OVERVIEW

THE SITUATION OF ARTICLE 2 TEU VALUES IN THE EU AND IN THE MEMBER STATES

Update nr 36 of 13 July 2022

NB: the latest updates are highlighted in yellow.

(Part 3 of the DRFMG Overview)
Abstract
This overview, drafted by the European Parliament’s Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the Monitoring Group on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights of the LIBE Committee, aims at monitoring and collecting information on the situation of Article 2 TEU values in the EU and in the Member States. It is based on open sources such as media articles, reports of national, European and international bodies and NGOS, etc.
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<td>23. THE NETHERLANDS</td>
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<td>25. PORTUGAL</td>
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<td>29. SPAIN</td>
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### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CoE</td>
<td>Council of Europe</td>
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<td>DRF</td>
<td>Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights</td>
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<td>ECRE</td>
<td>European Council of Refugees and Exiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUCJ/CJEU</td>
<td>Court of Justice of the European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPI</td>
<td>International Press Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPU</td>
<td>International Parliamentary Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIBE</td>
<td>Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Monitoring Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE</td>
<td>Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. INTRODUCTION

This overview, drafted by the European Parliament’s Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the Monitoring Group on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights of the LIBE Committee, aims at monitoring and collecting information on the situation of Article 2 TEU values in the EU and in the Member States. It is based on open sources such as media articles, reports of national, European and international bodies and NGOs, etc.

From March 2020 to March 2022, it was entitled “The impact of Coronavirus measures on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights in the EU - An overview of the measures taken by EU Member States” and was updated initially on a weekly basis, then twice a month and more recently monthly and circulated before each meeting of DRFMG. It initially focused on Covid measures and their impact on DRF, state of emergency, extraordinary powers and corresponding measures adopted by MS in a wide series of areas, substantially corresponding to Article 2 TEU values. These consolidated overviews are now available on the DRFMG website as Part 1, covering the period April 2020 to March 2021 and Part 2, covering the period March 2021 to March 2022.

DRFMG progressively shifted its focus from Covid measures and their impact on DRF/Article 2 TEU values to the overall situation of Article 2 TEU/DRF values in the Member States, and the Overview experienced a similar development in order to be useful for DRFMG. The current Overview consequently adapts its structure to mirror such development. The fact that the Covid situation in Europe has progressively improved, leading MS to exit from state of emergency or extraordinary powers and revoking Covid measures, as well as the establishment of the Covid Special Committee by the EP during its session of March 2021, militate in favour of adapting the focus and structure of this Overview.

Disclaimer: the document has been prepared on the basis of open source documents, press articles, press releases, institutional websites, etc. It is a work in progress document, providing an overview of a dynamically changing situation and it may contain errors, in which case you are welcome to inform us so that we can check and correct.

1 the following 9 issues were monitored for each Member State, the EU and UN/Council of Europe/OSCE: 1. Rules governing the State of emergency and exceptional powers for the government; description and duration of the measures; role of parliaments; the judiciary 2. Freedom of movement (internal and cross-border; sanctions) 3. Freedom of expression, media freedom, freedom of information (and sanctions) 4. Freedom of assembly (and sanctions) 5. Privacy and data protection 6. Asylum and migration and migration 7. Prisons 8. Discrimination 9. Any other issue relevant for Art. 2 TEU
# TABLE 1: MONITORING THE EXIT FROM STATE OF EMERGENCY OR EMERGENCY POWERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>State of Emergency or similar used for Covid?</th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Exit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BG</td>
<td>(now) OTHER: epidemic situation (but YES initially)</td>
<td>- 13 March- 13 May: State of Exception - 14 May - June 14: epidemic situation; prolonged to end of June; further extended to mid-July, then to end of August, then to 30 September, then to end of November, end of January and currently to the end of July - extended to the end of August - 25 August 2021: State of emergency prolonged for three months to the end of November</td>
<td>31 March 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>OTHER: declaration of outbreak of the epidemic disease</td>
<td>-11 March</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CY</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>YES (New state of humanitarian emergency for Ukrainian refugees crisis )</td>
<td>- 12 March (to 17 May) - from 5 October, for 30 days - until 20 November, then extended to 12 December - extended until 14 February, then until 28 February, then until March 28, then 11 April - declared on 4th March the new state of humanitarian emergency for Ukrainian refugees crisis</td>
<td>Exited on 11 April 2021 declared on 4th March the new state of humanitarian emergency for Ukrainian refugees crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>OTHER: Emergency situation</td>
<td>12 March</td>
<td>17 May 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FI</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>16 March</td>
<td>27 April 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>OTHER: State of sanitary emergency</td>
<td>- 23 March until 10 July; - a law on exit of the state of sanitary emergency was approved, allowing for various restrictive measures to be adopted and remain in place - then again State of sanitary emergency declared from 17 October on - state of sanitary emergency extended until 1 June 2021 - a law allowing for gradual easing of restrictions adopted on 27 May 2021 – state of sanitary emergency will end on 30 September - State of emergency extended until 15 November 2021 - 13 October: French government proposed to extend the state of emergency until end of July 2022</td>
<td>31 July 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>State of danger, medical crisis, emergency</td>
<td>Dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- 18 June - 18 December 2020: State of medical crisis  
- State of emergency: from 3 November on, then from 10 November 2020 for 90 days; then until 1st of March 2021; on 24 February 2021 extended for further 90 days.  
- 3 November 2020 – 8 February 2021 second state of danger; third state of danger ordered on 8 February 2021  
-State of medical crisis extended until 18 June 2021  
-28 September 2021: state of emergency extended to 1 January 2022  
-14 December: state of emergency extended to 1 June 2022 | The effect of the Third Authorization act for state of danger has been extended until the 15th day following the first day of the Parliament’s 2021 autumn session, which means may last until then 1 June 2022 |
| EL      | NO    | State of humanitarian emergency - before: State of emergency due to health crisis | 31 January to 31 July, extended to 31 October, then to January 2021 and subsequently to 30 April 2021; extended until 31 July 2021, then to 31 December 2021; extended to 31 March 2022  
3 March: declared a new state of humanitarian emergency until 31 December | 31 March 2022  
State of humanitarian emergency until 31 December 2022 |
| HU      | OTHER | State of danger, now State of medical crisis, then State of emergency | 12 March-9 June  
Then again from 9 November 2020 to December 6, then to January 11, to 7 February, and subsequently extended to 6 April  
- Extraordinary safety measures from 21 October to 14 November  
- three-month state of emergency starting from 8 November (- 10.08.2021: a state of emergency at the Belarus border is declared, running from August 11 until November 10, enabling the Armed Forces and the state police to assist the Border Guard with the prevention of illegal immigration. On 19 October, it was extended until 10 February 2021).  
- 24.01.2022: Authorities in Latvia are planning to extend the state of emergency in the Ludza Region, Augsdaugava Region, Kraslava Region, and the City of Daugavpils until May 10. | 28 February 2022 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Other: State of extreme situation on the basis of the Law on Civil Protection</th>
<th>Timeline Details</th>
<th>Additional Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>OTHER: State of extreme situation on the basis of the Law on Civil Protection</td>
<td>- 25 February-16 June</td>
<td>26 February: declares state of emergency for Ukraine’s refugees crisis until at least 10 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Then again (national state of emergency and the territory (absolute preparedness) level of the civil protection system) from Sept/Oct until further notice</td>
<td>(- 1 July: entered the state of national emergency due to Belarus crisis)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- state of emergency declared on 10 November and will be in place until 10 December along the border with Belarus and five kilometres inland, as well as at migrant accommodation facilities in Kybartai, Medininkai, Pabradė, Rukla and Vilnius</td>
<td>26 February: declares state of emergency for Ukraine’s refugees crisis until at least 10 March</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>18 March</td>
<td>24 June 2020; loi Covid 19 approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>OTHER: State of epidemic</td>
<td>20 March (State of emergency for Belarus crisis)</td>
<td>(State of emergency for Belarus crisis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>YES (State of calamity)</td>
<td>- from 18 March to 8 May: State of emergency</td>
<td>Until 20 March 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- from 8 May - mid-June, and prolonged to end June: State of calamity</td>
<td>- from 1 July: State of Alert (continental Portugal), State of Contingency (Lisbon), State of Calamity (in 19 parishes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- from 15 September: state of contingency (mainland Portugal), State of calamity (Madeira until end of Sept, Azores until 15 Sept), State of alert (for some Azores islands)</td>
<td>- from 15 October: State of calamity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- State of Emergency on Monday, November 9 until 23 November; then extended until 8 December; then to 23 December, to 31 January and then to 14 February; state of emergency extended again until 1 March, then 31 March, 30 April</td>
<td>- State of Calamity from 1 May to 13 June, then to June 27, 25 July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- since August: State of contingency</td>
<td>- since 1 December: return to State of calamity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td>Now OTHER: State of alert (but YES initially)</td>
<td>- 16 March - 15 May: State of emergency</td>
<td>8 March 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 15 May - 14 June: State of alert; renewed on 17 June, in mid-July, in mid-August, on 15 Sept, 15 Oct, 15 Nov, 14 December; 13 January, each time for 30 days; on 12 February, extended for another 30 days and extended again until 1 March, then 31 March, 30 April</td>
<td>- since August: State of contingency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| SK      | YES    | - 16 March - 13 June: State of emergency
|         |        | - 11 March - 16 March, and 13 June on: Extraordinary situation
|         |        | - From 1 October to mid-November: state of emergency
|         |        | - from mid-Nov to the end of the year
|         |        | - in December extended until 8 February
|         |        | - extended until 19 March 2021
|         |        | - extended until 29 April 2021
|         |        | - extended until 28 May 2021
|         |        | - lifted 14 May 2021
|         |        | - crisis situation remains in place since 11 March 2020 |
|         |        | Lifted 14 May 2021 |
| SL      | YES    | Lifted on 15 June 2021 |
| ES      | OTHER: State of alarm | 14 March - 21 June
|         |        | 9 October state of alarm for Madrid for 2 weeks
|         |        | Extended on 29 October for 6 months |
|         |        | Lifted on 9 May 2021 |
| SE      | NO     | / |
|         |        | / |
### TABLE 2 on Annual Reports by Institutions and NGOs on Article 2 TEU values / DRFEM in chronological order of publication during the year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Geographical area</th>
<th>Thematic areas</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World report</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
<td>World</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption perceptions index</td>
<td>Transparency International</td>
<td>World</td>
<td>Corruption, integrity, etc</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>ILGA-Europe</td>
<td>54 States, 4 Eur. institutions</td>
<td>LGBTIQ</td>
<td>16 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country reports</td>
<td>EU Commission</td>
<td>EU MS</td>
<td></td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>E.C.R.I</td>
<td>CoE</td>
<td>racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual activity report</td>
<td>GRECO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to COM RoL report</td>
<td>European Civic Forum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of Law index</td>
<td>World Justice Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Liberties</td>
<td>14 EU MS (Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, Slovenia, Slovakia and Sweden).</td>
<td>DRF 9 March</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>Varieties of Democracy Institute (V-Dem)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission on RoL to the COM</td>
<td>ENNHRI</td>
<td>EU MS</td>
<td></td>
<td>25 March 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices (Human Rights Reports)</td>
<td>US State Department</td>
<td>world</td>
<td>individual, civil, political, and worker rights, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights + other int.I agreements</td>
<td>End of March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report on the Supervision of the execution of ECHR judgments</td>
<td>CoE Council of Ministers</td>
<td>CoE MS</td>
<td></td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Amnesty International</td>
<td>world</td>
<td>Human rights and fundamental freedoms...</td>
<td>7 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>ODHIR</td>
<td>world</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Press Freedom Index</td>
<td>Reporters Without Borders (RSF)</td>
<td>world</td>
<td>Media freedom, freedom of expression, protection of journalists</td>
<td>20 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Activity report</td>
<td>CoE Commissioner for HRs</td>
<td>CoE MS</td>
<td>CoE areas of activities</td>
<td>21 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nations in Transit</td>
<td>Freedom House</td>
<td>29 countries of Central Europe and Asia</td>
<td>state of democracy</td>
<td>28 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Entity</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>CoE Platform for the Protection of</td>
<td>CoE MS</td>
<td>Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists</td>
<td>28 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Perception Index survey</td>
<td>Latana and the Alliance of Democracies</td>
<td></td>
<td>Democracy perception</td>
<td>5 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>ENNHRI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Specific recommendations</td>
<td>EU Commission / Council</td>
<td>EU MS</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights at large</td>
<td>May-June-July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamental Rights Report</td>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>EU MS</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>Moneyval</td>
<td>CoE MSs</td>
<td>Money Laundering, terrorism financing</td>
<td>4 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Pluralism Monitor</td>
<td>EUI - Centre for media pluralism and media</td>
<td>EU MS and Turkey</td>
<td>Basic Protection, Market Plurality, Political Independence, Social</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusiveness, digital transformation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Report</td>
<td>CoE Secretary</td>
<td>CoE MS</td>
<td>area of activities</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of Law Annual report</td>
<td>EU Commission</td>
<td>EU MS</td>
<td>Judiciary, corruption, media, checks and balances, civil society</td>
<td>End July 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice Scoreboard</td>
<td>EU Commission</td>
<td>EU MS</td>
<td>independence, quality, efficiency of national justice systems.</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report</td>
<td>CoE ECtHRs</td>
<td>CoE MS</td>
<td>Court’s organisation and activities, developments in the case-law, full</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>statistical data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civicus Monitor</td>
<td>Civicus</td>
<td>world</td>
<td>citizen action, civil society; indicators of civic space: freedom of</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>association, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>state duty to protect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activizenship reports</td>
<td>European Civic Forum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report on FRs</td>
<td>European Parliament</td>
<td>EU MS</td>
<td>DRFEM at large</td>
<td>varies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The situation of Article 2 TEU values in the EU and in the Member States

