

**2024**

# **HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT Jordan**

**Prepared By:**



**Washington Center  
For Human Rights**

# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Sources of Information.....	6
1. Official Reports:.....	6
2. Local NGOs and Civil Society:.....	6
3. International Organisations:.....	6
4. Field Research and Interviews:.....	6
Data Collection Methods.....	6
Interviews:.....	6
Field Research:.....	7
Document Analysis:.....	7
Limitations and Challenges.....	7
1. Access to Information:.....	7
2. Security Concerns:.....	7
3. Political Climate:.....	7
4. Cultural Sensitivities:.....	7
<b>Civil and Political Rights.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Freedom of Expression and Assembly.....	9
Arbitrary Arrests and Detention.....	9
Instances of Torture and Ill-Treatment.....	9
Government Responses and International Scrutiny.....	9
Overall Impact on the Population.....	10
<b>Rights of Specific Groups.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Women's Rights.....	12
Children's Rights.....	12
LGBTQ+ Rights.....	12
Ethnic and Religious Minorities.....	13
Conclusion.....	13
<b>Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Right to Health.....	15
1. Healthcare Access:.....	15
2. Quality of Care:.....	15
Right to Education.....	15
1. Educational Opportunities:.....	15
2. Barriers to Education:.....	15
Right to Adequate Housing.....	16
1. Housing Conditions:.....	16
2. Barriers to Adequate Housing:.....	16
Conclusion.....	16
<b>Refugees and Migrants.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Living Conditions and Access to Asylum Procedures.....	18
Living Conditions.....	18

Access to Asylum Procedures.....	18
Instances of Exploitation and Abuse.....	18
International and Domestic Responses.....	19
<b>Legal Framework and Accountability.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Judiciary and Impunity.....	21
Examples of Accountability.....	21
Conclusion.....	21
<b>International Relations and Human Rights.....</b>	<b>24</b>
Engagement with UN Bodies and International Organizations.....	24
International Pressure and Sanctions.....	24
Impact on Domestic Human Rights.....	24
<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Recommendations to the Government of Jordan.....	27
1. Reform Legal Frameworks:.....	27
Amend Repressive Laws:.....	27
Enhance Political Freedom:.....	27
2. End Debt Imprisonment:.....	27
Abolish Incarceration for Debt:.....	27
3. Strengthen Women's Rights:.....	27
Expand Nationality Rights:.....	27
Promote Gender Equality:.....	27
4. Protect LGBTI Rights:.....	28
Reform Penal Code:.....	28
5. Promote Civic Participation:.....	28
Reinstate Professional Organizations:.....	28
Recommendations to International Bodies.....	28
1. Engage in Dialogue:.....	28
Sustained Communication:.....	28
2. Monitor Human Rights Violations:.....	28
Support Independent Monitoring:.....	28
3. Conditional Aid:.....	28
Link Aid to Reforms:.....	28
Recommendations to Civil Society Organizations.....	28
1. Advocacy and Awareness:.....	29
Enhance Outreach:.....	29
2. Legal Support and Counseling:.....	29
Provide Assistance:.....	29
3. Partnerships and Coalitions:.....	29
Strengthen Alliances:.....	29
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>31</b>
Appendix A: Statistical Data on Human Rights Issues in Jordan.....	31
Refugees and Migrants.....	31
Syrian Refugees:.....	31

Their Nationalities:.....	31
Work Permits:.....	31
Women's and Girls' Rights.....	31
Marriage Laws:.....	31
Violence Against Women:.....	31
Economic Rights.....	31
Youth Unemployment:.....	31
Appendix B: Glossary of Legal and Human Rights Terms.....	31
Asylum Seeker:.....	32
Refugee:.....	32
Discrimination:.....	32
Human Rights:.....	32

# Executive Summary

In 2024, Jordan's human rights landscape is marked by a complex mix of severe violations, limited progress, and ongoing areas of concern. The country is currently under scrutiny as it undergoes its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) by the UN Human Rights Council, a process that will assess its human rights record and offer recommendations for improvement.

The Jordanian government has intensified its crackdown on civic space, targeting freedom of expression and assembly. Peaceful protesters, particularly those demonstrating against Israel's actions in Gaza, have been harassed and detained. Human rights defenders and journalists have also faced intimidation, arrests, and administrative detention without due process. Additionally, the 2023 Cybercrime Law has been misused to suppress dissent and restrict online freedoms, with vague provisions being employed to stifle activism. Despite recommendations to amend this law to align with international standards, the government has largely ignored these calls.

