



Annual Report 2024



Annual Report 2024

Contents

Introduction

04

Legislative and Legal Developments

09

Monitoring and Receiving Complaints

19

Respond to the Reports of International Organizations

47

Internal Activities and Events

61

External Activities and Events

77

Regional Forum

89

Celebration of International Human Rights Day

97

Conclusion

111

Introduction:

The Oman Human Rights Commission continues to fulfill its national role in protecting and promoting human rights, based on its mandate defined by its Statute attached to Royal Decree No. (57/2022), as well as the values and principles affirmed by the Basic Statute of the State and the international conventions to which the Sultanate of Oman is a party. Over the past year, efforts were intensified across various fields, with the Commission continuing to receive complaints and reports, conduct field visits, deliver awareness-raising lectures, and organize human rights-related activities at both local and international levels. It also maintained continuous engagement with international reports concerning the human rights situation in the Sultanate of Oman.

The Commission continued to monitor and receive complaints related to various rights, civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental, working to examine these complaints and coordinate with the relevant authorities to address them through mechanisms that ensure a prompt and effective response. Field visits were conducted to the central prison and detention centers to follow up on the conditions of detainees and ensure that the concerned institutions comply with national and international standards in their treatment, facilities, and services. Visits also extended to social, health, and educational institutions to ensure their alignment with human rights requirements.

Additionally, the Oman Human Rights Commission continued its engagement with reports issued by international organizations, whether governmental or non-governmental, including questionnaires from Special Rapporteurs. The Commission studied and analyzed these reports, coordinated with the relevant authorities to verify the information contained therein, and prepared responses based on national laws, governmental efforts to promote human rights, and international standards for report responses.

This year also witnessed enhanced regional and international engagement. The Commission, in cooperation with the National Human Rights Committee in the State of Qatar, the Arab Network for National Human Rights Institutions, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, organized a regional forum on the role of national human rights institutions in planning



and monitoring the implementation of national visions related to human rights. The forum brought together more than 170 participants representing over 50 entities, including government institutions, international and regional organizations, and civil society representatives.

As part of its ongoing commitment to promoting a culture of human rights, the Commission organized this year a celebration for Human Rights Day under the theme "The Nation's Foundation: Sustainable Steps to Protect and Promote the Rights of Older Persons." The celebration focused on recognizing the role and contributions of older persons in building society, highlighting the Sultanate's efforts to protect their rights, ensuring their access to necessary services, and enhancing their social standing through laws and legislation that safeguard them from neglect or abuse. The event also aimed to raise public awareness of the rights of older persons and ensure their active participation in various aspects of life.

Believing in the importance of promoting human rights awareness, fostering community consciousness, and instilling the spirit of citizenship, within the framework of its role in implementing Oman Vision 2040, the Commission organized a series of lectures and awareness-raising seminars targeting various societal groups, from school and university students to employees in public and private institutions, as well as military and security institutions. These lectures addressed a variety of topics such as the rights of the child, women's rights, labor rights, freedom of expression, complaint mechanisms, and other key human rights issues, thereby contributing to strengthening and entrenching a culture of respect for rights and duties in society.

This report highlights the key efforts undertaken by the Oman Human Rights Commission during the year 2024, focusing on major legislative and legal developments, the Commission's role in monitoring and receiving complaints, responding to regional and international reports, and its internal and external activities and events.

The Commission reaffirms its commitment to continuing the development of its operational mechanisms and strengthening its role as an independent national institution dedicated to promoting a culture of human rights and upholding the values of justice and human dignity in the Sultanate of Oman.

Establishment:



- The Oman Human Rights Commission was established in 2008 by Royal Decree No. (124/2008).
- In 2022, it was reorganized under Royal Decree No. (57/2022).

Vision:



- To be an effective national platform for supporting, promoting, and protecting human rights across all segments and institutions of society.

Mission:



- To instill a culture of human rights among individuals and institutions within society, promote the practice of these rights, and work toward their protection in accordance with national and international principles and legislation.

Statute:



- The Commission's statute consists of 16 articles that define the composition of the Commission, the mechanism for electing the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, the duration of membership, the Commission's objectives, and its powers.

Objective:



- The Oman Human Rights Commission aims to promote and protect human rights in the Sultanate of Oman in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State, international charters and conventions to which the Sultanate is a party, and applicable laws.

