at the forefront of the battle against COVID-19 and its regressive impacts in different areas, including health care, social protection, education, labour, access to information and countering domestic violence. A CEDAW member, Ms. Dalia Leinarte, was one of the key speakers and spoke about women, political leadership and related challenges. The WHO representative stressed the value of applying the lessons learned during the pandemic to improve the quality of medical and social assistance. Participants included representatives from the Moscow City Parliament, the Minister of Social Protection of the Moscow City Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as women human rights

defenders, civic activists, representatives of the business community and members of academia. Media coverage and outcomes of the event were posted on the official websites of the Moscow City Parliament, the Federal Ombudsperson and the Moscow City Ombudsperson.

Due to the pandemic, the planned Moscow component of the Indigenous Fellowship Programme had to be postponed. The Russian e-learning tool on the rights of indigenous peoples was finalized. OHCHR also assisted with the proofreading of the Russian translation of the Annotated Checklist for UN Programming, which was prepared by the UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Minority Protection.

Finally, OHCHR disseminated information through social media platforms about human rights, including challenges faced by vulnerable groups. Racial equality and the #FightRacism campaign, as well as women's rights and the #IStandWithHer and #16Days campaigns, were featured in more than 30 posts. Eight posts were dedicated to the rights of indigenous peoples and seven posts referred to the SDGs. 30 posts were dedicated to speeches made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which included the cross-cutting themes of equality and non-discrimination. In December, OHCHR celebrated Human Rights Day by organizing several events and widely disseminating information related to its core theme “Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights.”

Mechanisms

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

17

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

OHCHR continued to increase the awareness of the staff of the Office of the Ombudsperson about the functioning of the international human rights mechanisms. In cooperation with the Federal Office of the Ombudsperson in Russia, OHCHR organized a hybrid workshop for approximately 80 ombudspersons and their staff from 25 regions of Russia and Kazakhstan. The participants benefited from interactive learning sessions and exchanges with OHCHR officials, the former Chair of CERD and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Topics of discussion included interactions between the NHRIs and the international human rights mechanisms, the consideration of individual complaints by the human rights treaty bodies, the Paris Principles and OHCHR tools to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination.

To increase awareness about the international human rights mechanisms among the general public and to promote the implementation of their outcomes, OHCHR maintained the Russian version of OHCHR's website. OHCHR facilitated the translation of media materials, including press releases, statements issued by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and documents issued by the special procedures in relation to racism, recovering

better, women's rights, climate change and youth. OHCHR ensured the regular distribution of new materials through social media.

OHCHR continued using its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts to raise awareness on human rights issues, OHCHR's activities and international human rights instruments and mechanisms, with a particular focus on reaching youth. The platforms count more than 3,500 followers and approximately 100 posts were published during the year.

OHCHR continued creating digital media products that included UN Human Rights documents and publications for dissemination among Russian-speaking audiences and stakeholders. In addition, a total of 150 memory sticks containing useful resources were distributed to national partners. OHCHR updated the compilation of UN documentation on women's rights and gender issues, which is available in Russian, and distributed 50 memory sticks containing this information to various stakeholders, including CSOs, federal and regional human rights commissioners, journalists and academia. Approximately 200 leaflets on the SDGs and their links to human rights were designed and produced by OHCHR and disseminated to national partners and students of the Human Rights Master's Programme. Due to the pandemic and the shift of most events to online formats, there were fewer opportunities for the dissemination of materials. Nevertheless, at least four press releases and statements delivered by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN experts were shared with UN agencies and national partners. Four articles about OHCHR's activities were published in the UN in Russia Bulletin and distributed to Russian partners and State institutions. Nearly

100 posts were circulated on OHCHR's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

During its eightieth session, the CEDAW Committee considered Russia's ninth periodic report. In anticipation of this consideration, OHCHR submitted the UN Gender Theme Group report on Russia. The Committee reflected some of the concerns identified in that report in its concluding observations.

OHCHR supported the twenty-seventh annual International Film Festival on Human Rights, "Stalker," which opened on 10 December, Human Rights Day, with a video message from the High Commissioner for Human Rights. OHCHR participated in the closing ceremony of the Festival and awarded a special prize to one of the documentaries.

Development

D2 – Business actors effectively implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

1 2 3 5 8 9 13 16 17

OHCHR continued promoting the UNGPs. In October, OHCHR participated in the Social Forum on the Role of Responsible Business in Achieving Sustainable Development, organized by the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RSPP). The Forum combined in-person and virtual discussions, which enabled the attendance of a greater number of participants from different regions of Russia. Speakers included ministers and deputy ministers of key development ministries, including the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Labour and senior management from

leading companies and the financial services sector. OHCHR's intervention focused on the UNGPs as an international standard for business in the context of the SDGs. Emphasis was placed on the joint OHCHR-RSPP compilation and publication of successful corporate practices of Russian business covering human rights and business and its connection with the SDGs. The representative of the RSPP welcomed the role of OHCHR and the national Global Compact Network in building partnerships to develop and disseminate good practices that address the corporate responsibility to respect human rights.

The Office assisted the Global Compact National Network to prepare and submit to the Grant Committee a grant proposal for a project entitled "Support for the establishment of business and human rights community of practices in the Russian Federation." The project was launched at a gala event during the Global Compact annual meeting that took place at the Public Chamber of Russia. The meeting marked the twentieth anniversary of the Global Compact and the tenth anniversary of the UNGPs. Participants included senior government officials, senior managers of leading companies and representatives of the media and civil society.

