

EUROPEAN YEARBOOK ON HUMAN RIGHTS 2021

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**VIENNA FORUM FOR
DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**



EUROPEAN YEARBOOK
ON HUMAN RIGHTS 2021

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FOREWORD

2020 has been a particularly challenging year for human rights across the globe. The breadth of the issues faced by governments, civil society and individuals in Europe, and their complexity and interdependence, is thoroughly reflected in the selected contributions to this year's 13th edition of the European Yearbook on Human Rights.

2020 will always be viewed as the year of the great and global health crisis. Yet the health crisis also quickly developed into a human rights and rule of law crisis. In 2020, it became apparent that we can no longer rest on our laurels and pride ourselves on past achievements in the protection and promotion of human rights. While commitment to upholding human rights standards has been faltering across Europe for several years already, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this erosion. On the symbolic day of 10 December 2020, Human Rights Day, I told the Member States of the Council of Europe that we are at a crossroads.¹ If we want to bolster individual freedoms rather than relinquishing them and empower people rather than marginalising them, we must show courage and firm commitment to the fundamental principles of post-war European solidarity: to human rights, democracy and the rule of law as ultimate guarantors of peace, justice and democratic security.

In 2020, we have been forced to focus our attention on an often overlooked, yet indispensable and fundamental human right: the right to health.² Without it, we cannot live in dignity, and our ability to exercise any other right, – to vote and enjoy civil and political freedoms, to work, learn and create – is significantly restricted. The COVID-19 pandemic has made us painfully aware that human rights, while individual rights, cannot be protected effectively at an individual level only. They need effective and inclusive systems, accessible to everyone and built on a robust sense of solidarity. This is especially true for social rights – which are often, however, still treated as an afterthought. It is exactly this nonchalance towards the right to health and its essential social determinants in the past that proved lethal in 2020.

¹ D. MIJATOVIĆ, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 'The impact of COVID-19 on human rights and how to move forward', Speech, 10.12.2020, available at www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/speeches, last accessed 14.07.2021.

² D. MIJATOVIĆ, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Protecting the right to health through inclusive and resilient health care for all', Issue Paper, February 2021, available at www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/issue-papers, last accessed 14.07.2021.

Even before the pandemic struck, health data demonstrated that disparities in access to preventive health care and treatment, based on gender, minority or socioeconomic background, were common across Europe.³ Overall, the less advantaged in European societies have been experiencing worse health outcomes and reduced life expectancy. Alarming, the health gaps between socioeconomic groups have been increasing with age, demonstrating the shortcomings of European health and social care systems long before COVID-19. Yet the pandemic made more visible the painful truth of inequality that still afflicts our societies.

Following the 2008 financial crisis, many European states enacted austerity measures. These resulted in reduced public health financing and contributed to significant gaps in health services coverage. Austerity, as a general rule, strongly affects inclusivity, hitting the marginalised and vulnerable the hardest, with those on lower or fixed incomes, including older persons, children and persons with disabilities, suffering the most. Gaps in public health coverage lead to out-of-pocket payments and result in affordability problems as well as non-recourse or delayed recourse to health care, which can have disastrous consequences for both individual and public health. In the long term, it often leads to an increase in health expenditures. In many European countries, the pandemic tragically exposed the pre-existing weaknesses of health and social care systems that had been strained by years of austerity, economic difficulties and neglect. In some, past austerity measures heightened the need for early and particularly stringent lockdowns, which further limited access to non-COVID-related health care, severely restricted the enjoyment of other rights and had significant effects on mental health.

The right to health requires inclusive prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services for all, leaving no one behind and ensuring that structural inequalities are not magnified over time but pre-empted and addressed. Sustained efforts must be made to assure free access to high-quality health care for all, guided by the needs of patients rather than profit and regardless of gender, nationality, religion or socioeconomic status.⁴ This is a complex but not an impossible task, involving in many European countries public and private actors working interdependently.

Moreover, the right to health cannot be addressed independently from the other social rights. In addition to inclusive and resilient health care systems that are based on strong primary care and universal health coverage, four essential

³ WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) 'Healthy, prosperous lives for all: the European Health Equity Status Report', 2019, available at www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/health-equity-status-report-2019, last accessed 14.07.2021.