Composition:



- The Commission comprises fourteen (14) members with expertise and interest in human rights, including representatives from several government entities concerned with human rights. Their appointment is made by Royal Decree.

Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson:



- At its first meeting, the members of the Commission elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from among the non-governmental representatives.
- Membership in the Commission lasts for four (4) years, aligned with the term of the Council of Oman, and is renewable for one additional term.

Meetings and Decisions:



- The Commission meets upon invitation by its Chairperson four (4) times a year, or as needed.
- Decisions are made by a majority vote of the attending civil society members. In the case of a tie, the side of the meeting Chair prevails.
- Government representatives participate in the Commission's work and attend meetings, but they do not have voting rights.

Independence:



- The Oman Human Rights Commission enjoys full independence in carrying out its human rights-related activities.

Mandate and Functions:



- Develop a national human rights strategy and monitor its implementation in coordination with all relevant authorities.
- Monitor the protection of human rights and freedoms in the Sultanate of Oman in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State, international treaties and conventions to which Oman is a party, and applicable laws.
- Monitor comments and observations raised by foreign governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations regarding human rights in Oman, coordinate with relevant authorities to verify and respond to them.
- Provide advice to the relevant authorities on matters related to human rights and contribute to the preparation of reports on these issues.
- Monitor and assist in addressing any violations or abuses related to human rights in the Sultanate of Oman.
- Conduct field visits to prisons, detention centers, hospitals, and labor camps to monitor the human rights situation in these facilities.
- Receive, study, and recommend actions on human rights complaints, and follow up with the concerned authorities.
- Cooperate with international human rights mechanisms, prepare reports, and participate in relevant regional and international meetings.
- Organize conferences, training courses, and seminars on human rights in coordination with relevant authorities.
- Represent the Sultanate of Oman in regional and international conferences, events, and meetings related to human rights.



Monitoring and Complaints Handling

Media Law:

The Media Law was issued under Royal Decree No. 58/2024 to keep pace with digital transformations and modern challenges in the media sector. It aims to strike a balance between freedom of opinion and expression, the regulation of media work, the protection of media rights, and ensuring adherence to professional and ethical standards.

The Media Law reaffirms what is stipulated in the Basic Statute of the State that “freedom of opinion and expression through speech, writing, and other means of expression is guaranteed within the limits of the Law.” Article 37 further provides that “freedom of the press, printing, and publishing is guaranteed in accordance with the conditions and regulations specified by Law; anything that leads to sedition, hatred, or undermines the security of the state or offends human dignity and rights is prohibited.”

The Law affirms the provisions of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which the Sultanate of Oman acceded under Royal Decree No. 87/2002. Article 5 of the convention obliges States Parties to prohibit and eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee everyone, without distinction, the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

It also reaffirms the Arab Charter on Human Rights, to which Oman acceded by Royal Decree No. 16/2023. Article 32 of the Charter states: “The right to information and freedom of opinion and expression, as well as the right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any medium, regardless of geographical boundaries.” It requires States Parties to exercise these rights within the framework of the fundamental components of society and subjects them only to restrictions that respect the rights or reputations of others, or that are necessary for national security, public order, public health, or morals.

Additionally, the Law affirms the Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to by Oman under Royal Decree No. 54/96. Article 12 mandates the State to guarantee the child's right to freely express their views. This is reaffirmed in the Child Law issued under Royal Decree No. 22/2014, Article 12 of which states: "The child has the right to express their opinion through speech, writing, print, art, or any other means of their choosing, provided it does not conflict with the rights or reputation of others, national security, public order, or public morals, as defined by the Law."

The issuance of the Media Law is also in line with Oman's support for the 2021 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations, which called for the expeditious issuance of a media Law. Recommendations 86–96, 99–102, and 110–111 emphasized the need to enact legislation to promote freedom of opinion and expression. Thus, the Law aligns with international human rights standards and Oman's commitments under the 2021 UPR.

The Law includes various provisions regulating the media sector. It outlines the procedures for obtaining media licenses and mandates the regulation of media content to prevent the spread of false or inflammatory information and violations of individual privacy.

It further includes provisions that promote freedom of opinion and expression, independent journalism, and the free flow of information. It affirms the rights and freedoms of media practitioners in Oman, provides them with legal protection, excludes custodial penalties for media-related offenses, and regulates both traditional and modern media outlets. It also ensures protection for journalists and media workers, prohibits interference with their work, and guarantees a safe and independent work environment, while emphasizing their adherence to professional standards.