In February, OHCHR collaborated with the FAO Liaison Office for Russia and the Global Compact National Network to co-organize the Second Cooperation Forum entitled "SDGs: Instruments for business practices." The Forum, held in Moscow, combined in-person and virtual discussions to promote widespread participation across the country. The event was supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Development. Speakers included Anatoly

Chubais, Special Representative of the President of Russia, who spoke about relations with international organizations for achieving the SDGs; Sergey Vershinin, Deputy Foreign Minister; the Ambassadors of Switzerland and Great Britain to Russia; and senior managers of companies that are members of the Global Compact. The audience included representatives of State institutions, UN agencies, CSOs, various companies, business associations and unions, academics and leaders of working groups that prepared Russia's VNR. OHCHR organized a special session on the tenth anniversary of the UNGPs. During the session, Ms. Elzbieta Karska, member of the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, gave a presentation on UNGPs as an international standard for business in the context of the SDGs. OHCHR stressed the importance of promoting UNGPs among Russian companies through cooperation with the Global Compact and all relevant stakeholders. The participants welcomed the role of OHCHR and the Global Compact National Network in building partnerships and strengthening efforts to develop and disseminate good practices that address the corporate responsibility to respect human rights.

In July, OHCHR participated in the working session of the Global Compact National Network in the city of Kazan and delivered a presentation on the tenth anniversary of the UNGPs at the thematic panel on "Business and human rights."

D7 – State actors integrate human rights, including the right to development and the outcomes of the international human rights mechanisms, as they implement the SDGs and other development and poverty eradication efforts. The UN supports them in these actions and integrates human rights into its own development work.

OHCHR contributed to the application of a human rights-based approach to development planning and implementation that complies with international human rights norms, standards and principles.

In the context of the Summer School on Human Rights, OHCHR cooperated with the Federal Ombudsperson and the Ombudsperson in the Republic of Tatarstan to co-organize a roundtable entitled "The role of human rights commissioners in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals." The Deputy Ministers of Labour and Social Protection, Ecology and Natural Resources, Construction and Architecture and Health informed the audience about the implementation of the SDGs and spoke about the report *Regions of Russia and Sustainable development goals - Republic of Tatarstan*, presented at UN Headquarters in 2020. Participants also included human rights commissioners from the Volga Federal Okrug, the Director of the United Nations Information Centre and CSOs from Tatarstan. The Federal Ombudsperson paid special attention to the role of human rights commissioners as the guarantors of the SDGs, particularly in relation to achieving SDG 16.

In October, OHCHR also led a workshop for representatives of the Office of the Ombudsperson in the Perm region on "Human rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." The purpose of the event was to promote a human

rights-based agenda that was grounded in the SDGs in order to support the objectives of Leaving No One Behind(LNOB), eliminating discrimination and reducing inequality. Participants included 20 staff members of the Office of the Ombudsperson (15 women, five men). They were provided with tools to identify synergies between human rights and SDG reporting while also taking into account the recommendations issued by the international human rights mechanisms. Participants reaffirmed that NHRIs have a responsibility to foster opportunities for collaboration, partnerships and synergies in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to engage with key stakeholders at the local level, including authorities, representatives of the business community, academia, NGOs and civil society. The pilot workshop for NHRIs will be replicated in other regions to give increased visibility to the connection between the SDGs and human rights and to strengthen the role of NHRIs in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda.

SERBIA

Population size ¹	Surface area ¹	Human Development Index ²	NHRI (if applicable) ³
8.7 million	88,580 km ²	0.806 (rank: 64/189 in 2019)	A Status (2021)
Type of engagement		Human Rights Adviser	
Year established		1996	
Field office(s)		Belgrade	
UN partnership framework		UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021-2025)	
Staff as of 31 December 2021		4	

XB requirements 2021 **US\$568,000**

Key OMP pillars in 2021



^{1,2,3} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176

PILLAR RESULTS:

 **Participation**

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



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

The HRA continued to support, through regular exchanges, the efforts of the Platform of Organizations for Cooperation with UN Human Rights Mechanisms. The Platform prepared and submitted joint reports to the international human rights mechanisms and

interacted with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. The Platform undertook various communications initiatives, including strategic engagement with authorities and line ministries in relation to policy development and thematic areas of interest, such as prevention of torture, the rights of the child and the rights of persons with disabilities. It also engaged in joint monitoring and advocacy on human rights implementation and accountability. The Platform’s other areas of focus included risk mitigation processes, signalling urgent developments, contributing to policy development and thematic exchanges with authorities and the NMRF to jointly follow-up on specific thematic recommendations issued to Serbia by the international human rights mechanisms.

The HRA also delivered a capacity-building training to the 20 leading CSOs of the Platform, at their request, on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the

LNOB principle and linkages with the outcomes of international human rights mechanisms.

Furthermore, the HRA advocated for increased civil society participation in policy development. More specifically, CSO representatives participated in public discussions and working groups that develop legislative and policy documents. Furthermore, the regular “social dialogues” hosted by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, supported by the UN, included numerous speakers and interveners representing civil society. OHCHR also supported the active participation of civil society representatives in the work of the State’s NMRF. This support included targeted initiatives and thematic sessions, such as on follow-up to outcomes issued by the special procedures and individual complaints considered by the human rights treaty bodies.

Finally, the HRA continued to report on risks and threats faced by civil society, which helped to support the UNCT and the RC in high-level advocacy and risk mitigation actions undertaken with the Government.