Discrimination against women and LGBT individuals persists in Jordan, despite some legal reforms. Women still require male guardian permission for various rights, and LGBT individuals face harassment under vague "immorality" laws. Reports indicate that LGBT activists have been increasingly targeted, facing detentions and threats from authorities. Another critical issue is the practice of debt imprisonment, which continues despite violating international law. The lifting of the pandemic-related moratorium on debt-related imprisonment has worsened the situation, leaving many in financial distress.

Despite these ongoing violations, there have been some positive developments. A new law now allows Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians to retain their nationality, although they still cannot pass it on to their children or spouses. This represents a step forward in addressing gender discrimination in nationality laws. Jordan's participation in the UPR process also signals a willingness to engage with international human rights mechanisms, though whether the government will fully comply with the recommendations remains uncertain.

There are several areas of ongoing concern in Jordan. The use of administrative detention continues to be a significant issue, with reports of individuals being held without charge for extended periods, undermining the rule of law and due process rights. The country also faces severe economic hardship, with high unemployment rates and rising poverty, exacerbated by economic reforms tied to international financial assistance. The lack of a robust social safety net leaves many vulnerable to economic instability. Additionally, civilians continue to be tried in military courts, raising concerns about the fairness of trials and the independence of the judiciary.

To address these issues, it is recommended that the Jordanian government end repressive practices, including the use of administrative detention, and respect the rights of protesters and human rights defenders. The Cybercrime Law should be amended to align with international human rights standards, ensuring freedom of expression online. Further reforms are needed to eliminate discriminatory practices against women and to ensure protections for LGBT individuals.

International bodies are encouraged to closely monitor Jordan's adherence to UPR recommendations and hold the government accountable for human rights violations. Support should also be provided to local human rights organizations to strengthen their capacity to advocate for rights and monitor violations. Civil society organizations in Jordan should continue to raise awareness of human rights issues, advocate for legal reforms, particularly concerning women's rights and LGBT protections, and systematically document human rights abuses to provide evidence for advocacy efforts and international scrutiny.

Jordan's human rights situation in 2024 stands at a critical juncture, with significant pressure on the government to address longstanding issues while navigating complex socio-political dynamics. The upcoming UPR will play a crucial role in determining the future trajectory of human rights in the country.

# Methodology

The methodology used in collecting data for the human rights report on Jordan involves a comprehensive approach that integrates various sources of information and data collection methods. This methodology is crucial for accurately assessing the human rights situation in the country.

## Sources of Information

### 1. Official Reports:

The report draws on periodic submissions from the Jordanian government, which detail legislative changes, reforms, and the implementation of international human rights obligations. The government reports often include updates on laws related to political rights, civil liberties, and social justice initiatives [1].

### 2. Local NGOs and Civil Society:

Data is also collected from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating within Jordan. These organizations provide critical insights into human rights violations, particularly in areas like freedom of expression, women's rights, and the treatment of refugees. Their reports often highlight issues that may not be fully addressed in official government documents [2].

### 3. International Organisations:

Reports from international bodies such as the United Nations and Human Rights Watch contribute to the understanding of human rights conditions in Jordan. These organizations often conduct their investigations and provide independent assessments of the human rights landscape [3].

### 4. Field Research and Interviews:

The methodology includes qualitative data collection through interviews with affected individuals, activists, and experts. This field research allows for a deeper understanding of personal experiences and the impact of laws and policies on everyday life [4].

## Data Collection Methods

### Interviews:

Conducting interviews with victims of human rights abuses, activists, and representatives from civil society organizations helps gather firsthand accounts of the situation on the ground. This qualitative data is essential for illustrating the human impact of legal and policy frameworks [5].

## **Field Research:**

Researchers often engage in fieldwork to observe conditions directly, which may include attending public gatherings, monitoring the treatment of detainees, and assessing the operational environment for NGOs [6].

## **Document Analysis:**

A thorough review of legal documents, policy papers, and previous reports allows researchers to contextualize current findings within historical and legislative frameworks. This includes analyzing amendments to laws and their implications for human rights practices [7].

## **Limitations and Challenges**

The research process faces several limitations and challenges:

### **1. Access to Information:**

There can be significant barriers to accessing reliable information, particularly in areas where the government restricts freedom of expression or where NGOs operate under tight scrutiny. This can limit the scope of data collection and the ability to verify claims [8].

### **2. Security Concerns:**

Researchers and interviewees may face risks, including harassment or intimidation, particularly when discussing sensitive topics such as political dissent or minority rights. This can deter individuals from speaking openly about their experiences [9].

### **3. Political Climate:**

The political environment in Jordan can influence the availability and reliability of information, as government narratives may overshadow independent assessments. The use of vague laws to suppress dissent complicates the ability to gather comprehensive data on human rights violations [10].