Advocacy and Legal Consultancy Law:

In line with Oman's commitment to promoting justice and the rule of Law, Royal Decree No. 41/2024 was issued to promulgate the Advocacy and Legal Consultancy Law. The Law aims to develop an effective legal

framework that supports the protection of all rights and strengthens trust in the judicial system.

It reaffirms the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which obliges States Parties to provide legal protection to all individuals in accessing justice.

The Law also aligns with the “Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers” issued by the United Nations, which sets out the responsibilities and guarantees for Lawyers to perform their duties. Moreover, the Arab Charter on Human Rights emphasizes the importance of the legal profession in ensuring human rights. Article 16(3) of the Charter affirms the accused’s right to defend themselves personally or through a lawyer of their choice and to communicate with them freely and in confidentiality.

The Law stipulates that advocacy is a free profession that contributes to achieving justice, upholding the rule of Law, ensuring the right to defense and enables lawyers to practice their profession independently in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State. It also establishes the Committee for Lawyers and Legal Consultants Affairs to regulate the profession and ensure its proper practice, and it includes various provisions governing the legal profession and consultancy, sets the conditions for practicing it, and outlines the rights, duties, and accountability mechanisms for lawyers and legal consultants.

Biometrics Law:

The Sultanate of Oman issued the Biometrics Law under Royal Decree No. 21/2024 to regulate the collection and use of biometric data, while ensuring respect for human dignity, privacy, and personal data protection, in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State.

The Law aligns with international human rights standards by reinforcing the right to a fair trial, as enshrined in Article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms the presumption of innocence until proven guilty.

It also reaffirms the Arab Charter on Human Rights, particularly Article 16 on the right to a fair trial and Article 21 on privacy and protection from unlawful interference in personal life.

The Law prohibits torture and ill-treatment during criminal investigations. Biometric evidence, being scientifically accurate, helps prevent the use of coercive, unlawful methods and supports criminal justice, consistent with Article 15 of the Convention Against Torture, acceded to by Oman under Royal Decree No. 45/2020, which prohibits confessions obtained under coercion.

The Law also contributes to early detection of certain mental disabilities, thereby facilitating necessary healthcare and support for persons with disabilities. This aligns with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by Oman under Royal Decree No. 121/2008. Article 25 of the convention emphasizes the need to provide early health services to improve quality of life and promote social inclusion.

Biometric data is defined as measurable, distinctive characteristics used to identify a person, including DNA, fingerprints, palm prints, facial prints, and iris scans. The Law establishes a biometric database while ensuring data confidentiality and prohibits the use of DNA testing to establish or deny parentage.

The Law allows for the use of the biometric database in investigations and prosecutions to identify perpetrators of crimes, and recognizes such data as admissible evidence in judicial proceedings.

Legislation Concerning Vulnerable Groups:

Regulatory Bylaw for Daycare Centers for the Elderly:

The protection of the rights of the elderly is one of the fundamental principles promoted by international human rights treaties, which affirm their right to live in dignity, receive health and social care, and actively participate in society. Based on this principle, Ministerial Decision No. (344/2024) was issued to enact the Regulatory Bylaw for Daycare Centers for the Elderly, in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State which

guarantees a decent life for citizens, and in line with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which Oman acceded to under Royal Decree No. (46/2020).

The bylaw aims to regulate the operation of these centers and ensure the provision of a safe and supportive environment that meets the needs of the elderly by offering social, rehabilitative, psychological, cultural, and recreational services. The bylaw also encourages community members to volunteer in support of the elderly. It includes provisions outlining the requirements for obtaining a license to establish or operate a center, the obligations of the license holder, the criteria for center management, and the standards and specifications of the centers.

Regulatory Bylaw for Elderly Care in Foster Families:

The Regulatory Bylaw for Elderly Care in Foster Families, issued under Ministerial Decision No. (190/2024), translates the guiding principles of state policy outlined in the Basic Statute of the State into practical policies that ensure a dignified and stable life for the elderly while safeguarding their rights and protecting them under all circumstances.

The bylaw aims to regulate the care of elderly individuals who lack appropriate family care by placing them with foster families that provide a safe and supportive environment. It includes provisions specifying the eligibility criteria for elderly persons and foster families, the procedures for providing foster care, and the competent authority responsible for oversight and follow-up.