Non-discrimination

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, the HRA provided advisory support for policy development, either directly or through the UNCT. The efforts of the HRA and the UNCT were instrumental in the preparation, discussion and adoption of several policies that are largely compliant with international human rights standards. These policies include the amended Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, which was widely discussed and resulted in a strengthened anti-discrimination legal framework; the first Action Plan accompanying the National Disability Strategy, which was adopted in 2020 and is generally compliant with the provisions of CRPD; the draft Same Sex Union Law, which was widely shared with the public prior to its adoption; and the baseline and structure for the National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan, which is currently under public discussion. Expert guidance was also provided for the draft Deinstitutionalization Strategy and the Law on Rights in Social Care Accommodation and the draft Law on Gender Equality.

With the support of the Surge Initiative, the HRA collaborated with the EU Convention of CSOs to produce an innovative tool to mainstream the LNOB principle into policymaking across government sectors. The Ministry for Human Rights is now responsible for maintenance of the tool and its implementation, which will begin in 2022. The tool was also shared with CSOs, public institutions, State experts and UN entities.

Following the move of the NMRF Secretariat from the Office for Human and Minority Rights to the Ministry for Human Rights, the HRA increased its support to the Secretariat’s staff to address the risk of institutional memory loss. This included

the development of core staff capacities through their participation in regional OHCHR consultations on the NMRF. In addition, the National Recommendations Tracking Database (NRTD) will be introduced in Serbia in 2022. Several workshops were also delivered on the SDGs, human rights indicators, core standards, reporting and follow-up, and the expansion of the NMRF mandate to include follow-up to the recommendations issued by the special procedures and individual decisions of the human rights treaty bodies.

Furthermore, the HRA focused on building the capacities of CSOs. Specifically, training was provided to increase their capacities to integrate and advocate for the realization of SDGs and mainstream LNOB principles. In addition, at its request, the HRA provided the NHRI with training sessions on monitoring and reporting on economic, social and cultural rights, integrating the 2030 Agenda and including CSOs in their monitoring activities.

Following the publication of the *Report on youth rights in Serbia*, in April, the HRA supported partner CSOs in issuing annual reports on the situation of the human rights of youth and women and on gender equality. Local groups were included in this process. In addition, youth rights defenders and groups prepared and submitted the first youth-specific alternative report on Serbia to CESCR. The HRA supported the Platform of CSOs in submitting its joint alternative reports to CAT and CESCR.

The HRA delivered regular briefings on human rights developments, risks and opportunities to the RC and the UNCT. This informed high-level interventions and advocacy with senior State officials (i.e., the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the Parliament, line ministers) on a wide range of human rights issues, including

threats to civic space and freedom of expression, the human rights implications of COVID-19, divisive and nationalistic narratives and depictions related to war crimes and criminals.

Finally, the HRA led joint advocacy initiatives related to LGBTI equality through a collaborative campaign that consisted of 120 staff and officials from 12 international organizations and embassies in Serbia. The campaign included posts in traditional media outlets and social media that reached several hundred thousand people. The HRA continued to provide contextual analysis on major risks and human rights developments to the UNCT, RC and UN Human Rights headquarters in Geneva, with a view to supporting appropriate actions and responses.



Mechanisms

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

16 17

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

The Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue was established at the end of 2020 and replaced the Office for Human and Minority Rights. The role of the NMRF Secretariat, which was previously based in the Office for Human and Minority Rights, was not discussed until the second half of 2021. At that time, the HRA initiated in-depth discussions with State Secretaries, Assistant Ministers and expert staff to

enable the NMRF to resume its work and enhance its capacities and performance. As a result, the Line Minister is chairing the NMRF and the Ministry is serving as the Secretariat. The HRA provided several training sessions to staff and decision makers of the Ministry in order to build their capacity and increase their knowledge regarding the role of the NMRF. Further, the NMRF developed a Plan for Recommendations Monitoring that was submitted to the Government for endorsement. The NMRF resumed its regular sessions and thematic discussions with civil society at the end of 2021. A commitment was made to introduce and fully utilize the NRTD as soon as it becomes available. The HRA facilitated sessions between State actors and the CSO Platform to discuss the possible expansion of the NMRF mandate to include follow-up to recommendations issued by the special procedures and human rights treaty bodies.



Accountability

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

16



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.

Over the past few years, trainings were developed and delivered to the judiciary on human rights standards, and the 2018 online database on the Judicial Academy's web portal was updated to support the direct application of international human rights law in judicial proceedings. These actions enabled the HRA to more

effectively support the development and application of case law markers to measure progress.

The HRA initiated this work in partnership with the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Cassation and the Judicial Academy. However, finalization of this task was stalled due to the emergence of the pandemic and a consequential shift in priorities. International human rights standards were introduced and applied in different jurisdictions during the reporting period, yet efforts to measure the extent to which these standards are being brought before domestic courts will formally resume in 2022, when the working group reconvenes.



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.

3 5 8 10 13 16 17



OHCHR contributed to the increased integration of human rights into the humanitarian response.

The HRA supported the process of strengthening the UNCT's skills and knowledge about transitional justice through several actions and initiatives. Specifically, the HRA provided consistent analysis and updates to the RC and UN entities on transitional justice-related developments and risks on the ground, with an emphasis on local and national implications, as well as implications for the Western Balkans subregion more

broadly. In addition, the HRA initiated an informal Task Force on Transitional Justice under the UNCT Result Group on the Rule of Law and Human Rights to prompt immediate action by UN entities.