⁴ PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE (PACE) 'Lessons for the future for an effective and rights-based response to the COVID-19 pandemic', Resolution 2329(2020), June 2020, available at www.assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=28676, last accessed 14.07.2021.

social determinants for the right to health for all have been determined: income security and social protection; adequate living conditions including housing; education; and decent labour and employment conditions. Remarkably, the WHO argued in 2019 that the most cost-effective means of closing the health divide in Europe would be the increased investment in housing and community amenities.⁵ But unfortunately, affordable housing remains in short supply in Europe, and the overall average spending by governments on social housing has been decreasing over the last decade – while the number of homeless persons, including homeless children, has increased significantly.⁶

2020 dispelled all doubts. Health and social policymaking must be comprehensive, gender-sensitive and coherent. It must integrate economic, social and environmental governance dimensions at all levels of the process, based on participatory and rights-based budgeting. To ensure the best attainable standard of physical and mental health for all, we need a skilled health and social care workforce, adequate public financing and, crucially, effective leadership and governance. In addition, sustained efforts must be made to enhance equality and dignity for patients, promote transparency and accountability in relevant decision-making, and develop adequate health communication policies. It is also crucial that Council of Europe Member States ensure equitable global distribution of medical products and vaccines in all countries, rich or poor, invest in gender-inclusive bio-medical and pharmaceutical research that adequately addresses the health needs of men, women and children and adopt a ‘One Health’ approach in public health preparedness and global health security.

However, COVID-19 has not only been a health crisis. While the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic varies from state to state across Europe, large redundancies have made unemployment surge in all of them, prompting the risk that poverty will become an even greater challenge over the coming years. Social and economic rights support civil and political rights – and vice versa – as people who are forced to spend all their time trying to find ways to survive are prevented from taking part in public life and exercising their civil and political rights. But still today, the common perception lingers that social rights are a luxury – not important human rights obligations with immediate effect, whose non-observance has dire consequences not only at individual level but also for society as a whole. Their protection and equal enjoyment must therefore become a priority for all Council of Europe Member States.

Amid the pandemic’s disastrous effects on multiple aspects of human rights protection across the globe, there is consensus in one area: children and young people have been particularly hard hit. While – thus far at least – they have

⁵ WHO (2019) ‘Health status report’, *supra* note 3.

⁶ D. MIJATOVIĆ, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, ‘The right to affordable housing: Europe’s neglected duty’, Human Rights Comment, 23.01.2020, available at www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/blog-2020, last accessed 14.07.2021.

largely been spared from the direct health effects of COVID-19, the crisis has had a disproportionate, profound impact on their wellbeing. Virus containment measures have deprived them more than other groups of their usual routines, cutting them off from their social structures and support networks. During successive lockdowns, children across Europe have faced isolation, depression and a marked increase in domestic violence and abuse. OECD research revealed that young people's mental health has significantly declined since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis and remains higher than pre-crisis levels.⁷ In addition, school closures – lasting many months in some European countries – have dramatically affected children's access to education and, in some cases, to healthy food. With schooling diminished to online learning models, the pre-existing digital divide has disproportionately limited the learning opportunities of children from less affluent families, further compounding inequality in European societies.

The pandemic has also exposed again the entrenched patterns of gender inequality across Europe. This is evident in the workplace, where deep-rooted societal attitudes keep women in a subordinate role, in the steady consistency of violence against women and in the increasing attempts to limit women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. Cases of domestic violence have increased exponentially across Europe during the lockdowns. Despite measures adopted by some governments to counter this alarming development, much remains to be done. This is especially so amid renewed attempts by ultra-conservative movements across Europe to undermine the Istanbul Convention and the progress made previously in the fight against gender-based violence. Under the pretext of defending family values and traditions, misrepresentations of the Convention continue to be disseminated, often hiding a misogynist and homophobic agenda. To those opponents, it is worth repeating: it is not a treaty combating domestic violence that destroys families, but rather, domestic violence itself.⁸ LGBTI rights have also been under sustained attack in 2020, with a visible rise in hateful rhetoric, targeted stigmatisation and the propagation of homophobic narratives by public officials in some Member States.⁹

In 2020, we have witnessed substantial regression in other areas of human rights, as well. Of central concern is the worrying erosion of the rule of law in

⁷ ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) 'Supporting young people's mental health through the COVID-19 crisis', 12.05.2021, available at <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/supporting-young-people-s-mental-health-through-the-covid-19-crisis-84e143e5/#section-d1e16>, last accessed 14.07.2021.