It is worth noting that the Sultanate of Oman supported Recommendation No. 140 in the 2021 Universal Periodic Review concerning the enhancement of the protection of the rights of older persons. The issuance of these bylaws represents a fulfillment of such commitments.

Regulatory Bylaw for Temporary Care Homes:

The Ministry of Social Development issued Ministerial Decision No. (392/2024) to enact the Regulatory Bylaw for Temporary Care Homes

with the aim of providing a comprehensive legal framework to regulate the operation of such homes and ensure the protection and care of eligible groups. These include children exposed to abuse, violence, and exploitation; women at risk of abuse and violence; victims of human trafficking; and children subject to judicial rulings.

The bylaw reflects the Sultanate of Oman's commitment to protecting vulnerable groups and ensuring their rights, in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State, national laws, international conventions, and the recommendations from the 2021 Universal Periodic Review, including Recommendation No. 112-116 regarding the protection and rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking and forced labor.

The homes provide social, health, psychological, cultural, and recreational services to beneficiaries. The bylaw defines the categories eligible to receive services, their admission conditions, their rights and responsibilities, the operating system of the home, and the circumstances governing the relationship between the beneficiary and the home.

Amendment of Certain Provisions of the Executive Bylaw of the Social Protection Law:

The Social Protection Fund issued Decision No. (R/12/2024), which includes amendments to certain provisions of the Executive Bylaw of the Social Protection Law in alignment with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article (28) of the Convention emphasizes the need to ensure that persons with disabilities—especially women, girls, and the elderly—benefit from social protection programs.

The amendments also align with Recommendation No. 162 from the 2021 Universal Periodic Review, which Oman supported regarding the enhancement of the rights of persons with disabilities.

These amendments aim to more precisely define the eligibility criteria for disability benefits and to strengthen coordination among relevant entities to ensure appropriate support for this group.

Passengers' Rights Bylaw:

Ensuring the rights of passengers and regulating the relationship between airlines and passengers is a cornerstone for upholding freedom of movement and the right to safe and equitable travel. Accordingly, the Civil Aviation Authority issued the Passengers' Rights Bylaw under Decision No. (757/2024), which aims to regulate air services and protect the rights of passengers and air carriers.

The bylaw reaffirms Article (15) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which grants men and women equal rights regarding laws on the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile. Oman withdrew its reservation to this article under Royal Decree No. (3/2019).

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination also guarantees the right to freedom of movement and residence within a state's borders, as stated in Article (5).

Additionally, the bylaw affirms Article (26) of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which states: "Everyone lawfully present in the territory of a State Party shall have the right to move freely and to choose his or her residence in any part of that territory, within the limits of the applicable laws."

It also aligns with Article (20) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which requires States Parties to take effective measures to ensure the mobility of persons with disabilities with the greatest possible independence. These include facilitating their freedom of movement in the manner and time of their choosing at an affordable cost, and providing access to quality mobility aids, assistive technologies, forms of human assistance, and intermediaries.

Accordingly, the bylaw is consistent with the 2021 Universal Periodic Review recommendations supported by Oman regarding the enhancement of protections for persons with disabilities.

The bylaw also reflects the provisions of the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air (Montreal 1999), which Oman acceded to under Royal Decree No. (65/2006), aimed at protecting the interests of consumers in international air travel.

The bylaw addresses the rights and obligations of passengers and air carriers, outlines the specific requirements for passengers with disabilities, and details procedures and compensation for lost or damaged baggage.