Furthermore, on behalf of the RC, the HRA facilitated the country visit of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, in November 2021. This included the preparation of substantive documents and analysis, advisory assistance and support when meeting with counterparts and civil society representatives. As a follow-up to this visit, the UNCT developed an action plan on combating hate speech.

The HRA also hosted a discussion related to the visits of the DPPA from November to December 2021 and in January 2022 and extended expert support to the UNCT in preparing a mid-term plan of action to strengthen its intervening role in the area of transitional justice.

Finally, the HRA supported the strategic communication and advocacy efforts of the RC and the UNCT on critical developments regarding an increase in nationalistic narratives on the ground, the denial of atrocity crimes and public depictions glorifying atrocity crimes and war criminals.

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 Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 (Armenia); United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 (Azerbaijan); United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 (Georgia)
Staff as of 31 December 2021	11

XB requirements 2021

US\$965,000

Key OMP pillars in 2021



PILLAR RESULTS:

Accountability

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 supported the capacity-development of national institutions and programmes to enhance their knowledge

on HRBA and to contribute to achieving SDG 16.

In Georgia, the HRA strengthened the capacity of the State Inspector Service and supported the advancement of policies, laws and practices that enhance independence of the Service, especially with regard to investigations of alleged human rights violations committed by law enforcement agencies. Following the findings of a study supported by the HRA, a package of legislative changes was submitted to the Parliament of Georgia for endorsement. The State Inspector Service was, however, unexpectedly abolished by the Parliament, in December. Together with UNDP, the HRA co-organized a two-day meeting of the State Inspector

Service with the Public Defender's Office (the NHRI) to enable senior officials and staff from both institutions to understand the mandate and methods of work of their respective institutions, develop a methodology for documenting complaints and establish a formal communication process between the two institutions.

The HRA provided support and advocacy to the Ministry of Justice related to legislative reform of the criminal code and the development of a definition of torture in line with international standards. The Office also cooperated with the Ministry of Justice to establish a national mechanism for supporting the rehabilitation of victims of torture and other ill-treatment. The HRA undertook a study on the existence of rehabilitation systems for victims of torture in different countries that was used as an advocacy tool to encourage the Government to make a policy decision on the creation of such a mechanism.

At the request of the Government, the HRA provided expert advice on the preparation of a Human Rights Strategy and an accompanying National Action Plan. The Strategy and Action Plan are being finalized and are expected to be adopted in 2022.



Accountability

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 governments of the region.

16

OHCHR contributed to mainstreaming human rights into UN common country programmes in the subregion.

In **Azerbaijan**, OHCHR continued raising awareness about the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the human rights of vulnerable groups and recommended action to be taken by national stakeholders. OHCHR delivered two trainings to 48 representatives, including 29 women, from CSOs and bar associations in Baku and the regions (Ganja, Mingachevir, Sabirabad and Salyan).

OHCHR continued to participate in meetings organized by OCHA and the UNCT in Azerbaijan to coordinate humanitarian actions undertaken by UN agencies and national actors in response to the armed conflict of 2020. OHCHR and UN agencies provided legal assistance and psychosocial counselling services for populations in the conflict-affected regions, distributed relief items among conflict-affected persons and supported national authorities in demining and other activities. OHCHR also held briefings for governmental and development agencies on the legal services being delivered through OHCHR-run programmes for persons residing in conflict-affected regions, including the Barda and Ganja regions.

OHCHR participated in the development of the joint workplans of the United

Nations UNSDCF 2021-2025. In doing so, it ensured the inclusion of two key activities that will contribute to the achievement of an UNSDCF output on strengthening national policies and mechanisms to promote and protect human rights, increase access to justice and participatory mechanisms and sustain social cohesion by 2025.

Through participation in meetings of the Taskforce of the UN Azerbaijan and State Statistical Committee on SDG Monitoring and Reporting, OHCHR provided governmental and UN agencies with an overview of its publication *Human rights indicators tables: Updated with SDG indicators*. The publication provides guidance on how to use human rights indicators to measure progress in the implementation of human rights standards, including by taking SDG indicators into account. OHCHR also contributed to the development of a guidebook entitled *Data disaggregation for SDGs*, which identifies current challenges to data disaggregation in Azerbaijan and aims to strengthen the expertise of national institutions in producing disaggregated data related to the SDGs, in accordance with good practices.

Furthermore, OHCHR provided the National Coordination Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Sustainable Development with detailed information about recommended country-specific human rights tools and data for applying a HRBA in the preparation of Azerbaijan's Voluntary National Review of SDG progress in 2021.

In **Georgia**, the HRA provided advice on human rights to the five UN entities working in-country (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, WHO and UN Women), which collaborated to implement a project on the rights of persons with disabilities.

The HRA also led the UN Human Rights Thematic Group, actively participated in updating the CCA and led the UNCT's advocacy efforts to encourage the Government of Georgia to accept key recommendations, including in relation to the justice sector, that were issued during the third cycle of the UPR. In July 2021, the Government announced that it had accepted all of the recommendations that were highlighted by the UNCT.

In **Armenia**, OHCHR participated in the formulation of the UNSDCF, which was signed in 2021, to ensure that human rights would be mainstreamed into UNSDCF's Outcome 6.



Participation

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



OHCHR helped to increase the capacity of legal professionals and CSOs to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in accordance with international standards.