2. UN, COUNCIL OF EUROPE, OSCE

1. DEMOCRACY
- 8.04.2022: The Council of Europe has issued a set of guidelines to its 46 member states to address the challenges to the fairness and legitimacy of electoral processes created by new digital political communication techniques. These challenges include the possible abusive use of microtargeting, personal data, bots and algorithms, as well as disinformation campaigns. (Council of Europe – Press release)

2. RULE OF LAW

2.1. JUSTICE
- 15.03.2022: ECHR found that the premature ending of mandate for a member of the Polish National Council of the Judiciary is a violation of the Convention. The case concerned Mr Grzęda removal from the National Council of the Judiciary (NCJ) before his term had ended and his inability to get judicial review of that decision. His removal had taken place in the context of judicial reforms in Poland. (ECHR Press Release)
- 24.03.2022: The European Court of Human Rights has decided to indicate an interim measure in the cases concerning charges brought against Polish judges. The applicants are Polish judges, actively involved in the work of judicial associations. They all risk suspension for having applied, in their judicial decisions, the European Court’s case-law and the rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union relating, in particular, to the Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court and the National Council of the Judiciary (NCJ).
- 30.03.2022: The latest annual report from the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers on the implementation of judgments from the European Court of Human Rights has highlighted many positive developments whilst also underlining that the system faces a number of serious challenges. However, the human rights protection system faces several challenges, with more complex cases coming to the Court and governments finding it increasingly difficult to respond quickly to judgments. The departure of Russia from the Council of Europe will also have consequences, whilst highlighting the importance of the human rights convention in difficult times. (Source – Council of Europe Press release)
- 31.03.2022: The European Court of Human Rights has decided to indicate an interim measure in the case Glowacka v. Poland. The applicant, Anna Glowacka, is a Polish national who was born in 1962. She is a judge in the Kraków Regional Court (Sąd Okręgowy). Ms Glowacka risks suspension for having applied, in a judicial decision, the European Court’s case-law relating, in particular, to the Disciplinary and Civil Chambers of the Supreme Court and the National Council of the Judiciary (NCJ). Earlier this week, Ms Glowacka lodged an application with the European Court under Article 34 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 20.04.2022: The European Court of Human Rights has given notice to the Government of Poland of the application Wróbel v. Poland and requested that they submit their observations. The case concerns the lifting of the immunity of Mr Wróbel, a Supreme Court judge, with a view to charging him with criminal negligence. Mr Wróbel alleges that this was a result of his criticism of the judicial reforms taking place in Poland, which are seen by many to have caused a rule-of-law crisis in that State. (ECHR Press release)

10.06.2022: The Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers has published the case-by-case decisions taken during the Committee’s meeting from 8 to 10 June to supervise the
implementation of judgments and decisions from the European Court of Human Rights.
The Committee adopted 35 decisions concerning 17 States during the meeting, including two Interim Resolutions. 23 Final Resolutions were adopted by the Committee in respect of 41 judgments and decisions from the European Court, concerning 13 different states. (Council of Europe Press Release)

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION
- 4.05.2022: Governments need to step up their efforts and coordination to combat money laundering and terrorist financing by adopting stricter regulation and supervision of the virtual assets sector and the specialised “gatekeeper” professions, such as lawyers, accountants and other services providers who often help launderers, according to the Council of Europe’s anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing body MONEYVAL. (CoE Press Release)
- 2.06.2022 - European governments should increase the transparency and the accountability around lobbying to ensure that members of the public know which actors seek to influence political decisions so that the risk of corrupt practices can be reduced, says the Council of Europe’s Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) in its annual report. (CoE Press Release)

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES
- 26.04.2022: The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, published her annual report 2021. The Commissioner stressed that trends undermining human rights protection have continued in 2021. The topics covered by the report vary from media freedom and journalists’ safety to the protection of migrants, from freedom of peaceful assembly to the rights of women and girls, LGBTI people, persons with disabilities, human rights defenders and children, as well as transitional justice, the right to health, and racism. (Council of Europe Press release)
- 2.06.2022: The continuing Covid-19 pandemic that has further marginalised vulnerable groups, the ongoing problem of racism in police forces and the rise of anti-LGBTI public discourse were the main trends in 2021, said the Council of Europe’s Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in its annual report. (CoE Press Release)

- asylum and migration
17.03.2022: The Council of Europe’s Group of Experts against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) warned that most vulnerable Ukrainian refugees are at mercy of human traffickers. “There are reports of traffickers targeting parentless children fleeing Ukraine, and many such children are currently unaccounted for, following the hasty evacuation of orphanages and foster homes”. (Source Council of Europe, Press Release)
24.03.2022 – The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, urged more coordinated efforts by all member states to meet the humanitarian needs and protect the human rights of people fleeing the war in Ukraine. (Source Council of Europe, Press Release)
4.05.2022 - the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) published “Guidance Note” listing emergency measures. It stresses the need for the registration of all refugees, including those who are undocumented, and for an increased presence of specially trained law enforcement officers at border crossings, as well as at railway and bus stations. (Agence Europe)
15.06.2022 - the European Court of Human Rights decided to grant an urgent interim measure, under Rule 39 of the Rules of Court, in the case of N.S.K. v. the United Kingdom (application no. 28774/22, formerly K.N. v. the United Kingdom), an asylum-seeker from Iraq who was facing imminent removal to Rwanda, following the recent establishment of an asylum partnership arrangement between the UK Government and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda. Under the Memorandum of Understanding establishing that partnership, the UK had made arrangements for a number of asylum seekers, whose claims were not being considered by the UK, including N.S.K., to be relocated to Rwanda by means of a charter flight due to depart yesterday at 22:30 (BST). The Court indicated to the UK Government that the applicant should not be removed to Rwanda until three weeks after the delivery of the final domestic decision in his ongoing judicial review proceedings. The UK Government was notified, and a press release was published. (Council of Europe Press Release)