### **4. Cultural Sensitivities:**

Cultural norms and societal attitudes towards issues such as gender and sexual orientation can affect the willingness of individuals to participate in interviews or disclose personal experiences, potentially leading to underreporting of certain abuses.

In conclusion, the methodology for collecting data on human rights in Jordan is multifaceted, relying on a combination of official reports, NGO insights, field research, and interviews. Despite facing various challenges, this comprehensive approach aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the human rights landscape in the country [11]



Citations:

1. <https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-iv/index.html>
2. <https://www.hrw.org/middle-east/n-africa/jordan>
3. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/jordan/>
4. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/jordan>
5. <https://reliefweb.int/country/jor>
6. <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/>
7. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/jordan>
8. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/>
9. <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2022/jordan>
10. <https://www.freedomhouse.org/country/jordan/freedom-world>
11. <https://www.unicef.org/jordan>

# Civil and Political Rights

The civil and political rights situation in Jordan during 2024 has been characterized by significant repression, particularly concerning freedom of expression, assembly, and the treatment of activists and dissenters.

## Freedom of Expression and Assembly

Jordanian authorities have intensified their crackdown on freedom of expression and assembly, particularly targeting pro-Palestinian activists since October 2023. This repression includes arrests and harassment of individuals participating in protests against Israel's actions in Gaza. Human rights defenders and journalists have faced intimidation, and many have been subjected to arbitrary detention without charge or due process, often under the pretext of the Crime Prevention Law and the recently enacted Cybercrime Law[2][3][4].

The Cybercrime Law, introduced in August 2023, has been particularly controversial. It imposes stringent regulations on online speech and has been used to silence dissenting voices. Reports indicate that this law has facilitated the prosecution of activists and has led to increased censorship of social media platforms[3][4].

## Arbitrary Arrests and Detention

Arbitrary arrests have surged, with numerous human rights defenders detained in connection with protests. Many have been held in administrative detention, which allows the government to detain individuals without trial for extended periods. This practice has raised serious concerns about the lack of legal protections and due process in Jordan's judicial system[2][3][4].

In April 2024, a General Pardon Law was enacted, which provided amnesty for various offenses committed before March 19, 2024. However, this law excluded serious crimes related to state security and terrorism, reflecting the government's continued focus on suppressing dissent[5].

## Instances of Torture and Ill-Treatment

Reports of torture and ill-treatment in detention facilities persist, although specific incidents are often underreported due to the fear of reprisals. Human rights organizations have documented cases where detainees have faced abuse, particularly those arrested for political reasons. The government has been criticized for failing to investigate these allegations adequately[2][3][6].

## Government Responses and International Scrutiny

The Jordanian government has faced increasing international scrutiny regarding its human rights record. In January 2024, Jordan's human rights situation was reviewed by the UN Human Rights Council during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). This review highlighted

ongoing concerns about the repression of civil society and the need for reforms to align national laws with international human rights standards[1][2][3].

Despite accepting some recommendations aimed at improving human rights conditions, the government has largely rejected calls to amend the Cybercrime Law and to cease the use of spyware against activists. The continued use of Pegasus spyware against journalists and human rights defenders has raised alarms about privacy violations and the chilling effect on free speech[2][3][4].

## **Overall Impact on the Population**

The overall impact of these measures on the Jordanian population has been profound. The repression of dissent has created a climate of fear, discouraging public participation in political discourse and activism. Many citizens feel increasingly alienated from the political process, leading to a growing sense of frustration and disillusionment with the government. The restrictions on civil liberties have also hindered the ability of civil society organizations to operate effectively, further stifling public dialogue and advocacy for reform[3][4][7].

In summary, the civil and political rights situation in Jordan during 2024 has been marked by heightened repression, particularly against activists and dissenters, with significant implications for freedom of expression and assembly. The government's actions, underpinned by restrictive laws and practices, continue to pose serious challenges to the protection of human rights in the country.

**Citations:**

[1]

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/01/jordans-human-rights-record-be-examined-universal-periodic-review>

[2] <https://www.menarights.org/en/articles/oral-statement-upr-outcome-jordan>

[3] <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/jordan>

[4] <https://www.idea.int/democracytracker/report/jordan/february-2024>

[5] <https://jordantimes.com/opinion/jafar-al-sabbagh/general-pardon-law-2024>

[6] <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/jordan/>

[7] <https://freedomhouse.org/country/jordan/freedom-world/2024>

[8]

<https://south.euneighbours.eu/opportunity/support-to-human-rights-democracy-and-civil-society-in-jordan-2024/>

# Rights of Specific Groups

In 2023, human rights conditions in Jordan remained challenging for various groups, including women, children, LGBTQ+ individuals, and ethnic or religious minorities. Despite some legal frameworks aimed at protecting rights, significant violations persisted, often exacerbated by discriminatory laws and societal norms.

