

# EP Resolution on EU's 2021 Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy



## News

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On 17 February 2022, the European Parliament (EP) adopted a [resolution on the EU's 2021 annual report on human rights and democracy](#). The EP recommended that the EU Special Representative for Human Rights (EUSR) devote special attention to the countries/topics addressed in Parliament's monthly urgency resolutions on human rights abuses and to any human rights violations, notably those committed under authoritarian regimes. It also encouraged the EUSR to pursue diplomatic efforts to enhance the EU's support for international humanitarian law and international justice. The EP strongly condemned all attacks against the mandate holders of UN special procedures and against the independence and impartiality of their mandates. It pointed out that state sovereignty cannot be used as a pretext to avoid human rights monitoring by the international community and also underlined the need for adequate funding of all UN human rights bodies.

The EP reiterated its strong support for the International Criminal Court (ICC) as the only international institution able to prosecute some of the world's most heinous crimes and able to deliver justice for the victims. In order to uphold the independence and impartiality of the ICC, the EP called on the EU and the Member States to provide adequate financial support to enable the ICC to carry out its tasks. It strongly condemns any attacks on the staff or independence of the ICC.

MEPs also urgently called for the creation of an EU-wide scheme to issue short-term visas for the temporary relocation of human rights defenders and strongly condemned the killing of human rights defenders around the world. Justice and accountability for these attacks at the highest level of decision-making is demanded.

The EP further spoke out against the use of SLAPPs, i.e. the rise of legal harassment and restrictive legislation as a means of silencing critical voices (→ [euCRIM 4/2021, 223-224](#) and [euCRIM 3/2021, 161](#)). One such form of harassment involves strategic lawsuits against public participation and even the criminalisation of defamation online and offline, which is used to scare off journalists, whistleblowers, and human rights defenders. The Parliament also voiced concerns about the restriction of academic freedom and an increase in the censorship and imprisonment of scholars worldwide.

Ultimately, the EP remarked that artificial intelligence must be developed, deployed, and used under meaningful human supervision, in full transparency and ensuring accountability and non-discrimination, in particular to avoid both bias in automated decisions and data protection violations.

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