5.07.2022 - the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) published recommendations to create alternatives to the detention of migrant children, a practice that exists in 27 European countries, including Member States. In a statement, the three agencies highlighted alternative experiences in several Member States, such as in Italy and the Netherlands, where children have been placed with foster families; or in Serbia, which has a care system for unaccompanied migrant children; or even in France or Greece, which have collective accommodation for older unaccompanied minors. (Renew LIBE newsletter)

8.07.2022 - HRW notified that the European Court of Human Rights issued a historic ruling on July 7 concerning Greece’s practice of pushing boats of asylum seekers back to Turkey. Eleven women and children, including infants, died off the Greek island of Farmakonisi on January 20, 2014, in what survivors describe as a pushback operation. Eight years later, the Court has ruled that Greek authorities had not done all that could reasonably be expected of them during the operation to prevent the tragedy and protect the people on board. The court also found that authorities had not carried out a thorough investigation capable of shedding light on the circumstances in which the boat had sunk, violating the right to life of the applicants and their relatives. Authorities also subjected survivors to degrading treatment when they strip-searched them in public. (Human Rights Watch)

- prisons
- 21.04.2022: The Council of Europe’s Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) called on European states with persistent prison overcrowding to address this problem with determination by setting a maximum threshold to the number of prisoners in every penal institution - to be strictly respected - and by increasing the use of alternative measures to imprisonment. In its annual report for 2021, the CPT underlines that although, over the years, some countries have achieved tangible progress in tackling prison overcrowding, this problem persists in many prisons systems, especially in establishments accommodating remand prisoners. In addition, even in countries where overcrowding is not a problem in the entire prison system, particular prisons, parts of prisons or cells may be overcrowded. (Council of Europe, Newsroom)

- children’s rights
14.06.2022 – The Council of Europe’s Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) finds that many countries lack enough protection for children and domestic violence victims. GREVIO, which monitors implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), has published an annual report today focusing on child custody, visitation and domestic violence drawn from its evaluations thus far. (Council of Europe Press release)

LGBTIQ
- 7.07.2022 - a new Council of Europe report was published looking at the progress achieved in European countries in guaranteeing full legal gender recognition (LGR) in all areas of life. The report acknowledges advances in legislation, practices and public attitudes, but the progress is slow and additional steps are needed, inter alia, to “depathologise” legal gender recognition, as well as to ensure that family members of the persons concerned are not adversely affected and the children’s best interests duly taken into account. (Council of Europe Press Release)

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
29.04.2022 - the Council of Europe publishes alarming report on safety of journalists. The report issued by 15 media freedom organisations partners to the Council of Europe’s Platform for the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists shows that the number of alerts reported on the platform concerning serious threats to media freedom in Council of Europe member states in 2021 increased by 41%, from 200 in 2020 to 282. (Council of Europe)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
3. EUROPEAN UNION

1. DEMOCRACY
27.04.2022: the European Commission formally issued its first notification under the general conditionality regulation in relation to Hungary.
- the EP established a Pegasus committee of inquiry on surveillance through spyware, which involved a number of MSs and also targeted MEPs, Commissioner Reynders and other Commission officials.
19.05.2022: Parliament calls on the EU to take all necessary action in international proceedings and courts to support the prosecution of the Russian and Belarussian regimes for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and aggression. These investigations and consequent prosecutions should also apply to all Russian armed forces personnel and government officials involved in war crimes, MEPs ask. (European Parliament)

2. RULE OF LAW
22.03.2022 - As the European Union’s rule of law reporting cycle has entered its third edition, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and 24 other civil society networks and organisations from across the EU, have come together to put forward suggestions on EU-wide and country-specific recommendations to strengthen the review process. (Source – International Federation for Human Rights)
22.03.2022 – MEP López Aguilar calls on Commission to not validate Polish recovery plan while concerns about judiciary independence persist, see the letter here.
23.03.2022 – A group of European NGOs published an open letter to President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council asking the institutions to refrain from approving recovery funds to the governments of Poland and Hungary and provide direct support to local authorities, civil society and human rights defenders providing for refugees of the war. (Source – Netherlands Helsinki Committee)
24.03.2022 - Four European Parliament political group leaders urge Ursula von der Leyen not to approve Polish recovery plan yet. The letter can be read here.
6.04.2022 - MEPs debated in LIBE with the French Secretary of State for European Affairs, Clément Beaune, the so-called ‘Article 7’ procedures on the Rule of law opened in 2017 against Poland and in 2018 against Hungary. In particular, several MEPs asked the French Presidency to hold a vote to note this risk of serious violation of European values. (Agence Europe)
5.05.2022 - In a Resolution on ongoing hearings under Article 7(1) TEU regarding Poland and Hungary adopted with 426 votes to 133 and 37 abstentions, MEPs welcome that the French Presidency resumed conducting hearings under Article 7(1) of the Treaty but urge the Council to show “genuine commitment” and make “meaningful progress” to protect European values. They insist that Hungary and Poland’s failure to implement the numerous judgements made by the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights is unacceptable; all member states have to respect EU law, they note. (European Parliament Press Release)
19.05.2022 - the Parliament adopted its review of the Commission’s 2021 annual Rule of Law Report with 429 votes for, 131 against and 34 abstentions (Reintke report). MEPs were disappointed that, despite Parliament’s suggestions, the Commission still does not address...
the numerous, interlinked concerns about the state of the entire range of EU values in member states. The report should differentiate between systemic and individual breaches of EU values, and perform a more in-depth, transparent assessment. (European Parliament Press Release)

2.06.2022 - the European Commission endorses Poland’s €35.4 billion recovery and resilience plan. The Commission has given a positive assessment of Poland’s recovery and resilience plan, an important step towards the EU disbursing €23.9 billion in grants and €11.5 billion in loans under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). (Agence Europe)

17.06.2022 - Economy and finance ministers discussed the positive assessment of the Polish national recovery and resilience plan by the European Commission. The Council adopted its implementing decision on the approval of Poland’s plan today. The Council’s decision follows the European Commission’s assessment of the national recovery and resilience plans. These plans have to comply with the 2019 and 2020 country-specific recommendations and reflect the EU’s general objectives of creating a greener, more digital and more competitive economy. (Council of the EU Press material)

9.6.2022: The EP adopted a resolution highly critical with the Commission on the decision on Poland, see European Parliament resolution of 9 June 2022 on the rule of law and the potential approval of the Polish national recovery plan (RRF)

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

19.05.2022 - the European Commission has published the tenth edition of the 2022 EU Justice Scoreboard. For the first time, this year’s Scoreboard also includes data on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the efficiency of justice systems, as well as regarding accessibility to justice for persons with disabilities and with a strengthened business dimension. (European Commission Press Corner)

9.06.2022 - The French Presidency of the Council of the European Union (FPEU) has succeeded in advancing two texts of the ‘digitalisation of justice’ package presented by the Commission in December. Meeting in Luxembourg on 9 June, EU Justice Ministers sealed two political agreements in principle (‘General approach’) on two proposals for regulations. The first concerns the exchange of digital information in terrorism cases, the second establishes a collaboration platform for joint investigation teams. (Agence Europe)

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

25.04.2022 - The Commission has proposed to amend the Eurojust Regulation to give the Agency the legal possibility to collect, preserve and share evidence on war crimes. (European Commission press release)
- Gender equality
8.03.2022 - The European Commission is proposed EU-wide rules to combat violence against women and domestic violence. The proposed Directive will criminalise rape based on lack of consent, female genital mutilation and cyber violence. The new rules also strengthen victims' access to justice and encourage Member States to implement a one-stop shop mechanism, meaning that all support and protection services would be located in the same place (European Commission, Press release). The proposal can be read here.
15.03.2022 - The High-Level Group on Gender Equality in Sport presented an action plan for achieving gender balance in sport to the European Commission, Member States, and relevant sports organisations (Agence Europe, Europe Daily Bulletin). The action plan and recommendations can be downloaded here.
18.03 - MEPs on the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) supported by a large majority (65 votes in favor, 16 against, and 10 abstentions) lowering the employee threshold for companies that are covered by the directive on equal pay for equal work. Thus, EU companies with at least 50 employees (instead of the 250 initially proposed by the European Commission) are obliged to make information that makes it easier to compare wages public. The aim is to enable the employees of these companies to reveal any gender pay gaps within their organisation. (Europe Daily Bulletin, Agence Europe)
9.06 - representatives of the European Parliament and the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union reached a provisional political agreement, on the evening of Tuesday 7 June, on the proposal for a directive aimed at increasing the presence of women on the boards of listed European companies. (Agence Europe)

- Disabilities
12.03.2022 – EU ministers responsible for disability issues noted progress in implementing the Disability Rights Strategy 2021 and 2030 at a French EU Council Presidency ministerial conference on Wednesday 9 March, although there is still a long way to go to create a truly inclusive environment. (Agence Europe, Europe Daily Bulletin)

- Children’s rights
11.05.2022 - The European Commission unveiled a plan to require online platforms to detect and report the sharing of child sex abuse images on the internet, which quickly triggered privacy concerns. (AP News)
9.06.2022 - the European justice ministers adopted conclusions to strengthen the protection of children's rights in the EU. They are calling on Member States to improve protection for children in emergency situations through various actions. These include, for example: - ensuring reception procedures for unaccompanied minors that include the provision of accommodation and meet the basic needs of children; - strengthening policies against child trafficking; - ensuring that crisis situations are not used for adoption purposes. (Agence Europe)

