



SPAIN

2025-2027

CANDIDATE  
TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS  
COUNCIL

*Building trust and bridges*







# Spain and its Foreign Action in Human Rights

**The commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights is a distinctive and defining element of Spain's foreign policy,** a reflection of its importance at domestic level and a demand of Spanish society. Our country has undertaken very broad obligations in this area, being a part of eight fundamental international human rights treaties and nine optional protocols.

Spain attaches great importance to being a member for **the third time** of the Human Rights Council (HRC) for the period 2025-2027, after having been part of the Council in two previous periods from 2011 to 2013 and from 2018 to 2020. This candidacy enhances our firm commitment to human rights and, in particular, to the multilateral system for the protection and promotion of human rights.

01



**Spain has undertaken extensive obligations for the protection of human rights and has submitted itself to the monitoring of the international treaty bodies.**

A good example of Spain's commitment to the protection of human rights is **the II National Human Rights Action Plan**, which was drawn up with the participation of civil society and adopted in June 2023 for a five-year period (2023-2027) to continue advancing human rights agenda, guaranteeing the full exercise of rights and promoting new advances in equality, freedom and social justice both within and beyond our borders.

**The Spanish foreign policy has established the following priorities in the field of human rights:** the fight against the death penalty; the achievement of real and effective equality of opportunity between men and women; the fight against all forms of discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation or gender identity; the defence and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights, including the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, the right to care and the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.





# Spain's commitments to the protection and promotion of Human Rights

02

**We contribute** to the proper functioning of the Human Rights Council and support the independence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

**We play an active role** within the Human Rights Council and participate in the negotiation of resolutions and in debates and interactive dialogues, building trust and bridges.

**We make substantive contributions** to the consolidation of the human rights normative framework. Spain promotes the ratification of conventions through, above all, the recommendations it makes to countries that undergo the Universal Periodic Review. We lead by example: We were the third country to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to whose Group of Friends we belong, and we were one of the first countries to ratify the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women. We were the second country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its optional protocol.

**We support and actively participate in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).** The UPR has been instrumental for the promotion and protection of human rights in the world. Spain has undergone three reviews under this mechanism. The fourth cycle will take place in 2025. In addition, we participate in all UPR sessions with recommendations to all countries under review, as proof of our commitment to a mechanism whose two essential pillars are universality and dialogue.

**We are committed to the treaty bodies and special procedures.** Spain has ratified all the protocols establishing individual complaint procedures in relation to the international conventions to which we are a State party. Spain issued as early as 1991 an open and standing invitation to all special procedures (working groups, special rapporteurs and independent experts) to visit our country upon request.

**We promote human rights issues in the Security Council.** Spain has worked for the Security Council to pay special attention to human rights issues. Respect for human rights is a prerequisite for peace. We have therefore highlighted the importance of prevention and the fight against impunity in cases of human rights violations and we have promoted human rights-sensitive language in the negotiation of UN mission mandates.







# Ten proposals for the period 2025-2027

03

**01/** We will play an active role in the search for **common ground in consultations and negotiations** while upholding the principles and requirements for the protection and promotion of human rights. We will do so in permanent contact with member and non-member countries of the Human Rights Council building bridges, promoting dialogue and building trust between different sensitivities.

**02/** We will work for effective **equality of opportunities between men and women**, promoting the Feminist Foreign Policy that incorporates the gender approach in all areas of external action. We will continue to put into practice our firm commitment to the prevention and elimination of gender violence against women and girls, in all its manifestations, in compliance with international commitments and particularly the Istanbul Convention and the Warsaw Convention.

**03/** The defence and promotion of **economic, social and cultural rights** is also a key area of our country's action. We will continue to promote the human rights to drinking water and sanitation, whose effective realization is in turn a prerequisite for the realization of other rights such as the right to health, education and food.

**04/** We will promote **diversity and the fight against all forms of discrimination**, especially on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, including the decriminalization of consensual same-sex relationships. The fight against discrimination benefits society as a whole, contributing to the realisation of all people's rights. The promotion of diversity, in all its forms, contributes to more open, inclusive, equitable and tolerant societies.









**05/ We will work** to ensure the development of effective mechanisms to promote **the human right to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment**. A healthy environment is the basis and precondition for economic development, sustainability and social justice. Our country takes an active role in global efforts to strengthen environmental governance, focusing on its human security and health implications. It is essential to sustain and improve our environment in order to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights by the entire population.

**06/ We will actively work for the rights of persons with disabilities**. We will continue to promote an innovative vision of the rights of persons with disabilities and we will actively engage in the negotiation of resolutions on the rights of persons with disabilities in the framework of the Council sessions. Spanish legislation in this area is one of the most advanced in the world in terms of disability and integration, with a **Disability Strategy 2022-2030**.



**07 /** **New technologies** have a clear impact on the exercise of human rights, equality, inclusion and non-discrimination must be guaranteed. Spain is committed to developing digital rights with ethics and responsibility, ensuring equal access for all people.

**08 /** Spain advocates for the **protection and promotion of the work of human rights defenders as positive agents of change.** Their work is essential to highlight situations of social injustice, combat impunity and promote democratic processes around the world. Spain will continue to advocate for a safe and enabling environment for the defence of human rights and will encourage countries to step up their efforts to protect human rights defenders.

**09 /** We will place special emphasis on the **active involvement of the private sector in the defence and promotion of human rights.** Business has a great impact on the lives of the people and communities in which they operate. Spain therefore promotes human rights due diligence as a business management tool, supporting the adoption of European legislation in this area. We will also draft a law on the **Protection of Human Rights, Sustainability and Due Diligence in Business Activities.**

**10 /** **In line with the 2030 Agenda, human rights are an essential part of Spanish Development Cooperation,** which is the translation of the commitment of its citizenship with countries and communities suffering from inequality and poverty in its multiple dimensions, in favour of a new global social contract for sustainable and equitable development. Following the adoption of new **legislation on Sustainable Development Cooperation and Global Sustainability,** Spain is committed to reaching 0.7% of GDP in development aid, with a human rights, gender, equality and diversity-based approach.



**SPAIN**  
2025-2027 CANDIDATE  
TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS  
COUNCIL