⁸ D. MIJATOVIĆ, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 'European treaty against women's violence "saves lives"', Opinion, 11.05.2021, available at www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/opinion-articles, last accessed 14.07.2021.

⁹ D. MIJATOVIĆ, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Pride vs. indignity: political manipulation of homophobia and transphobia in Europe', Human Rights Comment, 16.08.2021, available at www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/blog-2021, last accessed 27.08.2021.

many Council of Europe Member States. The pandemic has been used by some governments as a welcome pretext to exploit fears and stifle dissent. Emergency legislation, often adopted without sunset clauses, has disproportionately restricted the exercise of rights, risking long-term consequences for human rights and the rule of law. In some Member States, the rights to information and media freedom have been particularly affected, curbing the most precious antidote against fear and distrust during times of crisis: the public's access to reliable and timely information and the possibility to freely exchange opinions. Measures restricting freedom of movement and freedom of assembly have been used to undercut the ability of human rights defenders and civil society to act in defence of human rights and aid the most vulnerable, with harsh and physical attacks against journalists and human rights defenders being particularly alarming. In addition, sustained attempts have been made to undermine the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and hamper the effectiveness of national human rights structures. European countries' failure to protect refugees and migrants trying to reach Europe via the Mediterranean has continued to cause thousands of avoidable deaths.

Clearly – and as also reflected by the range of serious challenges analysed in this book – Europe is thus facing multiple human rights crises in parallel. Crisis situations are always enormous tests for societies, for individuals, for communities and for governance, and they are times when human rights, democratic values and the rule of law become especially important. Thankfully, we have the European Convention on Human Rights and its protection system and a multitude of other ground-breaking legal tools to help us meet today's challenges. For decades, human rights have been instrumental in protecting individuals from state abuse and paving the way for major societal changes. They have served as benchmark and inspiration for institutions, human rights activists and countless individuals alike who pursued dignity, equality and justice throughout challenging times. Without them, we would doubtlessly be in a much worse situation.

State authorities must show renewed vigour today in implementing their human rights obligations and stand by the principles on which the Council of Europe was built. One lesson of 2020 is that societies are only as strong and resilient as their weakest members. The equal enjoyment of all human rights, including social and economic rights such as access to health care, housing and education for all, must be emphasised and robustly fought for, even if it takes an increase in public spending.

It is furthermore essential that we become more inclusive in the way we defend human rights. We must not only talk *about* but also *with* the victims of human rights violations, and we must listen to them carefully. Meaningful participation plainly leads to better outcomes. We have painfully learned in 2020 that decisions that are going to affect patients, women, school children or the health care work force are better taken in close consultation with representatives

of these groups.¹⁰ Lastly, it is imperative that cooperation and multilateralism be strengthened. The human rights challenges of today are too grave and too vast to be tackled at the national level only. We need international consultation and close collaboration to effectively address global challenges such as migration, the environment and current and future health crises. But we also need cooperation at the national level between government, civil society, independent institutions, media, community leaders and the private sector to ensure that human rights play a central role in public policymaking and in everyday life.

Dunja Mijatović
Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

¹⁰ D. MIJATOVIĆ (2021), 'Protecting the right to health', *supra* note 2.

EDITORS' PREFACE

Dear readers,

When COVID-19 hit the world, policy-makers and governments introduced a wide range of measures in the name of the pandemic. Their necessity might have been easily argued from a public health perspective justifying restrictions on some rights, such as those resulting from the imposition of quarantine or isolation limiting the freedom of movement and/or freedom of assembly. Additionally, as it was an unprecedented crisis, states authorities had to deploy maximum resources to combat the spread of the disease and had to take decisions at speed, which, while being well intended, might inadvertently have had a negative human rights impact. As the pandemic has now been going on for over a year in which the knowledge about the disease has considerably increased and vaccines have turned out to be an effective means to combat it, now seems to be the right moment to reflect on the impacts COVID-19 had on human rights and to assess the proportionality and necessity of state responses to the pandemic in light of human rights. COVID-19 measures disproportionately impacted certain groups of people, marginalised communities and certain individuals in society, exacerbating existing shortcomings in the protection of human rights and raising profound challenges with respect to non-discrimination laws, prevailing structural inequalities and the fragility of the rule of law. In order to ensure a resilient human rights system, there is a need to assess all these issues in order to ensure that in the future, responses to crisis not only pay respect to human rights but are rooted in them.