## Women's Rights

Women in Jordan continue to face systemic discrimination, particularly under the personal status code, which requires a male guardian's permission for marriage and restricts women's ability to travel with their children without similar consent. Although amendments were made in 2019, these laws still perpetuate gender inequality. Reports indicate that women are often subjected to violence, and the legal system inadequately protects them. For instance, Article 340 of the penal code allows reduced sentences for men who kill female relatives under certain circumstances, reflecting a societal tolerance for gender-based violence[1][2].

In July 2023, protests erupted in response to high-profile cases of femicide, highlighting public demand for better protections against gender-based violence. Women activists have called for legislative reforms to ensure accountability for perpetrators of violence against women, but progress remains slow[3][4].

## Children's Rights

Children in Jordan face various challenges, including exposure to corporal punishment, which is not prohibited by law. The penal code allows parents to discipline children by "general norms," leaving many vulnerable to abuse. Additionally, the rights of children from non-Jordanian backgrounds, particularly those of Jordanian women married to non-Jordanians, are limited. While non-citizen children no longer require work permits, many professions remain inaccessible to them, perpetuating cycles of poverty and marginalization [1][3].

The educational opportunities for refugee children, particularly those from Syria, are severely restricted. Only about 25% of secondary-school-age Syrian refugee children are enrolled in school, and many face barriers such as child labor and early marriage, which further hinder their educational prospects[4][5].

## LGBTQ+ Rights

LGBTQ+ individuals in Jordan face significant discrimination and harassment. While same-sex relations are not explicitly criminalized, vague laws regarding "immorality" are often used to target sexual and gender minorities. In 2023, LGBTQ+ activists reported increased state harassment, including the detention of activists and the closure of organizations advocating for LGBTQ+ rights. Security forces have been known to use digital surveillance to intimidate and expose LGBTQ+ individuals, further endangering their safety and freedom[6][7].

## **Ethnic and Religious Minorities**

Jordan is home to various ethnic and religious minorities, including Palestinians, Syrians, and others. These groups often face socio-economic challenges and discrimination. The government has historically limited the rights of Palestinian refugees, and many still struggle with access to essential services and employment opportunities. Additionally, Syrian refugees face restrictions on movement and access to services, which have been exacerbated by the economic pressures following the COVID-19 pandemic[8][9].

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the human rights landscape in Jordan during 2023 reflects a complex interplay of legal frameworks and societal norms that often undermine the rights of women, children, LGBTQ+ individuals, and ethnic or religious minorities. While there have been calls for reform and greater accountability, the reality on the ground indicates that significant challenges remain, necessitating sustained advocacy and international attention to improve conditions for these vulnerable groups.

**Citations:**

- [1] <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/jordan>
- [2] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_rights\\_in\\_Jordan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_rights_in_Jordan)
- [3] <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/jordan>
- [4] <https://dawnmena.org/jordan-human-rights-record/>
- [5] <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/jordan/>
- [6] <https://freedomhouse.org/country/jordan/freedom-world/2023>
- [7] <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/jordan/>
- [8] <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/jordan/>
- [9] <https://www.unhcr.org/syrian-refugees>

# Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

In 2024, Jordan's adherence to economic, social, and cultural rights, particularly concerning the right to health, education, and adequate housing, reflects a complex interplay of challenges and improvements.

## Right to Health

Access to healthcare in Jordan is a significant concern, especially in the context of the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis, which has placed immense pressure on the country's healthcare system. The government has tried to provide healthcare services to citizens and refugees, but challenges remain.

### 1. Healthcare Access:

The Ministry of Health has reported improvements in healthcare infrastructure, including the expansion of primary healthcare facilities and increased availability of essential medicines. However, disparities exist, particularly in rural areas where access to services is limited. Refugees often face barriers, including legal and financial obstacles, in accessing healthcare services[3].

### 2. Quality of Care:

The quality of healthcare services has been a focal point, with initiatives aimed at enhancing training for healthcare professionals and improving service delivery. Despite these efforts, issues such as overcrowding in hospitals and long wait times persist, affecting the quality of care received by patients[5].

## Right to Education

Jordan's education system is characterized by both achievements and significant challenges, particularly in accommodating the influx of refugee students.

### 1. Educational Opportunities:

The government has implemented policies to integrate refugee children into the national education system, which has led to increased enrollment rates. However, the quality of education remains uneven, with overcrowded classrooms and a shortage of resources impacting learning outcomes[5].