- asylum and migration
8.03.2022 - The Commission has adopted a proposal for Cohesion’s Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE) allowing Member States and regions to provide emergency support to people fleeing from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. CARE is introducing the necessary flexibility
in the 2014-2020 Cohesion policy rules to allow a swift reallocation of available funding to such emergency support. (European Commission - Press release)

18.03.2022 – The Commission has presented a set of operational guidelines to support Member States in applying the Temporary Protection Directive. The comprehensive guidelines will help those arriving to have a consistent and effective level of rights and the Member States to assume their new responsibilities. (European Commission, Press release)

24.03.2022 – The European Parliament gave consent to Frontex operational support for the Republic of Moldova, including at its borders with Ukraine. This agreement constitutes the framework for deploying Frontex staff to support the Moldovan authorities in daily border management activities in the Republic of Moldova, such as screening, identity checks and border, responding to the increased arrivals of refugees from Ukraine. (Source – European Parliament News)

28.03.2022 – In its conclusions of 24-25 March, the European Council called on Member States to intensify their efforts in a continued spirit of unity and solidarity, and it invited the Commission to take the necessary initiatives to facilitate such efforts. At the extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council of 28 March, Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis Schinas and Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, in coordination with the French Presidency of the Council represented by Minister Gérald Darmanin, presented a 10-Point Plan for stronger European coordination on welcoming people fleeing the war against Ukraine. (European Commission, Press release)

28.04.2022 - The EU’s border police, Frontex, is being sued for refusing to release documents detailing its working relations with the Libyan coast guard. The lawsuit was lodged at the EU General Court in Luxembourg in mid-April by the German sea rescue organisation Sea-Watch. (EU Observer)

29.04.2022 - EU border agency chief Fabrice Leggeri is resigning following the release of initial findings from a long-running watchdog probe into misconduct at the agency, according to multiple people familiar with the matter. (Politico)

5.05.2022 - French Presidency proposes to include persons rescued at sea in Eurodac as well as refugees benefiting from temporary protection. As the Member States were informed on 29 April, the French Presidency of the EU Council will on Friday 6 May submit a new compromise proposal on the Eurodac Regulation, which, under the ‘Pact on Migration and Asylum’, is to become a large database on migrants and asylum seekers. (Agence Europe)

18.05.2022 - the European Commission said in a statement that it had made €248 million available to the five Member States that were most affected at the start of the war in Ukraine and have taken in large numbers of refugees, to support their reception and border management systems. This emergency aid from home affairs funds will go to Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Member States can use these funds to provide immediate assistance (food, transport and temporary accommodation) to refugees. (Agence Europe)

31.05.2022 - In a judgment handed down, the Court of Justice of the EU ruled that a Member State of the European Union, Lithuania, that has declared a state of emergency due to a
mass influx of **migrants** can neither refuse a migrant the right to lodge an application for asylum nor detain him or her solely on the grounds that he or she is staying in the country unlawfully (Case C-72/22 PPU). (Renew LIBE News)

- **Covid-19 measures**
  11.03.2022 - The Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) formally endorsed the Council's negotiating mandate with the European Parliament to extend the Regulation establishing the EU Digital COVID Certificate. The European Commission had proposed on 3 February 2022 to extend the Regulation establishing the EU Digital COVID Certificate by one year, until 30 June 2023 (European Council, Press release). [Link](#) to the report.
  16.03.2022 - The European Commission adopted the second report on the impact and implementation of the EU Digital Covid Certificate, which shows that since July 2021, Member States have issued more than 1.7 billion EU Digital Covid Certificates in the EU. The European Covid Certificate also links 35 third countries to the European system through a system of equivalence decisions ([Europe Daily Bulletin](#)).

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

  15.03.2022 - The Court of Justice of the European Union issued a judgment defending the freedom of journalists to share inside information with sources for upcoming articles about companies listed on the stock exchange. The court said journalists may disclose inside information to sources before the publication of an article as long as it is deemed necessary and proportionate to their news-gathering. ([Politico](#))
  24.03.2022 - The French government has proposed EU action against "entities or individuals" that are "active in the spread of radical rhetoric" as a way to stop "the spread of extremist and violent ideologies and to prevent the radicalization of new actors." ([Statewatch](#))
  27.04.2022: The Commission issued its proposal to counter SLAPPs, which consists of a draft Directive and a Recommendation.

  21.06.2022 - Member states call on the Commission to strengthen funding for independent and investigative journalism and take into account online safety and freedom of speech for journalists and other media professionals in all relevant initiatives following from the EU’s digital strategy. Against the backdrop of increasing threats to journalists and thus impediments to freedom of expression and freedom to inform, the Council approved conclusions on the protection and safety of journalists and media professionals. ([Council of the EU Press material](#))

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
4. **AUSTRIA**

1. **DEMOCRACY**
   12.05.2022 - The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, published the report following her visit to Austria carried out in December 2021, with recommendations on improving the **reception and integration of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and on strengthening women’s rights and gender equality**. “Particular attention should be paid to the specific needs of vulnerable people, especially unaccompanied children; and to ensuring that asylum seekers have effective access to education and employment”, she adds while also emphasising the importance of strengthening independent and quality legal counselling by legally safeguarding the structural and functional independence of the competent federal agency. ([CoE Press release](#))

2. **RULE OF LAW**
   13.7.2022: The Commission published its **2022 Rule of Law report**, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

   2.1. **JUSTICE SYSTEM**

   2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK** (and public procurement risks)

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

   3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

   3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**
   2022 - According to RSF, in Austria press freedom has been undermined by various political pressures or restrictions on access to information. Violence at public events prevented journalists from reporting freely. Score 2021 : 83.66. Score 2022: 76.74. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](#))

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
   - **Covid-19 measures**
   17.05.2022: Entering Austria no longer requires proof of vaccination, recovery passes, or testing after all COVID-19-related entry requirements were dropped. ([Euractiv](#))
5. **BELGIUM**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**
   13.7.2022: The Commission published its *2022 Rule of Law report*, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

   2.1. **JUSTICE SYSTEM**

   2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK** (and public procurement risks)

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

   3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

   3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**
   Journalists enjoy a relatively high degree of trust, yet they are subject to violence by police and protesters during demonstrations, as well as online threats directed, above all, at women, while the media sector is apparently free from political pressure and is protected by an effective legal framework, some provisions of which remain controversial. Score 2021: 88.31, score 2022: 78.86 - according to Reporters without Borders Index 2022

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
6. **BULGARIA**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

- 18.03.2022 - Boyko Borissov, the former prime minister of Bulgaria, was detained late Thursday amid a wide-sweeping police investigation linked to probes by the European Public Prosecutor’s Office. ([Politico](https://www.politico.eu))

- 21.03.2022 - Former Prime Minister Boyko Borissov was released after spending 24 hours in prison after the Prosecutors Office refused to bring charges against him, despite police insistence. Borissov was detained on suspicion of blackmailing gambling boss Vasil Bozhkov, who is hiding in Dubai. On Friday (18 March), over 1,000 supporters of Borissov’s party staged a protest in downtown Sofia, accusing the government of political repression. ([Euractiv](https://www.euractiv.com))

- 22.03.2022 - The European Public Prosecutor’s Office (EPPO) confirmed that it has received several reports from Bulgaria of serious allegations of fraud with EU funds and systemic corruption, involving top officials. ([Euractiv](https://www.euractiv.com))

- 24.03.2022 - The Bulgarian Parliament approved two amendments on Thursday 24 March to abolish “golden passports”, which allow foreign investors to be granted Bulgarian citizenship. The European Commission has repeatedly stated that this practice is not in line with the EU Treaties. Bulgaria announced its intention to abolish these citizenship programmes in January. The Bulgarian President still needs to sign a decree for the law to enter into force. ([Agence Europe](https://www.euractiv.com))

15.04.2022 - The arrest of former Prime Minister Boyko Borissov was illegal, the Sofia District Court has said in a ruling. “Until the moment of Borissov’s detention, no evidence has been collected to indicate a connection with the alleged crime,” Judge Nikolay Urumov wrote in the decision. ([Euroactiv](https://www.euractiv.com))

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

- 14.06.2022 - In the case of Stoyanova v. Bulgaria (application no. 56070/18) the European Court of Human Rights held, unanimously, that there had been: a violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) taken together with Article 2 (right to life) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned the homophobic murder of the applicant’s 26-year-old son. His attackers, secondary-school students, had singled him out for assault because they had thought he looked like a homosexual. The attackers had been found guilty of aggravated murder, but had been given sentences which were below the statutory minimum after the courts took into account mitigating factors such as their young age and clean criminal records. (European Court of Human Rights Press release).