In **Azerbaijan**, OHCHR launched a new three-year project with the aim of protecting the human rights of vulnerable groups. Within the framework of this project, OHCHR will deliver systematic capacity-building programmes on a wide range of critical human rights topics and will ensure continued support for the engagement of the national actors in international and national human rights advocacy. The project will also contribute to improved access to justice for vulnerable groups by advocating for the establishment of a civil legal aid system in the country and the extension of free legal aid to members of vulnerable groups and

other persons affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In cooperation with the Ombudsperson and the Bar Association, OHCHR provided legal assistance to members of vulnerable groups in Baku and other regions and built on the developing pro bono culture among private legal professionals. The Office extended the provision of this assistance to the five regions of Azerbaijan on a permanent basis. As a result, 1,549 individuals (719 women, 830 men) from vulnerable groups benefited from legal assistance in 2021. The cases primarily focused on women's rights, housing rights, social security rights, labour rights and administrative law.

To support the launch of an advocacy campaign and coordinate efforts for the increased access of vulnerable groups to civil legal aid, OHCHR established a working group composed of national experts from the Azerbaijani Bar Association, the Parliament, CSOs and the Office of the Ombudsperson. Following focused discussions with these experts, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Justice, legal practitioners and academic institutions, OHCHR prepared a set of recommendations and findings.

OHCHR continued cooperating with the Bar Association and provided support to their capacity-building programme for newly admitted members of the Bar. In 2021, OHCHR delivered 10 trainings for 119 lawyers, including 54 women, on the international human rights system. During these trainings, OHCHR raised the awareness of lawyers regarding the core principles and obligations provided in various human rights treaties, including CEDAW, CRC, CRPD and ICRMW. Support was also provided to local district branches of the Bar Association through the delivery of over 300 copies of human

rights educational materials and publications in the Azerbaijani language.

In **Georgia**, the HRA conducted knowledge-building activities for various groups to assist with the protection of the rights of victims of human rights violations. In partnership with the Georgian Bar Association, the HRA conducted a series of trainings for lawyers. A total of 80 practicing defence lawyers, 45 of whom were women, were trained on the right to life, the prevention of torture, and non-discrimination.

Moreover, the HRA supported civil society inclusiveness in the process of establishing a coordination mechanism for the implementation of CRPD and advocated for ensuring that the voices of civil society and OPDs were heard at the government level.



Non-discrimination

ND3 – Legal and social frameworks increasingly promote the autonomy and choices of women and girls and protect them from violence, including in the digital space.



OHCHR contributed to strengthening the UNCT's efforts to promote the autonomy and choices of women and girls and protect them from violence.

In **Azerbaijan**, OHCHR and the RC co-organized an awareness-raising event on women's rights to commemorate International Women's Day. The event brought together 48 representatives, including 35 women, from CSOs and members of bar associations. The objective was to raise awareness about the international legal framework on women's rights and increase attention regarding

key challenges to women's access to justice in Azerbaijan.

OHCHR joined the RC and UN agencies to mark the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. The 2021 campaign focused on building alliances with men and boys in an effort to address GBV under the message "Stop violence against women." OHCHR provided support to the United Nations Gender Theme Group (GTG) to conduct a number of events. As was the case in previous years, OHCHR ensured that contact information for free legal assistance in Baku and the regions were displayed at all events and widely disseminated throughout the campaign.

OHCHR participated in the GTG session, which explored opportunities for UN joint programming and fundraising on gender mainstreaming activities. The Office emphasized the importance of access to justice for victims of GBV and provided information on its free legal assistance in Baku and the regions for vulnerable groups, including victims of GBV. Furthermore, with support from the GTG, a training on Gender Equality Markers was delivered to UN staff and implementing partners. Emphasis was placed on gender transformative monitoring and evaluation and reporting processes to ensure that gender mainstreaming is properly integrated into planning and implementation activities. OHCHR also provided substantive inputs to the UNCT confidential submission to CEDAW, in anticipation of its consideration of Azerbaijan's sixth periodic report.

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

5 10 16

OHCHR contributed to increasing the level of engagement of selected groups on human rights messages in support for equal, inclusive, and diverse societies without discrimination.

In **Azerbaijan**, OHCHR launched the second phase of its joint programme with the legal department of the Baku State University to finalize a new human rights curriculum for the Master's Programme at Baku State University. The University launched the new human rights curriculum in January 2022 and introduced a number of courses related to international human rights law, including the international human rights system, international human rights obligations, regional human rights systems, women's rights and the rights of the child, business and human rights, freedom of information and expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the Internet and human rights. OHCHR also supported the development of a textbook on the theory and practice of human rights in Azerbaijani and English. The textbook will serve as one of the fundamental teaching materials in the Bachelor's and Master's Programmes in Human Rights at the University and will be made available to other academic institutions teaching human rights in the country.

In cooperation with the RC and UNFPA, OHCHR delivered a seminar for 16 representatives from national CSOs and lawyers on the impacts of COVID-19 on women's rights and gender equality. The seminar raised the awareness of participants on the core documents and statements issued by CEDAW and OHCHR on the heightened

risks of GBV and discrimination faced by women during the pandemic.

In **Georgia**, the HRA participated in preliminary discussions and the drafting of the 10-year State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration, which seeks to bring about equality for Georgia's ethnic minorities. OHCHR advocated for the alignment of the Strategy with international and regional human rights standards. The Strategy was adopted at the end of 2021.

Some progress was made regarding respect for the rights of LGBTI persons. For the first time, the Government of Georgia issued documents to a person who underwent sex reassignment surgery. Furthermore, in collaboration with UNDP, the European Union Delegation in Georgia, the Government of Georgia and the Public Defender, the HRA organized a human rights forum and the first public discussion in Georgia's history on the rights of LGBTI persons.