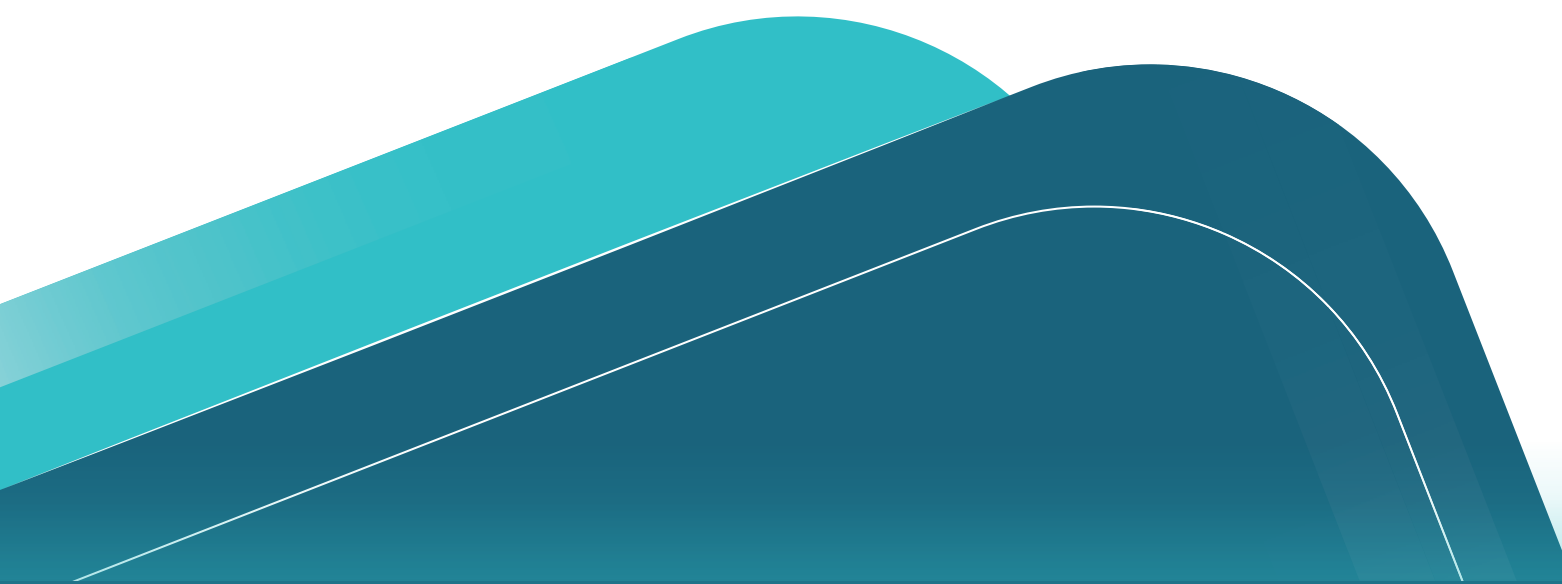
Environmental and Developmental Rights:

The Environment Authority issued Decision No. (296/2024) enacting the Noise Control Bylaw for the Public Environment, based on Article (15) of the Basic Statute of the State, which mandates the protection and balance of the environment to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development for all generations. It also obliges citizens and residents to preserve the environment and avoid harming it.

This is in line with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which requires States Parties to take steps to ensure the full realization of the right to health. This includes improving all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene, as stipulated in Article (12), paragraph (2).

The Arab Charter on Human Rights also affirms the right to a sound environment and obliges States Parties to take the necessary measures to enforce this right.

The bylaw aims to regulate noise levels from various projects and mitigate their negative effects on human health and living beings. It includes provisions defining permissible noise levels during day and night for projects and specifies the obligations of the entities responsible for these projects.