- 27.06.2022 - In a new report published today, the Council of Europe’s anti-money laundering body MONEYVAL draws up a comprehensive assessment of the country’s level of compliance with the Recommendations by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as at the date of the onsite visit in September 2021. It calls on Bulgaria’s authorities to improve the...
regulatory framework and to strengthen the practical application of measures to combat money laundering and financing of terrorism. (Council of Europe Communication)

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES
- Gender equality
22.03.2022 - ECHR decided that the Bulgarian authorities failed to protect victim of marital murder but allegation of general complacency towards violence against women not made out. (ECHR Press release).
20.05.2022 - In a letter addressed to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice of Bulgaria, Commissioner Mijatović calls on the Bulgarian authorities to improve the legal and institutional protection of victims of violence against women and domestic violence. The Commissioner stresses that the requirement of “systematic” violence provided by the Criminal Code in respect of offences committed in the context of domestic violence must be repealed without delay. (CoE Press Release)

-migration

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
According to RSF, media freedom in one of the poorest and most corrupt countries in the European Union is fragile and unstable. The few independent voices in Bulgaria work under constant pressure. Score in 2021: 62.71. Score in 2022: 59.12. (Reporters without borders)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
7. CROATIA

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW
13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
According to RWB, while the media scene has become diverse and dynamic, the government is failing to protect journalists against legal attempts to muzzle them, and against organized crime. The government itself represents a threat to press freedom. Score 2021: 72.05, Score 2022: 70.42 (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
8. **CYPRUS**

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its [2022 Rule of Law report](#), which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

- [asylum and migration](#)
- 15.03.2022 - Cyprus president promises 'more humane' migrant camp conditions. After repeated criticism of living conditions at a migrant camp in Cyprus, the President of the eastern Mediterranean island nation has admitted shortcomings and promised to improve the situation. A growing number of migrants are arriving in the Republic of Cyprus from the Turkish-administered northern part of the ethnically split island. ([Info Migrants](#))
- 22.04.2022 - The permanent secretary of the Cypriot Ministry of the Interior, Costas Constantinou, told the European Parliament’s Committee on Civil Liberties on Thursday 21 April about the difficulties encountered in managing the increase in migratory flows, partly linked to arrivals from the northern part of the island. Migrants arriving in Cyprus represent “5% of its total population”, and the war in Ukraine, with arrivals of Ukrainian refugees, has increased the pressure. Since 2015, the island has received 51,200 asylum applications, including 13,200 in 2021, the Cypriot explained. The situation has worsened in 2022, with an additional 5,500 applications filed between January and March “compared to 1,600 over the same period in 2021”. The Cypriot also said that almost 22,000 applications were still pending due to lack of staff, and 7,500 refusal decisions were also in the appeal phase. ([Agence Europe](#))

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

According to RSF, while freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution, political parties, the Orthodox Church and commercial interests have significant influence over the media. Score 2021: 80.15, Score 2022: 65.97. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](#))

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
9. **CZECH REPUBLIC**

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

- asylum and migration

12.05.2022 - The Czech Republic will tighten passport checks on refugees and only grant aid to those fleeing war that have crossed the Ukraine border, the interior ministry announced following an influx of Roma people with dual Hungarian-Ukrainian citizenship. ([Euractiv](#))

26.05.2022 - Czech Republic urges refugees from Ukraine to get employed or lose benefits. Prime Minister Petr Fiala has announced that the Czech Republic will extend for the last time the state of emergency of refugees for another month, which means that there will be an emergency period until the end of June. ([Schengen Visa](#))

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

According to RSF, in the Czech Republic freedom of the press is threatened by the high concentration of privately owned media and the pressure exerted on public broadcasting. Score 2021: 76.62, Score 2022: 80.54. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](#))

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
10. **DENMARK**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

   13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

   3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

   - asylum and migration

   16.03.2022 – **Human Rights Watch** accuses Denmark of mismatch treatment of Syrian and Ukrainian Refugees. Shortly after Russia’s latest invasion of Ukraine, the Danish Immigration Service reportedly asked Denmark’s 98 municipalities to assess their capacity to take in Ukrainian refugees. This same agency recently began stripping Syrian refugees of their residency permits in a bid to force them back to Syria, asserting that parts of Syria are safe. (Human Rights Watch, Info Migrants)

   20.04.2022 – Denmark has begun talks with **Rwanda** to set up a new procedure for transferring asylum seekers to the East African country, following Great Britain’s lead, which announced a similar initiative last week. Denmark adopted a law in 2021 that allows refugees arriving on Danish soil to be transferred to asylum centres in a partner country, which led the European Parliament’s Committee on Civil Liberties to question Immigration Minister Mattias Tesfaye in January. The agreement would aim to ensure a more trustworthy approach to migration, rather than the criminal network of human traffickers that characterises migration across the Mediterranean today. (Agence Europe)

   25.05.2022 - ‘Zero asylum seekers’: Denmark forces refugees to return to Syria. (the Guardian)

   9.06.2022 - the Council of Europe **Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)** calls on the Danish authorities, as a matter of priority, to introduce a national action plan against racism, with a particular emphasis on preventing anti-Muslim racism and discrimination, covering actions in the areas of education, public awareness, promotion of counter speech and the training of relevant professionals, such as law enforcement officials and teachers. Securing staff with Muslim and other minority backgrounds in such professions should also be among the elements of this action plan. (Council of Europe Media Release)

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**
According to RSF, during the coronavirus crisis, traditional investigative journalism has benefitted from a rising interest, especially in subjects related to healthcare. Score 2021: 91.43, Score 2022: 90.27. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
11. **ESTONIA**\(^{10}\)

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its *2022 Rule of Law report*, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

9.06.2022 - In a report, the *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)* calls on the Estonian authorities to ensure that general anti-discrimination legislation is accessible and effective and to tackle the problem of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech. (Council of Europe Media Release)

9.06.2022 - In its latest *Opinion* on Estonia, the *Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)* makes a series of recommendations aimed at improving the integration of society as a whole, and ensuring that persons belonging to national minorities can participate effectively in economic, social and political life. (Council of Europe Media Release)

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

According to RSF, although press freedom is guaranteed on the legal and political levels, journalists face the risk of self-censorship due to anti-defamation legislation and cyber-bullying. Score 2022: 88.83, Score 2021: 84.75. (Reporters without Borders)

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
12. **FINLAND**

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its [2022 Rule of Law report](#), which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

According to RSF, Finland is one of the few countries where the media is truly free. The freedom of the press has been continuously strengthened ever since the first legislation banning censorship was adopted – under Swedish rule – as the first in the world in 1766. Score 2022: 88.42, Score 2021: 93.01. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](#))

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
13. **FRANCE\(^{12}\)**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

   13.7.2022: The Commission published its [2022 Rule of Law report](#), which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

   According to RSF, the legislative and regulatory framework favours press freedom and editorial independence, but the mechanisms for combatting conflicts of interest in the media are insufficient, inappropriate and outdated. In response to police violence, a new set of regulations for policing protests was adopted that takes more account of journalists’ rights. But reporters have also been the targets of many physical attacks by demonstrators. Score 2021: 77.40, Score 2022: 78.53. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](#))

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
14. **GERMANY**

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

14.06.2022 – National minority representatives in Germany are expressing concern over lacking education about their history, culture and contribution to German society among the majority population. This concern is raised prominently in an opinion published today by Council of Europe experts on Germany’s implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM).

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES - asylum and migration

17.03.2022 - German schools prepare for influx of Ukrainian refugee children. German schools want to make sure that Ukrainian refugee children do not lose out on education. But, after two years of the coronavirus pandemic, the system is already overstretched. An estimated half of all Ukrainian refugees arriving in Germany are schoolchildren. (DW)

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

According to RSF, the overall environment is favorable to journalism, but violence and verbal attacks are on the rise. Draft bills threaten the protection of journalistic sources, access to information is fragmented and media pluralism has been decreasing. Score 2021: 84.76, Score 2022: 82.04. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
15. GREECE

1. DEMOCRACY
- According to a forensic report by CitizensLab, a spyware similar to Pegasus called Predator (that was initially developed by the North Macedonian company, Cytrox) is likely to be used by the Greek authorities (together with Armenia, Egypt, Indonesia, Madagascar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Serbia).

Already in November 2021, media reported that Stavros Malichudis, a journalist following migration issues, had been under surveillance.

But more recently, it was reported that a Greek journalist, Thanasis Koukakis, working also for CNN and Financial Times, was informed by CitizensLab that he had been targeted with Predator, for 10 weeks between July 12 and September 24 in 2021, while he was working on alleged money laundering and corruption cases. He had in 2020, 2021 and 2022 suspicions of being surveilled and complained to the Hellenic Authority for Communications Security and Privacy.

In all cases, the government denied being behind these surveillance operations. Media organisations have written to the government to ask them to explain the fact that Koukakis private communications were intercepted by the Greek National Intelligence Service (EYP), a body which is overseen by the office of the Prime Minister, in 2020. The organisations also raise questions in relation to some legislative changes introduced, related to the EYP. A prosecutor has launched a preliminary inquiry into the matter.

- 24.05.2022: The scandal involving Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis in Greece has affected the health budgets of other EU countries, and the bloc’s finances, Greece’s former anti-corruption prosecutor Eleni Touloupaki told EURACTIV.com in an interview. Touloupaki explained that the scandal affected the entire EU because Greece was the reference country for setting the drugs’ prices across the bloc. (EURACTIV)

- 24.6.2022: Greek government finally launched a 214-Million-Euro Lawsuit Against Novartis over Bribery.