### 2. Barriers to Education:

Economic barriers continue to hinder access to education, especially for marginalised groups. The high cost of educational materials and transportation can deter families from sending their children to school. Additionally, language barriers for non-Arabic-speaking refugee children pose significant challenges to their educational integration[3].



# **Right to Adequate Housing**

Housing conditions in Jordan are another critical area of concern, particularly given the significant number of refugees residing in the country.

## **1. Housing Conditions:**

Many families, particularly those in refugee camps, live in inadequate housing conditions. The government has made efforts to improve these conditions, but challenges remain due to limited resources and ongoing demand for housing[5].

## **2. Barriers to Adequate Housing:**

Economic constraints and high rental prices in urban areas have exacerbated housing insecurity for many Jordanians and refugees alike. The lack of affordable housing options continues to be a pressing issue, leading to overcrowding and substandard living conditions for vulnerable populations[3].

## **Conclusion**

In summary, while Jordan has made strides in promoting economic, social, and cultural rights in 2024, significant barriers remain. Access to healthcare, educational opportunities, and adequate housing are critical areas where ongoing efforts are needed to ensure that all individuals, particularly the most vulnerable, can fully enjoy their rights. The interplay of economic constraints, refugee pressures, and systemic challenges necessitates a comprehensive approach to address these issues effectively.

**Citations:**

- [1] [https://treaties.un.org/doc/treaties/1976/01/19760103%2009-57%20pm/ch\\_iv\\_03.pdf](https://treaties.un.org/doc/treaties/1976/01/19760103%2009-57%20pm/ch_iv_03.pdf)
- [2] <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/international-human-rights-law-and-practice/economic-social-and-cultural-rights/590020A9F0C393D6395774EBCDD172B2>
- [3] <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>
- [4] <https://www.refworld.org/legal/agreements/unga/1966/en/33423>
- [5] <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/cescr>
- [6] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Covenant\\_on\\_Economic,\\_Social\\_and\\_Cultural\\_Rights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Covenant_on_Economic,_Social_and_Cultural_Rights)
- [7] [https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?chapter=4&mtdsg\\_no=IV-3&src=TREATY](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?chapter=4&mtdsg_no=IV-3&src=TREATY)
- [8] <https://www.fao.org/right-to-food-around-the-globe/countries/jor/en/>

# Refugees and Migrants

The situation of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers in Jordan during 2024 remains complex and challenging. Jordan hosts a significant number of refugees and migrants, primarily due to ongoing regional conflicts, particularly the Syrian civil war. As of late 2023, the country was home to approximately 730,000 registered refugees, predominantly from Syria, with additional populations from Iraq, Yemen, Sudan, and other nations[1][5].

## Living Conditions and Access to Asylum Procedures

### Living Conditions

Refugees in Jordan often face difficult living conditions. While over 85% of Syrian refugees live outside of camps, many reside in rented accommodations that are often inadequate, leading to increased vulnerability[1]. The economic landscape in Jordan is strained, with high unemployment rates and rising living costs exacerbating the challenges faced by both refugees and local communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified these issues, pushing many into poverty and increasing reliance on humanitarian assistance[1][3].

For migrant workers, particularly those in domestic work, conditions can be even harsher. Reports indicate widespread abuses, including wage theft, unsafe working environments, and physical or verbal abuse. Many domestic workers, primarily from countries like the Philippines and Sri Lanka, are subjected to exploitative labor practices, often having their passports confiscated and facing long hours without adequate rest[1][2].

### Access to Asylum Procedures

Access to asylum procedures is particularly problematic for non-Syrian refugees. Since a 2019 government decision, the registration of asylum seekers from countries other than Syria has been severely restricted. This policy effectively bars many individuals from receiving UNHCR documentation, which is crucial for accessing services and legal protections[1][4]. As a result, many asylum seekers from Iraq, Yemen, and Sudan face significant barriers to formal recognition and support, often leading them to work in the informal sector without legal protections[2][4].

### Instances of Exploitation and Abuse

Exploitation and abuse of refugees and migrant workers in Jordan are prevalent. For instance, migrant laborers often endure dangerous working conditions, including overcrowded transportation to work sites, which has resulted in fatal accidents[2]. Additionally, the labor market policies in Jordan favor Syrian refugees over other nationalities, creating a hierarchy among refugees that exacerbates the vulnerabilities of non-Syrian groups[4]. This discrimination in labor access reflects broader systemic issues within Jordan's response to refugee populations, where international aid and development efforts have primarily focused on Syrian refugees, often neglecting other vulnerable groups[2][4].