ND8 – The UN system implements a coherent and human rights-based response to inequality and discrimination, including intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination.

10 16 17

OHCHR supported a coherent human rights-based approach in relation to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

In **Azerbaijan**, OHCHR led the implementation of the training component of UNCT's 2020 Action Plan on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. As a result, OHCHR facilitated the delivery of four trainings for over 120 UN staff members on different aspects of PSEA, including the prevention and management

of risks of sexual exploitation and abuse, the application of the UN's PSEA standards at the national level, the referral of victims for medical, psychosocial and legal support, the responsibilities of PSEA focal points and the functioning of PSEA community-based complaints mechanisms. In addition, OHCHR and other UN PSEA focal points developed an inter-agency PSEA community-based reporting mechanism, which will ensure a collective in-country approach to preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, on 18 November, OHCHR and the UNCT PSEA team delivered a training for partner CSOs on key UN policies relating to PSEA and the role of those partners in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. As a result, over 55 members and leaders of partner CSOs received guidance on developing their own PSEA action plans and conducting PSEA assessments. Information was also provided on a range of measures and tools that are recommended by the UN to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and abuse.

UKRAINE

Population size ¹	Surface area ¹	Human Development Index ²	NHRI (if applicable) ³
43.47 million	604,000 km ²	0.779 (rank: 74/189 in 2019)	Status A (2019)
Type of engagement		Human Rights Monitoring Mission (HRMMU)	
Year established		2014	
Field office(s)		Kyiv; field offices in Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kramatorsk, Luhansk, Mariupol and Odesa	
UN partnership framework		United Nations Partnership Framework 2018-2022	
Staff as of 31 December 2021		41	

XB income **US\$6,227,925**

XB requirements 2021 **US\$7,226,000**

XB expenditure **US\$5,319,595**

Personnel	Non-personnel	PSC ⁴
81%	10%	9%
\$4,294,663	\$526,522	\$498,410

Key OMP pillars in 2021



^{1,2,3,4} Please refer to Data sources and notes on p.176 and p.179

PILLAR RESULTS:

Peace and Security

PS3 – State authorities adopt and implement laws and programmes to prevent sexual violence from occurring in the context of conflict, violence and insecurity and investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual violence.

16

OHCHR helped to strengthen oversight, accountability and protection mechanisms to ensure their compliance with international human rights standards by monitoring CRSV.

The HRMMU began human rights monitoring and research to determine the extent of domestic violence occurring in the armed group-controlled territory. Women living in conflict-affected areas on both sides of the contact line were found to be at higher risk of domestic violence due to a lack of security, a high military presence, impunity for perpetrators and economic hardship. Following amendments to Ukrainian legislation on domestic violence in 2018, women and girls in government-controlled territory have access to protective measures that are unavailable to women and girls in armed group-controlled territory. In areas of the

Donetsk and Luhansk regions that are controlled by armed groups, older legislation and policies inspired by the Russian Federation’s legal approach to domestic violence is in force.

The HRMMU monitoring identified a severe shortage of shelters and support services for victims of domestic violence in this territory. Activists are unable to carry out their work due to a fear of being accused of espionage for accepting assistance and funding from international organizations. Those who remain in armed group-controlled territory do so in secret and at great personal risk to their safety and liberty. The HRMMU reported publicly and briefed interlocutors on the situation.

The HRMMU also contributed to developing a List of Early Warning Indicators on conflict-related sexual violence. The document was prepared with UN Women, at the request of the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy, in accordance with the second Ukrainian National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

In cooperation with the OHCHR Women’s Rights and Gender Section and UN Women, the HRMMU continued to assess the situation of women human rights defenders (WHRDs) in Ukraine. This involved workshops, research, thematic webinars and briefings throughout 2021. For instance, the HRMMU held a series of webinars for over 40 WHRDs aimed at enhancing their engagement with the special procedures, as part of the Mission’s international advocacy efforts to promote and protect women’s rights and gender equality, combat online violence against women and strengthen engagement and collaboration between WHRDs.

In 2022, the HRMMU will build on these initiatives, in partnership with WHRDs, the UNCT, the Government and other relevant stakeholders.

The Mission also undertook advocacy to improve protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). As a result of consistent joint advocacy undertaken by the HRMMU, diplomatic corps and civil society, the HRMMU has seen a progressive improvement in the policing of peaceful LGBTI assemblies in large cities across the country. In the past, the police failed to adequately respond to violent actions from counterdemonstrators or provided insufficient security to participants before and after assemblies where they were violently attacked. In 2021, all pride events, in particular LGBTI equality marches in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa and Kryvyi Rih, were successfully secured by law enforcement.



Peace and Security

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



OHCHR supported compliance of legislation/policy with international human rights norms and standards..

OHCHR continued monitoring the human rights situation in Ukraine, including Crimea, and regularly updated all relevant stakeholders, such as national authorities, CSOs and the international community through two periodic and two thematic reports on Ukraine, a thematic report on arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment in the context of armed

conflict in eastern Ukraine and a second thematic report on civic space.

The HRMMU also issued a briefing paper on enforced disappearances in Crimea and drafted two Secretary-General reports on human rights in Crimea. The HRMMU continued documenting individual cases of human rights violations in Crimea, including cases of torture/ill-treatment and civic space restrictions, and continued supporting human rights defenders from Crimea through capacity-building activities and direct assistance. Following OHCHR’s coordinated advocacy with other stakeholders, the Parliament repealed legislation, which assigned “non-resident taxpayer” status to persons originating from Crimea and residents of mainland Ukraine with a Crimean address listed on their passport. The Russian Federation adopted a resolution that cancelled the so-called “one-time crossing rule,” which was introduced as a travel restriction during the pandemic.