The European Yearbook on Human Rights has always been a platform for young and renowned scholars to raise, address and discuss important and topical human rights issues. It does not come as a big surprise, thus, that the 2021 EYHR is a special edition dedicated to 'Human Rights in Times of a Pandemic'. When selecting the final contributions, we, the editorial team, endeavored to cover a wide variety of topics, and we are proud to provide our readers with such a rich and intensive corpus of materials which clearly draws attention to important human rights aspects of the pandemic and contributes to the wider debate on state discretion in times of emergencies.

The 2021 EYHR is opened by a foreword by Dunja Mijatović, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. In the last two years, Dunja Mijatović has constantly raised the need to find a human rights-based approach to the pandemic, particularly highlighting the importance of economic, social and cultural rights. We are therefore very grateful that she agreed to contribute to

this year's edition, providing us with her insights and approaches to human rights in times of a pandemic.

Shifting to the international level, we are proud that Volker Türk, the Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination of the United Nations, opens our thematic section with a contribution on the responses by the UN to the pandemic, seen from a human rights perspective ('Early Lessons Learnt from the COVID-19 Pandemic and the United Nations Response').

Following the contribution by Volker Türk, the Yearbook moves to address the human rights impacts of the pandemic and states responses to it. In the first two contributions, important moral and philosophical questions raised by the pandemic are discussed. Accordingly, Laura Palazzani in her contribution 'The Pandemic and the Ethical Dilemma of Limited Resources: Who to Treat?' dives deep into the dilemma on how to distribute scarce resources in health care during emergency situations. The relationship between the state and its citizens, the bond between them and the mutual trust has been considerably stressed in the last years. Carinne Elion-Valter, in her contribution 'Social Contract in Public and Corporate Governance: Metaphor or New Morality?', addresses whether there is a need and potential for a new social contract between the state and civil society involving new actors, such as corporate businesses.

The human rights implications of the pandemic and the interplay between emergency situations and human rights is commonly understood in terms of negative human rights obligations and the interference of the state in human rights. However, Silvia Venier in her contribution 'Positive Obligations to Protect against Epidemic Outbreaks under Human Rights Law' takes a different perspective, focusing on states' positive human rights obligations as duties to take active steps to protect in all phases of the emergency cycle.

Moving to immediate COVID-19 induced interferences with human rights, Christina Binder and Adam Drnovsky in their contribution on 'Elections in Times of COVID-19: A Human Rights Perspective' analyse how democratic principles surrounding free and fair elections increasingly eroded during the pandemic. The concern for the rule of law is also at the heart of the contribution 'The Effects of COVID-19 on the EU Approach on the Rule of Law: Implications for the Commission and European Parliament' by Pietro de Perini, Paolo De Stefani and Marco Mascia, assessing whether the EU institutions have stepped up their efforts to protect the rule of law in Member States when the pandemic exposed the fragility of European values, including the rule of law.

Institutional responses to the pandemic are also subject to analysis in three further contributions: Heidi Suorsa asks whether the pandemic might have created a window of opportunity for the European Union to push for and finally create a European Health Union ('Creating a European Health Union in Times of COVID-19: A Trajectory Towards a Fundamental Right to Health Care?'). As the pandemic, the spread of the disease and its impact have also been

connected to the environment and especially air pollution, Chiara Scissa in her contribution 'The Right to a Healthy Environment as an EU Normative Response to COVID-19: A Theoretical Framework' questions whether the pandemic might not help the right to a healthy environment to have more consideration and momentum. Lastly, Signe Andreasen Lysgaard and Jonas Grimheden in their contribution on 'The EU Sustainable Finance Agenda: A Strengthened Case for Human Rights in Times of COVID-19' assess the contributions of the taxonomy sector to creating social sustainability.