## **International and Domestic Responses**

Internationally, Jordan has received substantial support from various countries and organizations, including the United States and the European Union, primarily aimed at managing refugee populations and enhancing security[2]. The Jordan Compact, established in 2016, aimed to improve the livelihoods of Syrian refugees through work opportunities and educational support. However, it has also led to the exclusion of other refugee groups from similar benefits, highlighting a critical gap in humanitarian response strategies[2][4].

Domestically, the Jordanian government continues to grapple with the economic implications of hosting such a large refugee population. Despite efforts to integrate refugees into the labor market, many remain in precarious employment situations without adequate legal protections. The government has been criticized for its restrictive policies that limit access to asylum and work permits for non-Syrian refugees, further complicating their ability to secure livelihoods and basic rights[1][3][4].

In summary, while Jordan remains a key host country for refugees and asylum seekers, the treatment of these groups, particularly non-Syrian populations and migrant workers, reflects significant challenges and systemic inequalities. The international community's response, while impactful, has often prioritized certain groups over others, necessitating a more inclusive approach to address the needs of all vulnerable populations in Jordan.

**Citations:**

- [1] <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/jordan>
- [2] <https://merip.org/2024/03/jordans-syrian-refugee-response-and-discriminatory-development-aid/>
- [3] <https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/refugees-and-migrant-health-country-profile-jordan>
- [4] <https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article/36/4/877/7444737>
- [5] <https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/jordan>
- [6] [https://mena.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1686/files/documents/2024-05/pub2023-047-l-world-migration-report-2024\\_1.pdf](https://mena.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1686/files/documents/2024-05/pub2023-047-l-world-migration-report-2024_1.pdf)
- [7] <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-2/refugees-and-asylum-seekers>
- [8] <https://www.ilo.org/resource/other/i-dont-feel-refugee-anymore-story-syrians-abdel-rahman-and-mohammad-jordan>

# Legal Framework and Accountability

Jordan's legal framework for human rights includes the Constitution, international treaties, and domestic laws. The country has ratified several key human rights treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture[1]. However, the implementation of these treaties remains a challenge.

In 2023, Jordan enacted a new cybercrime law that further undermines free speech and privacy online. The law uses vague terminology like "fake news" and "inciting immorality," making it difficult for people to understand and adhere to[2]. Notably, the authorities increased penalties for online defamation to a minimum three-month jail sentence or a fine of up to 20,000 Jordanian dinars[2].

## Judiciary and Impunity

The judiciary in Jordan plays a crucial role in upholding human rights, but concerns remain about its independence and impartiality. Civilians continue to be tried in military courts, which raises questions about the fairness of the proceedings[2].

Impunity for human rights violations remains a significant issue in Jordan. Local governors continue to use the Crime Prevention Law of 1954 to place individuals in administrative detention for up to one year, circumventing the Criminal Procedure Law[3]. In 2023, the authorities lifted the pandemic-related state of emergency, ending a moratorium on debt-related imprisonment, which is prohibited under international law[4].

## Examples of Accountability

In January 2024, Jordan's human rights record will be examined by the United Nations Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group for the fourth time[5]. This peer review process provides an opportunity for the international community to assess Jordan's progress in implementing human rights recommendations and highlight recent developments.

However, examples of perpetrators being brought to justice for human rights violations remain limited. In November 2023, security forces arrested at least three individuals under the new cybercrime law for their online opinions about the conflict in Gaza, Palestine[2]. The public prosecutor charged them with offenses such as "inciting sedition, strife, and hatred" and "defaming of an official body"[2].

## Conclusion

While Jordan has a legal framework for human rights and has ratified several international treaties, the implementation and enforcement of these laws remain a challenge. The enactment of the new cybercrime law and the continued use of administrative detention raise concerns about the government's commitment to upholding civil liberties and due process. The upcoming UPR review provides an opportunity for Jordan to address these issues and

demonstrate its willingness to hold perpetrators accountable and protect the rights of its citizens.

## References:

1. Human Rights Watch. (2024). Jordan: New Threats to Civic Space. Retrieved from [\[https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/01/11/jordan-new-threats-civic-space\]](https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/01/11/jordan-new-threats-civic-space)
2. Amnesty International. (2024). Human rights in Jordan. Retrieved from [\[https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/jordan/report-jordan/\]](https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/jordan/report-jordan/)
3. Human Rights Watch. (2024). World Report 2024: Jordan. Retrieved from [\[https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/jordan\]](https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/jordan)
4. U.S. Department of State. (2023). Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Jordan. Retrieved from [\[https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/jordan/\]](https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/jordan/)
5. OHCHR. (2024). Jordan's human rights record to be examined by Universal Periodic Review. Retrieved from [\[https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/01/jordans-human-rights-record-be-examined-universal-periodic-review\]](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/01/jordans-human-rights-record-be-examined-universal-periodic-review)(<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/01/jordans-human-rights-record-be-examined-universal-periodic-review>)



# International Relations and Human Rights

Jordan's international relations in 2024 were shaped by its efforts to balance ties with Arab countries and the West while navigating human rights challenges. The country maintained its strategic position as a mediator in regional conflicts, such as the Palestinian-Israeli issue and the Syrian crisis. However, Jordan also faced international scrutiny over its domestic human rights record[4].