The HRMMU kept national and international partners informed about the human cost of the conflict through public reports, monthly updates and ad hoc updates and briefings. More specifically, the HRMMU maintained a comprehensive record of conflict-related civilian casualties in Ukraine. The record reflected data disaggregated by sex, age, place of incident, control over the place of the incident and the weapon(s) used/type of incident.

The HRMMU’s monitoring and reporting efforts were strengthened by robust advocacy that facilitated several breakthroughs, including confidential access to detainees in armed group-controlled territory (AGCT) for the first time in many years. It is hoped that this will lead to similar access by other stakeholders, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and UN agencies, and result

in a practical exchange of information on the situation of individuals in custody and human rights concerns in AGCT. In addition, following the HRMMU's advocacy in relation to the conflict-affected population, the Parliament temporarily suspended penalties for residents of AGCT when travelling to the Russian Federation in order to enter government-controlled territory. Normally, civilians who cross a State border in areas not controlled by the Government are in violation of Ukrainian laws. The temporary regulation removes the former administrative liability for civilians, including fines, for the duration of quarantine or in cases when entry/exit checkpoints (EECPs) are closed, and civilians choose this route on humanitarian grounds.

The HRMMU also continued issuing briefing notes on the impact of the pandemic on health-care workers in Ukraine. This highlighted the degree to which the situation for frontline health-care workers, 83 per cent of whom are women, dramatically worsened during the pandemic. This included unhealthy and unsafe working conditions, violence and threats of violence.

Furthermore, the HRMMU led advocacy with State and local authorities on the need for additional measures to protect the life and health of homeless people, especially in the context of COVID-19 and during the winter. As a result, homeless shelters were opened in Zaporizhzhia and Melitopol and funding for another shelter in Sumy was unblocked.

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

16 

OHCHR supported the application of a human rights-based approach to programmes by UN entities.

The HRMMU continued to coordinate the Human Rights Working Group in order to mainstream human rights across UN organizations in Ukraine.

Advocacy efforts by the Office and the UNCT led to the Government's adoption of the National Roma Strategy. In addition, the HRMMU led the coordination of the UNCT's inputs for the Roma Strategy Action Plan.

The HRMMU, UNDP, UNHCR and UN Women briefed members of the UN Human Rights Committee prior to its consideration of Ukraine's eighth periodic report. The HRMMU highlighted the lack of accountability and impunity for conflict-related crimes committed by government officials, legislative and procedural gaps in addressing conflict-related sexual violence, gaps in ensuring a remedy and reparations to the conflict-affected population, deficiencies in the administration of justice, attacks on freedom of expression and privacy and concerns surrounding the State policy for transitional justice. These issues were included in the Committee's concluding observations.

The HRMMU, along with UN agencies, provided inputs into the World Bank's five-year strategy in Ukraine. It also shared evidence-based information gathered by the HRMMU on obstacles to housing and utility subsidies for households living in vulnerability. With regard to the conflict situation in eastern Ukraine, the

HRMMU continued to provide information about recent developments in the conflict zone to other actors on the ground, including the Trilateral Contact Group and the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. This included details about hostilities, civilian casualties, conflict-related detentions, simultaneous releases under the Minsk agreements and interactions with de facto authorities.



Mechanisms

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

16 17

OHCHR supported the drafting of the National Human Rights Strategy and National Human Rights Action Plan 2021-2023 and the alignment of national laws with international criminal law and international humanitarian law.

The HRMMU led the provision of joint UNCT technical support and inputs for the preparation of the draft National Human Rights Strategy and National Human Rights Action Plan 2021-2023, both of which were adopted in 2021. These inputs helped to ensure that the draft Strategy includes increased protection for the most vulnerable groups and reflects gender mainstreaming across all spheres of life.

Due to persistent advocacy, technical cooperation and recommendations provided by the HRMMU, the Parliament adopted a law on the harmonization of criminal law with standards and principles of international criminal law and international humanitarian law. As recommended by the HRMMU, this legislation aligns the

provisions on criminal liability for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression with the Rome Statute and customary international law. It also includes crucial provisions on command responsibility, the non-applicability of statutory limitations for international crimes and universal jurisdiction for the prosecution of international crimes.

In cooperation with other members of the UNCT, the HRMMU led analysis of the draft law entitled “On the principles of the State policy for the transitional period,” which was elaborated by the Ministry for Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories. The analysis noted that the draft law fails to comply with international standards, is not victim-oriented, lacks a gender perspective and that the definition and overall approach to transitional justice does not correspond to UN standards. After the draft was registered with the Parliament, the Resident Coordinator reached out to the Speaker of the Parliament and the Heads of parliamentary factions to outline the HRMMU’s concerns about the draft law. On 18 October 2021, the Venice Commission published an opinion, which reiterated the HRMMU’s primary concerns. The Minister for Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories declared her commitment to reviewing the draft and cooperating with the Parliament.

Accountability

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.

16

OHCHR supported the compliance of State institutions and programmes with international human rights norms and standards.

In December 2021, the HRMMU launched the second OHCHR thematic report, *Civic space and fundamental freedoms in Ukraine*. The report analysed civic space concerns and suggested recommendations that are expected to improve the situation related to civic space and fundamental freedoms, empower civil society and encourage public participation in Ukraine.