The next contributions deal with the human rights of particular vulnerable groups during the pandemic. Dragana Stöckel and Marina Pantelić dedicate their contribution to the difficult balance needed to protect the lives of people in long-term care facilities and respect their human rights to family life and freedom of movement ('Human Rights of Residents in Long-Term Care Facilities During COVID-19: Saving Lives at the Cost of Deprivation of Rights?'). Andrea Broderick and Silvia Favalli argue for increased efforts related to the transition from institutional care to community living of persons with disabilities. In institutional settings, the pandemic has not only resulted in increased risks of isolation and exploitation, but has also caused a disproportionate number of deaths amongst inhabitants of residential institutions and group homes, which fuels claims to increase efforts for different forms of living ('The Transition from Institutional Care to Community Living in the EU: Lessons Learned in the Shadows of the COVID-19 Pandemic').

Migration and asylum remain high on the political agenda despite – or because of – the pandemic. The contribution by Aphrodite Papachristodoulou on 'Migrants at Sea Amid the Coronavirus Pandemic: The Perfect Pretext for Endorsing *à la carte* Respect for Human Rights' is the first of three contributions dealing with the rights of migrants during the pandemic. While Papachristodoulou focuses on the rights of migrants intercepted and rescued at sea and subsequently detained under COVID-19 directives, Alan Desmond argues that the pandemic has been instrumentalised by states to maintain the restrictive approaches to migration which we have seen in particular since 2015/2016. ('The European Approach to Irregular Migration in Pandemic Times: The More Things Change, the More they Stay the Same?'). Elspeth Guild, Kathryn Allinson and Nicolette Busuttil subsequently assess whether the Global Compacts for Refugees and Migrants added to the protection of the rights of migrants in times of the pandemic ('Implementing the UN Global Compacts for Refugees and Migrants in Times of Pandemic: A View from the EUMS').

When Carinne Elion-Valter, in her contribution in the beginning of the Yearbook, raised the question of the need to discuss a new social contract involving big companies, tech companies have been clearly part of her considerations. These have played a central role during the pandemic, by assisting states, individuals, businesses and other entities to get through not only the public health crisis, but also a socio-economic one. The need to discuss their

powers and human rights responsibilities is addressed by Sabrina Rau in her contribution on 'Technology Companies' Due Diligence and the Responsibility to Respect Amid COVID-19: What are Proportionate Means where there is Power and Reliance?'

The thematic section on COVID-19 and human rights is brought to a close with a case study on 'Serbia's Compliance with Article 2(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Times of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Pandemic or Endemic?' by Danilo Ćurčić and Vlada Šahović, prescinding the need to protect economic and social rights.

The second part of the EYHR 2021 deals with other human rights developments in Europe and beyond, aside from the pandemic. It opens with a contribution by Claire Methven O'Brien on 'Business and Human Rights in Europe 2011–2021: A Decade in Review'. The need to strengthen corporate responsibilities is also subject to analysis in the contribution by Virginie Rouas on 'Towards Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence in the European Union? Opportunities and Challenges for Corporate Accountability'.

A fairly new instrument adopted by the EU allowing for interventions against serious human rights abuses occurring beyond the Union's borders by adopting targeted sanctions is the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (GHRSR), which is analysed by Carmelo Danisi in his contribution on 'The European Union's Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime and the "Role Responsibility" of International Organisations'.

And lastly, Cristina Pugnale and Mathilde Bénard shed light on 'National Human Rights Institutions: An Emerging Human Rights Actor in The European Union'.

Courts play a crucial role in the protection of human rights in Europe and beyond. As it does every year, the EYHR includes a section on the relevant jurisprudence by the European Courts in the field of human rights. This year the jurisprudence part is opened by a contribution by Eirik Holmøyvik on 'The Right to an Effective (and Judicial) Examination of Election Complaints', which analyses recent developments in the case law of the ECtHR related to election complaints as essential guarantees of free and fair elections. Subsequently, Lorenzo Acconciamesa analyses relevant judgments of the ECtHR, while Christian Breitler and Martin Traussnigg focus on the relevant jurisprudence of the European Court of Justice.

The EYHR has always aimed to provide insights in the practical field of human rights. This year's edition is thus completed by a short contribution by Markus Möstl and Wanda Tiefenbacher from the UNESCO International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels on their efforts to promote human rights at the local level.