## Engagement with UN Bodies and International Organizations

- Jordan continued to host a significant number of refugees, including over 655,000 Syrians, 66,686 Iraqis, and 12,882 Yemenis. The country's efforts to support refugees were recognized by the international community, but concerns remain about the living conditions and access to services for these populations[1][3].
- In 2024, Jordan was reviewed by the UN Human Rights Council under the Universal Periodic Review process. The government received recommendations to address issues such as freedom of expression, association, and assembly, as well as the rights of women and LGBTI individuals[1][2].
- Jordan maintained its membership in various international organizations, including the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the United Nations. The country's diplomatic efforts focused on promoting regional stability and conflict resolution[4].

## International Pressure and Sanctions

- While Jordan did not face direct sanctions related to human rights concerns, the country's international partners, particularly the United States and the European Union, expressed concerns about the human rights situation[2][4].
- In 2024, the Jordanian authorities escalated their crackdown on freedom of expression and association, targeting activists, journalists, and LGBTI individuals. This led to criticism from international human rights organizations and some Western governments[1][2].
- The enactment of a new cybercrime law in 2024 was seen as a further restriction on free speech and privacy online, drawing international condemnation. The law included vague provisions that could be used to target dissent and criticism of the government[2].

## Impact on Domestic Human Rights

- The international scrutiny and pressure had a mixed impact on Jordan's domestic human rights situation in 2024. While the government faced criticism, it also maintained its strategic partnerships with key allies[4].
- The crackdown on civil society and the restrictions on freedom of expression continued, with activists and journalists facing harassment, intimidation, and arrest. The authorities used vaguely defined laws to target dissent and criticism[1][2].
- Some positive developments occurred, such as the approval of a law granting Jordanian women married to non-Jordanian men the right to retain their nationality. However, women remained unable to pass their nationality to their spouses and children[1].
- The rights of LGBTI individuals remained under threat, with the authorities using "immorality" provisions in the Penal Code to target this community. An anti-LGBTI campaign led by some parliamentarians in 2024 further exacerbated the hostile environment for LGBTI people in Jordan[1][3].

In conclusion, Jordan's international relations in 2024 were characterized by its efforts to balance ties with Arab countries and the West while facing human rights challenges. The country's engagement with UN bodies and international organizations highlighted ongoing concerns about civil liberties, women's rights, and the treatment of minorities. While Jordan maintained its strategic partnerships, the international pressure had a limited impact on improving the domestic human rights situation, as the authorities continued to restrict civic space and target dissent.

**Citations:**

[1] Amnesty International. (2023). Jordan 2023.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east/jordan/report-jordan/>

[2] Human Rights Watch. (2024). Jordan: New Threats to Civic Space.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/01/11/jordan-new-threats-civic-space>

[3] Human Rights Watch. (2024). World Report 2024: Jordan.

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/jordan>

[4] Dajah, H. (2024). Jordanian foreign policy balances. Jordan Times.

<https://jordantimes.com/opinion/hasan-dajah/jordanian-foreign-policy-balances>

# Recommendations

## Recommendations to the Government of Jordan

### 1. Reform Legal Frameworks:

#### **Amend Repressive Laws:**

Revise or repeal laws that restrict freedom of expression and assembly. Ensure that legal frameworks support international human rights standards and protect individuals' rights to free speech and peaceful protest.

#### **Enhance Political Freedom:**

Update regulations governing political parties and civil society organizations to promote genuine political participation and prevent the arbitrary dissolution of these entities. This will help foster a more democratic and open political environment.

### 2. End Debt Imprisonment:

#### **Abolish Incarceration for Debt:**

Eliminate the practice of imprisoning individuals for unpaid debts. Introduce alternative debt resolution mechanisms that avoid incarceration and support financial rehabilitation.

### 3. Strengthen Women's Rights:

#### **Expand Nationality Rights:**

Extend recent legal reforms to allow Jordanian women married to non-Jordanian men to pass their nationality to their spouses and children. Address other discriminatory laws affecting women, such as those requiring male guardian permission for marriage and travel.

#### **Promote Gender Equality:**

Reform discriminatory provisions in the personal status code to ensure equal rights for women in areas such as marriage, divorce, and custody.

