



Standing invitations for country visits to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council

Concepts and definitions

Definition:

The indicator refers to the open invitation extended by a State to all thematic special procedures to undertake country visits.

Rationale:

By extending a standing invitation, a State announces that it is, in principle, prepared to receive a country visit from any of the thematic special procedures mandates. Issuing a standing invitation, to some extent, reflects a State's declared commitment to cooperate with special procedures, which are one of the core pillars of the international system for the protection and promotion of human rights. This indicator is a *structural indicator* in the OHCHR methodology for human rights indicators ([HRI/PUB/12/5](#)).

Concepts:

Special procedures are either an individual (called "*Special Rapporteur*" or "*Independent Expert*") or a Working Group composed of five members, one from each of the five United Nations regional groupings: Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and the Western group. The Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts, and members of the Working Groups are appointed by the Human Rights Council and serve in their capacities. As of 14 August 2020, there are [44 thematic and 12 country mandates](#).

Special procedures report annually to the Human Rights Council. The majority of the mandates also report to the General Assembly. Their tasks are defined in the resolutions creating or extending their terms, including examining, reporting and advising on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective. As part of their working methods, mandate-holders undertake country visits to examine the human rights situation at the national level. After their visits, they issue a [mission report containing their findings and recommendations](#).

Comments and limitations:

Special Procedures mandate-holders act on individual cases and concerns of a broader, structural nature by sending communications to States and others in which they bring alleged or potential violations of human rights to their attention. They conduct thematic studies and convene expert consultations, contribute to the development of international human rights standards, engage in advocacy, raise public awareness and provide advice for technical cooperation.

Mandate-holders undertake to uphold independence, efficiency, competence, and integrity through probity, impartiality, honesty, and good faith. The independent status of the mandate-holders is crucial to fulfil their functions in all impartiality. A [Code of Conduct](#), [Manual of Operations](#) and [Internal Advisory Procedure](#) provide guidelines on the working methods and review practices of special procedures.

Standing invitations generally facilitate country visits but are not always honoured. This indicator should be read in conjunction with other indicators such as: numbers of visit requests from mandate-holders received by the State and the proportion of which realized; the average time elapsed between a visit request from mandate-holders and the start of a country visit; the number of pending visit requests from mandate-holders; and the mandates which have been able to carry out a visit compared to those that have requested a visit.

Other supplementary indicators include State's cooperation with other pillars of the international human rights system, namely, the treaty bodies and Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism. Other relevant information on the activities of the Special Procedures mandate-holders can be found at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx>.

The indicator contributes information on the stated commitment of States to cooperate with international human rights mechanisms in order to ensure respect for, protection and promotion of human rights (*structural indicator*). However, it does not capture the actual process of implementation (*process indicator*) or the results thereof (*outcome indicator*).

Methodology

Computation Method:

The indicator is computed as the State that have extended a standing invitation to thematic special procedures 'Yes' or 'No'. The date when the standing invitation was extended is also recorded.

Disaggregation:

Not applicable.

Treatment of missing values:

- [At country level](#)

No missing values.

- [At regional and global levels](#)

No missing values.

Regional aggregates:

Regional aggregates are calculated as the total number of States that has extended a standing invitation in the region divided by the total number of States in the region.

Sources of discrepancies:

No discrepancies.

Methods and guidance available to countries for the compilation of the data at the national level:**Quality assurance**

- OHCHR maintains a database that is updated regularly and OHCHR makes every possible effort to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data.

Data Sources

Description:

OHCHR produces the indicator based on data obtained by its Special Procedures Branch (SPB), <https://spinternet.ohchr.org/StandingInvitations.aspx>.

Collection process:

The SPB collects the administrative data on standing invitation as part of its mandate to provide administrative and logistical assistance to individual thematic Special Procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council.

Data Availability

Description:**Time series:**

2015 - 2020

Calendar

Data collection:

Real-time

Data release:

Real-time

Data providers

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Data compilers

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

References

URL:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Indicators/Pages/HRIndicatorsIndex.aspx>

References:

UNITED NATIONS (2012). Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation. New York and Geneva. Available from

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Indicators/Pages/HRIndicatorsIndex.aspx> .

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Special Procedures, Annual Facts and Figures, Fact Sheets and Directory. Available from

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Publications.aspx#annual>.

Related indicators

- Status of ratification of the 18 international human rights treaties and optional protocols
- Acceptance of 9 individual complaints procedures
- Reporting compliance by State parties to the human rights treaty bodies
- Replies to communications from the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council
- Country Visits by the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council
- SDG 16.1.2: Number of conflict-related deaths by sex, age, and cause
- SDG 16.10.1: Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months
- SDG 16.a.1: Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles
- SDG 16.b.1: Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law
- Human Rights Engagement Barometer