2. RULE OF LAW
13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

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3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and
MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES
- asylum and migration
2.03.2022- The European Commission has proposed that the Council of the EU recommend that Greece "carry out independent investigations into all serious allegations of ill-treatment by the Hellenic Police and Hellenic Coast Guard at external borders" that are "capable of leading to the identification and punishment of those responsible." The proposal comes in a draft Council Implementing Decision on Greece’s compliance with the Schengen acquis (body of law) on the management of the external borders. (Statewatch)
8.03.2022 - 27 civil society organisations active in the areas of asylum and migration in Greece urge the European Commission to promptly take the necessary measures against Greece to ensure effective compliance with Article 38(4) of the Asylum Procedures Directive. The organisations highlight the need to ensure that asylum seekers to whom the safe third country concept has been applied have their applications promptly examined on the merits and are provided with respective legal status and adequate reception conditions. The letter can be read here.
17.03.2022 - The Human Rights Court warns against summary removal of asylum seeker. For the first time the court issued an emergency order which was published last week, ordering the Greek authorities not to carry out the summary return of an asylum seeker to Turkey from the Greek Islands. On February 15, Aegean Boat Report (ABR), a nongovernmental group regularly reporting on Greek border abuses, asked the European Court of Human Rights to intervene to prevent the summary expulsion of four asylum seekers who landed on an Aegean island after crossing from Turkey. (Source – Human Rights Watch)
10.06.2022 - Greek court confirms conviction of Afghan teenagers over Moria fires in 2020 as the criminalisation of refugees continues. Greece is increasing deployments of border police and equipment in the Evros while ignoring interim measures by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on people stranded in the region. The annual report by the Greek Ombudsman puts into question efficiency and reliability of Greek authorities investigations of pushbacks. (ECRE)
24.6.2022: while NGOs and international organisations raise concerns about the pushbacks in Greece to Turkey, the Greek government rejects accusations.

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
29.03.2022 - Six international organisations for the freedom of the press have published a report accusing Greece’s ruling New Democracy party (EPP) of trying to control media. While the report raises the alarm over a “systemic press freedom crisis”, the government replies that people are still free to opt on what media to follow. (Euractiv) The report can be read here.

According to RSF, press freedom in Greece suffered serious setbacks in 2021 and 2022, with journalists regularly prevented from covering issues from migration to Covid-19. Further, the assassination of veteran crime reporter Giorgos Karaivaz in April 2021 remains unsolved despite the government’s promise of a quick investigation. Score 2021: 70.99, Score 2022: 55.52. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
16. HUNGARY

1. DEMOCRACY
19.05.2022 - Despite previous greenlights from parliament and the Supreme Court (Kúria), Hungary’s Constitutional Court blocked referenda on controversial Chinese university investment and unemployment benefits. (Euractiv)
24.05.2022 - The governing majority in the Hungarian Parliament adopted the 10th Amendment to the Fundamental Law of Hungary, allowing the Government to use the war in Ukraine as a reason to keep its extensive regulatory powers justified by the pandemic. (Civic Space Watch)
9.06.2022 - On 8 June 2022, the governing majority in the Hungarian Parliament adopted Act VI of 2022 on Eliminating the Consequences in Hungary of an Armed Conflict and Humanitarian Disaster in a Neighbouring Country (the “Fourth Authorization Act”), which entered into force the same day. The Fourth Authorization Act completes the Hungarian Government’s efforts to keep its exceptional regulatory powers justified by the pandemic and then by the war in Ukraine, and to be able to rule by decree with limited parliamentary oversight. (Hungarian Helsinki Committee)

- Elections
24.03.2022 - The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) announced it would heed public calls asking for a full-scale election monitoring mission instead of a “limited” observation mission typical for EU countries last month. The election watchdog said that the previous recommendations to improve elections in Hungary remain unaddressed, and the concentrated media market is a problem. (Source – Euractiv)
4.04.2022 – Hungary’s parliamentary elections offered voters distinct alternatives and were well run, but while competitive, the process was marred by the pervasive overlapping of government and ruling coalition’s messaging that blurred the line between state and party, as well as by media bias and opaque campaign funding, international OSCE observers said in a statement. (OSCE Press release)

2. RULE OF LAW
14.03.2022 - Hungary’s Constitutional Court, often accused of a pro-government bias, dismissed charges against the executive on Sunday of using emails sent to citizens on the eve of the Ukrainian-Russian war for campaign purposes in the upcoming parliamentary elections. (Source – Euractiv)
27.04.2022 - The European Commission has launched the conditionality procedure against Hungary because of long-standing concerns over persistent misuse of EU funds in the country. (Euractiv)
13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

- Minorities
19.05.2022 - the European Court of Human Rights held, unanimously, that there had been a violation of Article 8 (right to respect for home) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned an inspection of the applicant’s home retrospectively justified as necessary to verify compliance with construction regulations and for the allocation and/or review of housing benefits – in 2011 by a delegation of the local mayor’s office. The inspection took place as part of a new social scheme and amid heightened tensions between Roma and non-Roma inhabitants. (ECHR Press Release)

- LGBTIQ+
13.04.2022: NGOs were fined by the National Election Committee (NVB) over their campaign to vote invalidly in the referendum they claim was homophobic, and will go to court.

- Asylum and migration
21.03. 2022 - Hungary has expressed readiness to receive up to 900,000 Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war in their country. (Source - Schengen Visa Info)

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
According to RSF, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, whom RSF has deemed a “press freedom predator”, has built a media empire whose outlets follow his party’s orders. Independent media maintain major positions in the market, but they are subject to political, economic, and regulatory pressures. Score 2021: 68.24, Score 2022: 59.80. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
17. **IRELAND**

1. 1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its *2022 Rule of Law report*, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

According to RSF, despite a transition to greater media pluralism in 2021, continued delays to long-awaited defamation reform restricted press freedom in Ireland. Concerns also remained about the future funding of the media, including public service broadcaster RTÉ. Score 2021: 88.09, Score 2022: 88.30. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](https://rsf.org/en/index-world-map))

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
18. **ITALY**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

25.05.2022 - The Italian District Anti-Mafia Directorate searched on Tuesday, the newsroom and home of the journalist who authored the report on the Capaci Mafia attack, TV anchor Sigfrido Ranucci announced on social media. “The purpose is allegedly to seize documents concerning the reportage, where the journalist, Paolo Mondani, claimed the presence of Stefano Delle Chiaie, a member of the neo-fascist right, on the scene of the bombing,” said Ranucci, describing the search as “not hostile”. *(Euractiv)*

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

According to RSF, press freedom in Italy continues to be threatened by organised crime, particularly in the south of the country, as well as by various extremist or protest groups that use violence, which have seen a significant increase throughout the pandemic. Score 2021: 76.61, Score 2022: 68.16. *(Reporters without Borders Index 2022)*

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
19. **LATVIA**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES** and **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

According to RSF, journalists work in a fairly free and safe environment, but access to trustworthy and pluralistic information, especially by the Russian-speaking population, has been a serious issue. Score 2021: 80.74, Score 2022: 79.17. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](https://rsf.org/))

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
20. **LITHUANIA**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its *2022 Rule of Law report*, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

26.04.2021 - The Council of Europe’s Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) called for further measures to prevent corruption in Lithuania in respect of persons entrusted with top executive functions, including the President of the Republic, ministers, chancellors and political advisers, as well as members of the Lithuanian Police and the State Border Guard Service. In its evaluation report, GRECO finds that Lithuania has a comprehensive normative and institutional framework to tackle corruption, which will be further improved by the new Law on the Prevention of Corruption. However, implementation of the applicable rules, prevention of corruption and overall coordination still leave room for improvement. ([Council of Europe Newsroom](https://newsroom.coe.int/en/news/2021/04/26/1146766-the-council-of-europe-s-group-of-states-against-corruption-greco-called-for-further-measures-to-prevent-corruption-in-lithuania/))

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**


4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
21. **LUXEMBOURG**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**
   13.7.2022: The Commission published its **2022 Rule of Law report**, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**
   According to RSF, Luxembourg’s media landscape is in the process of being reshaped by a new system of state aid for the media, which enjoy a great deal of freedom. Score 2021: 82.44, Score 2022: 79.81. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](https://rsf.org/en/rankings/press-freedom-index/))

4. **ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU**
22. MALTA

See Study on The situation of Article 2 TEU values in Malta
and also LIBE mission report

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

20 April 2022 - European Chief Prosecutor Laura Codruţa Kövesi stated in LIBE after a visit to Malta that it is “very difficult for me to identify the institution that is responsible for detecting crimes” (EU Observer).

8 May 2022 - Yorgen Fenech’s offshore ties with scandal-ridden oil trading company. An investigation by Times of Malta and Italian weekly L’Espresso has uncovered a money-trail starting from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and leading to Malta, Italy and Azerbaijan. The €2.5 million paid by Fenech’s offshore UAE company, Wings Investment, to oil traders Napag Italia, opens a window into the businessman’s secret entry into the fuel trading and bunkering business. (Times of Malta)

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

30.03.2022 - Access Info has successfully defended the right of access to information in Malta, winning a court ruling from Malta’s Information and Data Protection Appeals Tribunal that all EU citizens have a right to submit information requests. Malta’s 2008 Freedom of Information Act says that requesters must be both citizens of Malta or another EU Member State and have been resident in Malta for five or more years. Access Info challenged this as contravening Malta’s Constitution and international standards, amounting to a violation of the right to freedom of expression, and constituting discrimination. (Source – Access Info Europe)

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

6.04.2022 – The European Commission has decided to send a reasoned opinion to Malta regarding its investor citizenship scheme, also referred to as ‘golden passport’ scheme. The Commission considers that the granting of EU citizenship in return for pre-determined payments or investments, without any genuine link to the Member State concerned, is in breach of EU law. (European Commission Press release)
3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
According to RSF, in Malta, journalists have to cope with a highly polarised environment under the strong influence of political parties. In 2021, a public inquiry into the assassination of journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia was concluded, listing a comprehensive set of reforms the government has been reluctant to implement. Score 2021: 69.54, Score 2022: 61.55. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
23. THE NETHERLANDS

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

According to RSF, the assassination in July 2021 of crime reporter Peter R. de Vries, who also worked as a legal adviser for victims of crime, shocked not only a society that values press freedom, but also the authorities who have developed a sophisticated system to protect journalists. Score 2021: 90.33, Score 2022: 77.93. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
24. **POLAND**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