## **4. Protect LGBTI Rights:**

### **Reform Penal Code:**

Repeal or amend provisions that criminalize “immorality” and are used to target LGBTI individuals. Establish legal protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

## **5. Promote Civic Participation:**

### **Reinstate Professional Organizations:**

Facilitate the election of new boards for dissolved professional organizations, such as teachers’ syndicates. Support the establishment of independent and active civil society groups that contribute to a vibrant public discourse.

## **Recommendations to International Bodies**

### **1. Engage in Dialogue:**

#### **Sustained Communication:**

Advocate for ongoing dialogue between Jordan and international human rights organizations. Support Jordan’s participation in reviews to address and monitor progress on human rights issues.

### **2. Monitor Human Rights Violations:**

#### **Support Independent Monitoring:**

Fund and encourage independent human rights monitoring to assess and report on the situation in Jordan, focusing on the treatment of political dissidents, journalists, refugees, and marginalized communities, including LGBTI individuals.

### **3. Conditional Aid:**

#### **Link Aid to Reforms:**

Consider making international aid contingent on clear improvements in human rights practices. This approach could provide strong incentives for the Jordanian government to implement necessary reforms.

## **Recommendations to Civil Society Organizations**

## **1. Advocacy and Awareness:**

### **Enhance Outreach:**

Increase efforts to raise awareness about human rights issues through social media, community outreach, and public campaigns. Focus on marginalized groups such as women and LGBTI individuals to highlight their specific challenges and available support resources.

## **2. Legal Support and Counseling:**

### **Provide Assistance:**

Offer legal aid to individuals facing unjust imprisonment for debt or political dissent. Establish support networks to assist those subjected to harassment or intimidation by authorities.

## **3. Partnerships and Coalitions:**

### **Strengthen Alliances:**

Build coalitions with other civil society groups to amplify advocacy efforts. A unified approach can enhance the effectiveness of campaigns aimed at influencing policy changes and promoting human rights.

By adopting these recommendations, Jordan can make significant progress toward addressing human rights violations and building a more inclusive and equitable society.

# Conclusion

The 2024 human rights report on Jordan highlights ongoing issues affecting the country. The government has intensified efforts to suppress dissent, targeting activists, journalists, and civil society members through restrictive laws, particularly those related to cybercrime, limiting freedom of expression and association. Despite some legal progress for women, such as retaining nationality when marrying non-Jordanians, significant gender inequality persists, with women facing legal and social obstacles like requiring male guardian approval for marriage and the inability to pass nationality to their children. LGBTI rights are severely constrained, with vaguely defined laws justifying harassment and abuse, and rising anti-LGBTI sentiment leading to increased violence and discrimination.

Economic challenges, worsened by high unemployment and rising poverty, have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The social protection system remains insufficient, leaving many without the necessary support, and debt imprisonment continues despite international norms. Judicial and military practices also undermine human rights, with military courts handling civilian cases, thus undermining fair trial rights and the rule of law, while administrative detention remains a concern as individuals are held without due process. Overall, Jordan's human rights situation remains precarious, marked by ongoing repression and systemic discrimination. Continued international attention, proactive measures, and sustained advocacy are crucial for improving the human rights landscape and protecting Jordan's vulnerable populations. Without ongoing efforts, the cycle of injustice and inequality is likely to persist, hindering progress toward a more just and equitable society.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Statistical Data on Human Rights Issues in Jordan

### Refugees and Migrants

#### Syrian Refugees:

Over 655,000 Syrians sought refuge in Jordan by late 2023, with more than 85% living outside refugee camps.

#### Their Nationalities:

Jordan hosted 61,081 Iraqis, 12,772 Yemenis, 5,163 Sudanese, and 593 Somalis among others.

#### Work Permits:

Since 2016, approximately 373,000 work permits have been issued or renewed for Syrian refugees, though many remain in the informal sector without protections.

### Women's and Girls' Rights

#### Marriage Laws:

Women need male guardian permission to marry, and marriages between Muslim women and non-Muslim men are not recognized.

#### Violence Against Women:

The penal code allows mitigated sentences for crimes against women under certain conditions, exposing them to violence and discrimination.

### Economic Rights

#### Youth Unemployment:

Jordan faces high unemployment rates, particularly among youth and women, exacerbated by economic challenges.

## Appendix B: Glossary of Legal and Human Rights Terms



**Asylum Seeker:**

A person who seeks international protection from persecution in their home country.

**Refugee:**

A person who has been forced to flee their country due to persecution, war, or violence.

**Discrimination:**

Unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, often based on race, age, or gender.

**Human Rights:**

Rights that are believed to belong justifiably to every person, including the right to life, liberty, and security.