The pandemic brought about a number of changes for all of us. One positive change concerns the composition of the editorial team of the EYHR. The European Training and Research Centre on Human Rights and Democracy of the University of Graz (UNI-ETC), the Austrian Human Rights Institute of the University of Salzburg and the Global Campus of Human Rights Venice, which have acted as institutional bases from the outset, have been joined in 2021 by the Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights. We would like to thank all our authors and reviewers, who bore the burden of another year of COVID-19 restrictions and still managed to submit all the contributions on time, allowing for a punctual publication of the EYHR. We would furthermore like to thank the Global Campus of Human Rights for its financial support, which makes this publication possible. Many thanks also go to Agnes Romanin for her excellent work and support. And lastly, particular thanks go to Ann-Christin Maak-Scherpe, Ahmed Hegazi and the wonderful Rebecca Moffat from Intersentia for their constant support, their availability and their flexibility during the entire publication process.

Graz, Salzburg, Venice, Vienna – August 2021
Philip Czech, Lisa Heschl, Karin Lukas,
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACHR	American Convention on Human Rights
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AG	Advocate General
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ARSIWA	(Draft) Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts
ASGS	Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy
ATS	Alien Tort Statute
A&M	Asylum and Migration
BHR	Business and Human Rights
BID	Bail for Immigration Detainees
CCPR	Committee on Civil and Political Rights (Human Rights Committee)
CDDH	Steering Committee for Human Rights' (<i>Comité directeur pour les droits de l'homme</i>)
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CEDAW	Convention/Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CERD	UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CEU	Central European University
CFR	Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
CILD	Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
CoE	Council of Europe
COMEST	World Commission for the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technologies
CPR	Common Provisions Regulation
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRII	Corona Response Investment Initiatives

CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility/Country Specific Recommendations (European Commission)
CSRD	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive
CST	Civil Service Tribunal
DALY	Disability Adjusted Life Years
DARIO	Draft Articles on the Responsibility of International Organisations
DH-BIO	Committee on Bioethics of the Council of Europe
DPO	Person with Disabilities
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EASPD	European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities
EAW	European Arrest Warrant
EC	European Commission
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECRE	European Council for Refugees and Exiles
ECSR	European Committee of Social Rights
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
ED	Executive Director
EDAP	European Democracy Action Plan
EDPS	European Data Protection Supervisor
EdTech	Education Technology
EEA	European Economic Area/European Environmental Agency
EGC	European General Court
EGE	European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies
EHU	European Health Union
EMN	European Migration Network
ENNHRI	European Network of National Human Rights Institutions
EP	European Parliament

EPSR	European Pillar of Social Rights
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ERoLM	European Rule of Law Mechanism
ESC	European Social Charter
ESCR	European Committee on Social Rights
ESF	European Social Fund
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
EU	European Union
EUBI	Emergency Universal Basic Income
EUMS	European Union Member States
EWRS	Early Warning and Response System
FRA	EU Agency for Fundamental Rights
FRO	Fundamental Rights Officer
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GA	United Nations General Assembly
GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GC	General Comment, Grand Chamber
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GCSA	Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to the European Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GHRSR	Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HRC	Human Rights Committee/Human Rights Council
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
HRIAs	Human Rights Impact Assessments
HRVP	High Representative for Foreign Affairs
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IACtHR	Inter-American Court of Human Rights
IBC	International Bioethics Committee
ICC	International Criminal Court/International Chamber of Commerce
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

ICJ	International Court of Justice
IHR	International Health Regulation
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
ILC	International Law Commission
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCR	Integrated Political Crisis Response
LGBT+/I	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual plus/ Intersexual
LIBE	Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
LTCF	Long-term Care Facility
MC	Marrakesh Compact
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MNE	Multinational Enterprise
MS	Member State
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO(s)	Non-governmental Organization(s)
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
NVT	New Voting Technologies
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OLP	Ordinary Legislative Procedure
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PHEIC	Public Health Emergency of International Concern
PM	Particular Matter
QALY	Quality Adjusted Life Years
QMV	Qualified Majority Voting
RAMM	Regulation on Migration and Asylum Management
RBC	Responsible Business Conduct Working Group
RDR	Ranking Digital Rights
RoL	Rule of Law

RtP	Responsibility to Protect
SAR	Search and Rescue
SCA	Sub-Committee on Accreditation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SOLAS	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
SRSG	UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises)
TCN	Third-Country Nationals
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNGPs	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNWG	UN Working Group (on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises)
US(A)	United States of America
VCLT	1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties
WG	Working Group on issues of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization

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