5.05.2022 - In a Resolution on ongoing hearings under Article 7(1) TEU regarding Poland and Hungary adopted with 426 votes to 133 and 37 abstentions, MEPs welcome that the French Presidency resumed conducting hearings under Article 7(1) of the Treaty but urge the Council to show “genuine commitment” and make “meaningful progress” to protect European values. They insist that Hungary and Poland’s failure to implement the numerous judgements made by the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights is unacceptable; all member states have to respect EU law, they note. ([European Parliament Press Release](https://www.europarl.europa.eu))

2.06.2022 - the European Commission endorses Poland’s €35.4 billion recovery and resilience plan. The Commission has given a positive assessment of Poland’s recovery and resilience plan, an important step towards the EU disbursing €23.9 billion in grants and €11.5 billion in loans under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). ([Agence Europe](https://www.agence-europe.eu))

17.06.2022 - Economy and finance ministers discussed the positive assessment of the Polish national recovery and resilience plan by the European Commission. The Council adopted its implementing decision on the approval of Poland’s plan today. The Council’s decision follows the European Commission’s assessment of the national recovery and resilience plans. These plans have to comply with the 2019 and 2020 country-specific recommendations and reflect the EU’s general objectives of creating a greener, more digital and more competitive economy. ([Council of the EU Press material](https://ec.europa.eu))

9.6.2022: The EP adopted a resolution highly critical with the Commission on the decision on Poland, see [European Parliament resolution of 9 June 2022 on the rule of law and the potential approval of the Polish national recovery plan (RRF)](https://www.europarl.europa.eu)

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

10.03.2022 - Poland’s constitutional court ruled once again that the European Convention on Human Rights is partly incompatible with the Polish constitution. The tribunal denied the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and national courts the right to "review the constitutionality and compatibility" of Polish laws on the judiciary with the human rights convention. ([Euronews](https://www.euronews.com))

22.03.2022 - The EU Court declares inadmissible the request for a preliminary ruling from a Polish court, asking whether EU law confers on it the power, which it does not have under Polish law, to find that a judge’s service relationship does not exist due to irregularities vitiating the instrument of his appointment. ([CJEU Press Release](https://curia.europa.eu))
24.03.2022 – **Polish judge reinstated** after losing job to Supreme Court debacle. Igor Tuleya, whose case has become a symbol of the Polish government’s violation of judges’ independence, has been judicially reinstated to rule on criminal cases. ([Euractiv](https://www.euractiv.com))

20.04.2022 - The **European Court of Human Rights** has given notice to the Government of Poland of the application **Wróbel v. Poland** (application no. 6904/22) and requested that they submit their observations. The case concerns the lifting of the immunity of Mr Wróbel, a Supreme Court judge, with a view to charging him with criminal negligence. Mr Wróbel alleges that this was a result of his criticism of the judicial reforms taking place in Poland, which are seen by many to have caused a rule-of-law crisis in that State. ([European Court of Human Rights](https://www.echr.coe.int))

25.04.2022 - The **European Court of Human Rights** has given notice to the Government of Poland of **20 applications** and requested that they submit their observations. The cases concern judicial decisions rendered by various chambers of the Supreme Court in civil cases, following appeals with regard to applications for vacant judicial posts, or regarding a disciplinary case regarding a lawyer, or decisions by the National Council of the Judiciary. It is alleged that the judicial formations dealing with the applicants’ cases were not “independent and impartial tribunals established by law” since they included judges who had been appointed by the new National Council of the Judiciary. ([European Court of Human Rights](https://www.echr.coe.int))

2.05.2022 - the ECtHR published the communicated case **Rutkiewicz v. Poland** about the suspension of a judge of the Elbląg District Court by decision of the Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court.

31.05.2022 - the Polish Parliament paved the way for the release of European recovery funds by formally adopting the bill presented by President Andrzej Duda to dissolve the **disciplinary chamber** of the Supreme Court. ([Agence Europe](https://www.agence-europe.com)), in reality changing its name.

16.06.2022 - in the case of **Żurek v. Poland**, the European Court of Human Rights held by, six votes to one, that there had been a violation of Article 6 § 1 (right of access to court) of the European Convention on Human Rights, and unanimously, that there had been a violation of Article 10 (freedom of expression). Mr Żurek is a judge. He was also spokesperson for the National Council of the Judiciary (NCJ), the constitutional body in Poland which safeguards the independence of courts and judges. In that capacity, he has been one of the main critics of the changes to the judiciary initiated by the legislative and executive branches of the new Government which came to power in 2015. The case concerned his removal from the NCJ before his term had ended, and his complaint that there had been no legal avenue to contest the loss of his seat. It also concerned his allegation of a campaign to silence him. ([ECHR Press Release](https://ecrpressrelease.org))

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

- **asylum and migration**

17.03.2022 - Poland rolls out mass registration campaign for Ukrainian refugees. The country is preparing to accept hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians into its administrative system which could make it easier for Ukrainians migrating permanently to Poland and other EU countries in the future. Poland has a registration system where citizens and foreigners
with a permanent residence permit are given a unique eleven-digit number known as PESEL. This number allows them to identify themselves, for example in banks and offices. The PESEL system also lets the Polish government maintain databases of every resident in Poland. (Euractiv)

1.04.2022 - According to Grupa Granica, a group supporting refugees on the Polish-Belarusian border, and the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, on March 22, police arrested four volunteers for helping a family with seven children in the forest. A prosecutor charged the volunteers with organizing illegal immigration, a crime punishable by up to eight years in prison. On March 25, the court rejected the prosecutor’s request for pre-trial detention. The same day, police arrested another volunteer as she sat in her car. Court proceedings against the five volunteers are pending. (Human Rights Watch)

12.05.2022 - Poland recorded ten times more Ukrainian refugees since the start of the war in Ukraine than the refugees Serbia received from the Middle East at the peak of the 2015 refugee crisis, a spokesman for the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said. (Euroactiv)

31.05.2022 - Poland’s commissioner for human rights (RPO) has stressed that there continues to be a humanitarian crisis on the country’s border with Poland, stressing that since last summer, tens of thousands of people, the majority of them from the Middle East, Africa and Asia, have been attempting to cross the border in an unlawful way. (Schengen Visa Info)

- LGBTIQ
29.06.2022 - A top Polish appeals court ruled that so-called “LGBT-free zones” must be scrapped in four municipalities, a verdict welcomed by activists as a victory for human rights and democracy. (Euractiv)

- Covid-19 measures
23.03.2022 - The government wants to lift more pandemic restrictions although medical experts are concerned about not enough people being vaccinated against COVID-19 for the country to develop herd immunity and the mass arrival of unvaccinated Ukrainians. (Euractiv)

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
According to RSF, while Poland has a diverse media landscape, public awareness of press freedom remains weak. After turning the public media into instruments of propaganda, the government has multiplied its attempts to change the editorial line of private media and control information on sensitive subjects. Score 2021: 71.16, score 2022: 65.64. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
The situation of Article 2 TEU values in the EU and in the Member States

25. PORTUGAL

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

- asylum and migration

17.03.2022 - Portugal has the capacity to receive Ukrainians and needs people to work because, every month, about 23,000 job vacancies remain unfilled, said the Claudia Pereira, secretary of state for integration and migration on Wednesday. “We not only have the capacity, but we really need people to work and be part of Portugal,” said Pereira on the sidelines of the inauguration of the Local Centre for Support for the Integration of Migrants (CLAIM), at the Polytechnic Institute of Porto (IPP). (Euractiv)

13.06.2022 - The Council of Europe’s expert group on human trafficking, GRETA, has urged the Portuguese authorities to improve trafficking victims’ access to legal aid and to guarantee their effective access to compensation. These are among the main proposals for action included in the latest evaluation report of Portugal’s implementation of the Council of Europe’s anti-trafficking convention, published today by GRETA.

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

According to RSF, freedom of the press is robust in Portugal. Journalists can report without restrictions, although some face threats from extremist groups. Score 2021: 89.89, Score 2022: 87.07. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
26. ROMANIA

1. DEMOCRACY
23.03.2022 - Former Romanian president was confirmed as secret police informant. Traian Basescu, a former president of Romania, has collaborated with the communist-era secret police, the High Court said in a final ruling. (Euractiv)

2. RULE OF LAW
22.03.2022 - Venice Commission criticizes changes in the Romanian judiciary, again. Romania's hurried decision to dismantle the section for investigating offences within the judiciary does not allow a more effective investigation of offences – particularly corruption – committed by judges or prosecutors, says the Council of Europe’s advisory body on constitutional issues (Source – Euractiv). The Venice Commission’s opinion can be read here. 19.04.2022 - Romania’s justice ministry sent a draft of new laws regulating the judiciary and the criminal codes to the European Commission for consultations. The changes to the justice laws were under debate for months in 2020 and 2021, but the process was halted, only to resume at the end of last year, but with different versions which attracted the criticism of the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission. (Euractiv)
3.06.2022 - New security laws drafted in Romania criticized for excessive powers given to secret services. The Romanian domestic and foreign intelligence services SRI and SIE will avoid any kind of accountability while being placed directly under the control of the President, according to analysts reviewing the set of ten draft laws currently under debate among the members of the ruling coalition. (Romania Insider)
13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE
3.05.2022 - In the case of Bumbes v. Romania, the ECHR held unanimously that there had been a violation of Article 10 (freedom of expression) interpreted in the light of Article 11 (freedom of assembly and association) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned the fining of Mr Bumbeș for taking part in a protest against proposed gold- and silver-mining activity in the Roșia Montana area. He along with three others had handcuffed themselves to one of the entrance barriers of the main Government building and displayed signs. (Press Release ECHR)

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES
The situation of Article 2 TEU values in the EU and in the Member States

- LGBTIQ+
  1.05.2022 - Human rights groups in Romania have condemned the country’s so-called LGBT+ “propaganda” bill, and begged lawmakers to stop it in its tracks. The bill, which has passed through the Senate and must now be decided on by Romania’s lower house, bans the use of materials in schools that “promote” being LGBT+. The bill has been pushed as a measure to prevent “child abuse” by the junior ruling coalition ethnic Hungarian party (UDMR) and the nationalist Alliance for Uniting Romanians (AUR), both of whom argue for “traditional family values”, and is similar to legislation already in effect in Russia and Hungary. (Pink News and EU Observer)

- prisons
  14.04.2022 - The Council of Europe’s Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) has called on the Romanian authorities to vigorously pursue the reform of the prison system to address some serious and persistent shortcomings. In its report on the ad hoc visit to Romania carried out from 10 to 21 May 2021, which focused on the treatment of persons held in prisons and police establishments, the CPT urges the authorities to take action as a matter of priority in a number of areas. These include improving living conditions, offering a range of purposeful activities to help prisoners prepare for reintegration into the community, increasing prison staff numbers and ensuring adequate health care services. (Council of Europe Press release)

- women’s rights
  16.06.2022 - In its first report on Romania, the Council of Europe’s GREVIŠ – the independent expert group that monitors implementation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – acknowledges the steps taken by the country to comply with the treaty but identifies areas were progress is still needed.