The HRMMU’s advocacy efforts and timely preventive actions that were undertaken with the Ministry of Justice, the national police and the Office of the Ombudsperson contributed to the prevention of hate crimes and violence. Furthermore, the HRMMU’s working relationship with Facebook (Ukraine) enabled the Mission to report materials of concern and increase Facebook’s awareness of hate speech patterns in Ukraine. As a result, Facebook took down a number of posts that incited violence, thereby making the online space safer.

During the reporting period, prevention of and accountability for torture and ill-treatment remained a top priority for the HRMMU in the government-controlled territory, the territory controlled by self-proclaimed republics and in Crimea. In July 2021, OHCHR released a thematic report, *Arbitrary detention, torture, and ill-treatment in the context of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, 2014-2021*. The report examines the prevalence and patterns of conflict-related arbitrary detention, including secret and incommunicado detention, and conflict-related torture and ill-treatment, including conflict-related sexual violence. Furthermore, it addresses accountability for these violations, including a remedy and reparations for victims. The report will help keep the issue in the public spotlight and ensure that these heinous practices continue to decrease.

In parallel, the HRMMU led advocacy efforts on the draft law on the Security Service of Ukraine to ensure that it contains strong safeguards against torture and ill-treatment committed by officials of the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU). It also undertook advocacy on Law No. 2689 on the harmonization of national legislation with international humanitarian law and international criminal law, which was adopted by the Parliament in May 2021 but has not yet been signed by the President. Finally, the HRMMU promoted amendments to the Criminal Code to bring the definition of torture in line with CAT.

“We are devoted to this work because the health and lives of people are at stake.”

“We don't just work a lot,” said Svitlana Panarina, a nurse from conflict-affected Toretsk in eastern Ukraine. “We work non-stop. This is not an office where you can just go home at 5 pm, leaving some tasks for tomorrow. We are devoted to this work because the health and lives of people are at stake.”

Health-care workers in Ukraine – 83 per cent of whom are women – were already in a vulnerable situation before the COVID-19 pandemic started. With salaries below the national average, coupled with unhealthy and unsafe working conditions and inadequate social security, the situation of health-care workers in the country worsened during the pandemic.

At the time of writing, confirmed COVID-19 cases in Ukraine are again on the rise. Since the pandemic began, there have been more than 2.2 million cases and close to 53,000 deaths.

Panarina has been working as a therapeutic nurse in Toretsk City Hospital for three years. She said they were partially prepared for the pandemic through courses and trainings, but the situation rapidly evolved.

She recalled a time when there were only three nurses and one doctor left in her department. Oxygen concentrators were lacking and it became impossible to treat people.



Svitlana Panarina © Zhenya Pedin

THE RIGHT TO HEALTH UNDER THREAT

As reported by the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU), increased workloads, insufficient time for rest and inadequate wages forced many health-care workers to leave their jobs. According to the State Statistical Service, the number of health-care workers decreased by 5.4 per cent in 2020 – from 777,000 in January to 734,900 in December. This change, however, is also partially due to ongoing health care reforms.

“The shortage of qualified health-care staff will inevitably continue to have a negative impact on the population’s right to health, including their access to and the quality of

essential services,” says Matilda Bogner, Head of HRMMU.

Ambulance crews have decreased in the city of Kharkiv, resulting in extended shifts of up to 16 hours, a lack of disinfection of vehicles and inadequate breaks for the staff.

While the Government has tried to address the issue of remuneration of health-care workers by introducing temporary bonuses for those involved in the pandemic response, there are concerns about the lack of transparency in their distribution, unequal pay for work of equal value and a further widening of the gender pay gap.

Some bonuses, for instance, were larger for doctors than mid-level and junior health-care staff, who are primarily women. Additionally, the Government’s payment

of salary bonuses of up to 300 per cent were only available for medical staff working in medical facilities where people with confirmed COVID-19 cases were hospitalized and treated. As a result, not all health-care workers who were in contact with COVID-19 patients, such as family doctors, were entitled to this remuneration.

Furthermore, although more than 55,000 health-care workers had been infected by COVID-19 as of 31 December 2020, only a small percentage were recognized by authorities as work-related, impeding their right to compensation.

“In line with its international human rights obligations and national commitments, Ukraine should significantly increase its investment in the health sector to improve working conditions for health-care workers,” said Bogner. “They should be provided with decent pay, occupational health and safety and social security and consulted about policymaking at all levels, including through trade unions.”

MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS, INEFFECTIVE TRADE UNIONS

One of the issues that became visible and urgent during the pandemic was the absence of mental health and psychosocial support services for health-care workers in Ukraine.

“We don’t have any kind of help like that,” said Panarina. “Instead, we cope by supporting each other and rejoicing when we have the opportunity to help someone and when patients leave us in good health. This is the only way to cope emotionally.”

As reported by the UN HRMMU, some health-care workers claimed that the health-care trade unions, which should be supporting them and advocating for their rights, were not effective and that health-care workers who have blown the whistle regarding issues of concern have not been protected. At the same time, health-care unions stated they were not effectively consulted (at the national or local level) about the Government’s COVID-19 response.

When asked whether she was afraid to work during the COVID-19 pandemic, Panarina emphatically responded “no.” Despite the challenges, many health-care workers did not give up, she said. Instead, they became more resilient and began fighting and advocating for their collective rights.

Panarina is now passionate about “helping our health workers remember their dignity and teaching them to defend their rights.”