

Greece

Greece is a Member State of the Council of Europe (COE) and of the United Nations (UN), and has human rights obligations at the regional and universal levels.

Regional: European System



As a Member of the COE, Greece has ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and is subject to the jurisdiction of the [European Court of Human Rights](#). Greece has ratified the European Social Charter, and has authorized the [European Committee of Social Rights](#) to decide collective complaints against it. Its human rights policies and practices are also monitored by the [COE Commissioner for Human Rights](#), who identifies gaps in human rights protection, conducts country visits, engages in dialogue with States, and prepares thematic reports and advice.

Individuals and groups have submitted complaints of human rights violations committed by Greece to the European Court of Human Rights. For example, the Court held that laws defining civil unions as only between a man and a woman violated the rights to respect for private and family life and amounted to unjustified discrimination between different-sex and same-sex couples. See ECtHR, [Vallianatos and Others v. Greece](#), no. 29381/09 and 32684/09, ECHR 2013, Judgment of 7 November 2013. Additionally, the Court may grant [interim measures](#) to protect people in urgent situations of risk in Greece.

As a State party to the European Social Charter, Greece must submit regular reports to the European Committee of Social Rights on its implementation of the Charter's provisions. The Committee has also decided collective complaints against Greece. For example, the Committee held that the forcible eviction of Roma families, without adequate access to legal remedies, violated the Charter right of the families to social, legal, and economic protection. See ECSR, [International Centre for the Legal Protection of Human Rights \(INTERIGHTS\) v. Greece](#), Complaint No. 49/2008, Merits, 11 December 2009.

Greece is a [party](#) to the following **regional human rights treaties**:

- European Convention on Human Rights and several of its [protocols](#)
- European Social Charter
- COE Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
- COE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
- European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

United Nations System

As a UN Member State, Greece is subject to the oversight of various [UN human rights bodies](#), including the [Human Rights Council](#) and its [Universal Periodic Review](#) and thematic [special procedures](#). As a party to specific universal human rights treaties, Greece's policies and practices are monitored by UN [treaty bodies](#). It has accepted the complaints procedure of four treaty bodies.

Greece has ratified the following **UN human rights treaties**:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Greece has submitted a reservation that modifies its obligations under the [CRPD](#).

Greece has also ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aimed at abolishing the death penalty, and optional protocols to the CRC addressing children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. Greece has a duty to submit **State reports** to the UN treaty body associated with each UN human rights treaty Greece has ratified. These reports must be submitted on a periodic basis and describe the steps Greece has taken to implement the treaty provisions.

Greece has also ratified [optional protocols](#) and made appropriate declarations allowing individuals to submit **complaints** against the State alleging violations of the ICCPR, CEDAW, CAT, and CRPD. Additionally, certain UN treaties contain **inquiry procedures**, which allow the UN treaty body to consider allegations of grave or systematic human rights violations. Greece has accepted the inquiry procedures of the CAT, CED, CEDAW, and CRPD.

In March 2001, Greece extended a **standing invitation** to UN special procedures, which means that any such mandate holders are welcome to conduct visits in Greece. For example, the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations went on a mission to Greece in April 2013 and published a visit [report](#) in March 2014.

For more information on Greece's engagement with [UN human rights bodies](#), visit <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/ENACARegion/Pages/GRIIndex.aspx>.

Last updated: February 2020