- Covid-19 measures
  23.03.2022 - Romania sees increase in COVID-19 cases. Romanian authorities have noted an increase in the number of coronavirus infections and a rise in the number of hospital admissions due to COVID-19. The number of deaths, however, continues to fall. Romania eliminated all restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the health ministry still recommends people wear masks and avoid crowded areas as the pandemic is far from over. (The Capitals by Euractiv)

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
According to RSF, Romania can boast of a diverse, relatively pluralistic media landscape that produces hard-hitting public interest investigations. Pressure from owners, lack of transparency in financing or market difficulties, however, hamper the reliability of the information. Score 2021: 75.09, Score 2022: 68.46. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
27. **SLOVAKIA**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its *2022 Rule of Law report*, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

20.4.2022 - Slovakia’s former prime minister and populist left-wing leader Robert Fico and the former Interior Minister Róbert Kaliňák were *charged* for supposedly used classified tax files to wage smear campaigns against political rivals, including former President Andrej Kiska and Boris Kollár, currently Slovakia’s speaker of parliament. They were indicted (with Fico as head) for being part of a “criminal organization” that also included former police chief Tibor Gašpár, Slovak oligarch Norbert Bodor (*Politico*).

26.04.2022 - Former Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico sent a letter to top EU politicians warning about the end of democracy in Slovakia and called Slovakia a “stain” on the map of Europe. Kaliňák has been detained, but Fico has immunity as a member of the National Council that can be lifted. (*Euroactiv*)

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

- **asylum and migration**

28.03.2022 - The Slovak Ministry of Interior is facing strong criticism for its handling of the refugee crisis on the eastern borders with Ukraine as it has delegated the management to a private company that previously organised corporate parties. The Interior minister Roman Mikulec (OLaNO) signed a contract worth €2.5 for “complex management of evidence, transport and care for refugees” with a private company, Dustream production was picked by the ministry without a public procurement process. (*Source – Euroactiv*)

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

According to RSF, although the authorities attempt to improve press freedom and bring justice for the 2018 assassination of the investigative journalist Jan Kuciak, progress has been slow and journalists work in a hostile atmosphere. Both public and private media remain vulnerable to interests unrelated to journalism. Score 2021: 76.98, Score 2022: 78.37. (*Reporters without Borders Index 2022*)

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4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
28. **SLOVENIA**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

24.04.2022 - The elections saw a new liberal-green party win and obtain 1/3 of the votes, which will form a new government with opposition parties, that campaigned to review the main reforms introduced by the previous Jansa government. DRFMG had held a series of sessions and sent a delegation to Slovenia to examine the situation of Article 2 TEU values in the country.

2. **RULE OF LAW**

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.06.2022 - The Interior Ministry on Thursday withdrew its consent for first damages suits brought against individuals over the costs of policing of unregistered anti-government protests over the past two years. The Interior Ministry told the STA that in withdrawing the consent Minister Tatjana Bobnar acted in line with the positions taken on the matter by the State Attorney's Office, the ministry's legal service and the Human Rights Ombudsman. (Total Slovenia News)

10.06.2022 - Slovenia has moderately improved its measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, demonstrating some progress in the level of compliance with the FATF (Financial Action Task Force) standards. The positive steps taken by the authorities have led to the upgrade of Slovenia from “partially compliant” to “largely compliant” in the area related to assessment of money laundering and terrorist financing (ML/TF) risks. However, there are still significant legislative deficiencies as regards the criminalisation of terrorism financing. These are the key points of a new follow-up report published today by the Council of Europe anti-money laundering body MONEYVAL. (Council of Europe Press release)

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

- **Covid-19 measures**

23.03.2022 - Slovenia is experiencing a new wave of COVID-19 infections after the Omicron wave ended, with the authorities opting for a 'wait-and-see' approach given that hospital figures remain low. According to the latest official data, the country confirmed nearly 5,000 cases on Monday, the highest in a month, bringing the 14-day case notification rate per 100,000 people to 1,657. Slovenia relaxed the vast majority of restrictions once the original...
The situation of Article 2 TEU values in the EU and in the Member States

Omicron-driven wave receded. Masks remain mandatory in closed public spaces and public transportation but are no longer required in schools. (Euractiv)

- LGBTIQ+ rights
  9.07.2022 - A top court in Slovenia ruled that **bans on same-sex couples getting marrying and adopting children are unconstitutional** and ordered its parliament to amend the law within six months to guarantee they can. Constitutional Court judges ruled 6-3 on both issues Friday, saying that Slovenia’s laws allowing only opposite-sex marriages and adoptions violated a constitutional prohibition against **discrimination**. (AP News)

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION
According to RSF, a climate of hostility toward journalists fostered by Prime Minister Janez Janša has led to physical assaults and online attacks. Although the legal framework protecting press freedom remains strong, the media are subject to political pressure and strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP). Score 2021: 76.90, Score 2022: 68.54. (Reporters without Borders Index 2022)

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
29. **SPAIN**

1. DEMOCRACY

2. RULE OF LAW

13.7.2022: The Commission published its 2022 Rule of Law report, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. JUSTICE

- 28.06.2022 - in the case of M.D. and Others v. Spain, the European Court of Human Rights held, unanimously, that there had been: a **violation** of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The case concerned the **compiling of files by the police in Catalonia on judges who had expressed certain views on that region’s independence from Spain**. Material from the files, including photographs, had been subsequently leaked to the press. The Court found in particular that the mere existence of the police reports, which had **not been compiled in accordance with any law**, had contravened the Convention. (ECHR Press Release)

2.2. ANTI-CORRUPTION

3. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

3.1. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES

- privacy

- 18 April 2022: Citizen Lab revealed that more than 60 pro-independence Catalan politicians had been targeted with the NSO Group’s Pegasus spyware between 2015 and 2020, see report on **Catalan Gate**.

3.2. MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

According to RSF, the level of violence against journalists has fallen considerably thanks to a decline in the tension over Catalan independence demands, and it was not revived by the protests against measures to curb the pandemic. Political polarisation and patchy legislation threaten the right to information. Score 2021: 79.56, Score 2022: 76.71. *(Reporters without Borders 2022)*

4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
30. **SWEDEN**

1. **DEMOCRACY**

2. **RULE OF LAW**

   **13.7.2022:** The Commission published its *2022 Rule of Law report*, which includes recommendations to MSs, public service media, a new section on implementation of ECtHRs judgments, Pegasus.

2.1. **JUSTICE**

2.2. **ANTI-CORRUPTION**

3. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES and MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

3.1. **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, MINORITIES**

   - minorities
     
     **30.03.2022** – Human rights organisation Amnesty International published its annual report on Tuesday (29 March), in which it criticized the way Sweden handled the pandemic and also condemns the authorities on its treatment of the Sami minority in the country. Mining and wind power projects have been allowed to continue despite opposition from local Sami communities in northern Sweden, where most of them live. ([Euroactiv](http://www.euroactiv.com))

   - Covid-19 measures
     
     **22.03.2022** – A group of scientists published a study that analyzed the Swedish strategy on tackling the Covid-19 pandemic. As a conclusion they noted that: the Swedish response to this pandemic was unique and characterized by a morally, ethically, and scientifically questionable laissez-faire approach, a consequence of structural problems in the society. There was more emphasis on the protection of the “Swedish image” than on saving and protecting lives or on an evidence-based approach. A strategy was never discussed among all relevant parties, and never implemented nor communicated to the public. In addition, there was an unwillingness and incapacity to admit any failures at all governmental levels; or to take any responsibility for the clearly detrimental outcomes for Swedish society. ([link to the study](http://www.euroactiv.com))

3.2. **MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION**

   According to RSF, as the world’s first country to have adopted a press freedom law, Sweden traditionally holds media independence in great respect. Nevertheless, journalists continue to be targeted by threats, online hate campaigns and abusive lawsuits. Score 2021: 92.76, Score 2022: 88.84. ([Reporters without Borders Index 2022](http://www.euroactiv.com))
4. ANY OTHER ISSUE RELEVANT FOR ART. 2 TEU
This overview, drafted by the European Parliament’s Policy Department for Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the Monitoring Group on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights of the LIBE Committee, aims at monitoring and collecting information on the situation of Article 2 TEU values in the EU and in the Member States. It is based on open sources such as media articles, reports of national, European and international bodies and NGOs, etc.