

FRANCE 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

France is a multiparty constitutional democracy. Voters directly elect the president of the republic to a five-year term. President Emmanuel Macron was re-elected on April 24. An electoral college elects members of the bicameral parliament's upper house (Senate), and voters directly elect members of the lower house (National Assembly). Observers considered the presidential election on April 10 and 24 and separate National Assembly elections on June 12 and 19 to have been free and fair.

Under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior, a civilian national police force and gendarmerie units maintain internal security. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces. There were reports members of the security forces committed some abuses.

Significant human rights issues included credible reports of: crimes involving violence or threats of violence against Muslims; crimes, violence, or threats of violence motivated by antisemitism; and crimes involving violence or threats of violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex persons.

The government took steps to investigate, prosecute, and punish officials who committed human rights abuses or engaged in corruption. Impunity was not widespread.

Note: The country includes 11 overseas administrative divisions covered in this report. Five overseas territories, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, and La Reunion, have the same political status as the 13 regions and 96 departments on the mainland. Five divisions are overseas "collectivities": French Polynesia, Saint-Barthelemy, Saint-Martin, Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, and Wallis and Futuna. New Caledonia is a special overseas collectivity with a semiautonomous status between that of an independent country and an overseas department. Citizens of these territories periodically elect deputies and senators to represent them in parliament, like the mainland regions and departments.

Penalties for wage, hour, and OSH violations depend on the status of the accused and were generally commensurate with those for other similar crimes. Penalties were regularly applied against violators, with the government reporting 2,160 fines in 2021, up from 1,822 in 2020, for a total of €11.2 million (\$12 million).

Informal Sector: According to the Quarterly Informal Economy Survey, the informal economy comprises an estimated 13 percent of national GDP, representing \$452 billion.

In a February 2019 report, the Employment Advisory Council, which includes business and labor union representatives as well as parliamentarians and government-appointed members, estimated 5 percent of persons older than age 18 (around 2.5 million persons) worked in the informal economy, which totaled 2 to 3 percent of the total wages paid by companies nationwide. The main sectors where informal labor was observed were hotels and restaurants, food retail trade, construction, security, and transport.

The General Directorate for Labor published a report in 2021 that included inspections into the informal economy. The ministry's 1,952 labor inspectors covered 1.8 million private businesses that employed approximately 20 million persons in 2019 and 2020. According to the report, 300,000 labor inspections took place in 2019, including 24,000 in the informal economy, compared with 150,000 labor inspections in 2020, including 16,500 in the informal economy. The ministry attributed the lower number of inspections in 2020 to the COVID-19 pandemic.