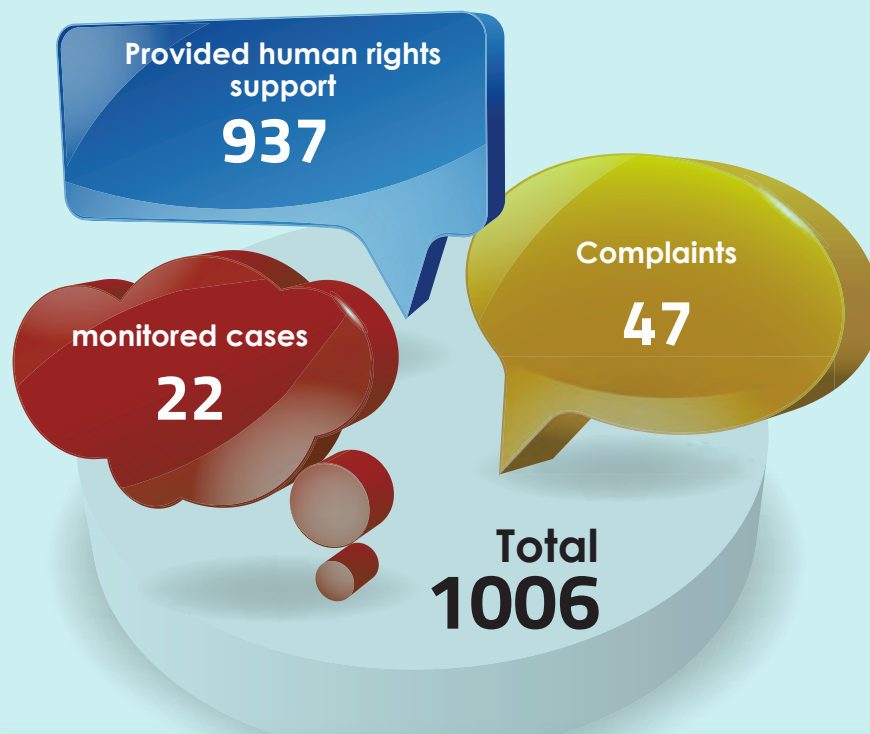


Monitoring and Receiving Complaints

Monitoring and Complaints Handling:



In accordance with Article (11) of its Statute issued by Royal Decree No. (57/2022), the Oman Human Rights Commission is mandated to monitor and receive complaints related to human rights and assist in their resolution in cooperation with the relevant authorities and institutions. During the reporting period, the Commission received and monitored a total of (1006) cases, including (47) complaints, (22) monitored cases, and (937) cases in which human rights support was provided. These cases covered a broad spectrum of civil, political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, and developmental rights, in addition to the rights of vulnerable groups.

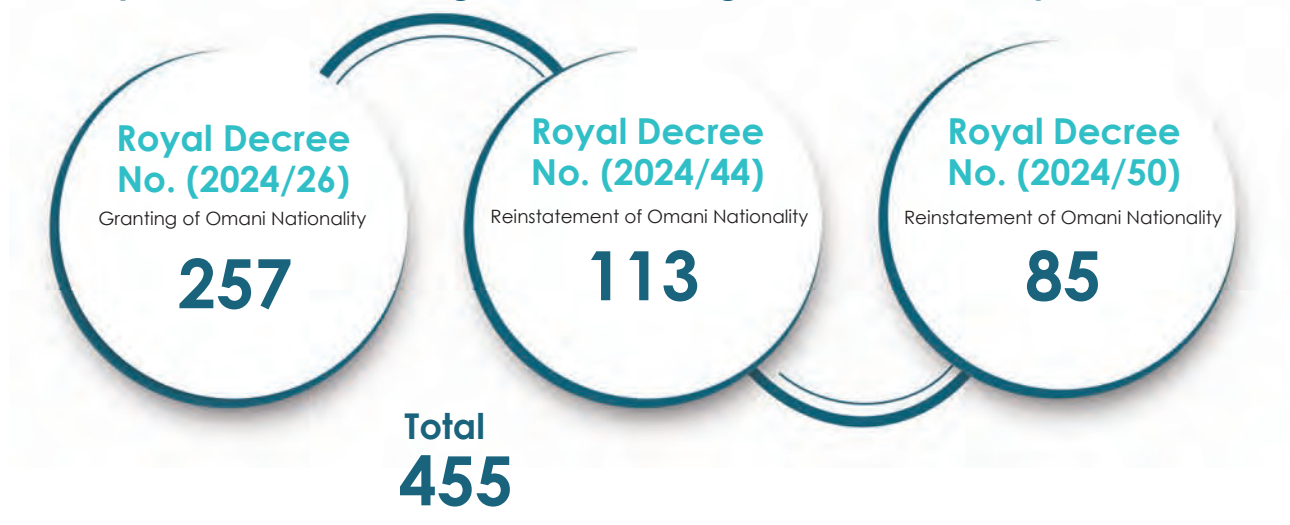


Nationality:

In line with ensuring the implementation of the Omani Nationality Law issued by Royal Decree No. (38/2014) and its Executive Regulations issued by Ministerial Decision No. (93/2019), the Oman Human Rights Commission monitored the issuance of several Royal Decrees in 2024 granting and revoking Omani nationality for a number of applicants.

Royal Decree No.	Type	Nos. of Persons entitled to Omani Nationality
Royal Decree No. (2024/26)	Granting of Omani Nationality	257
Royal Decree No. (2024/44)	Reinstatement of Omani Nationality	113
Royal Decree No. (2024/50)	Reinstatement of Omani Nationality	85
Total		455

Royal Decrees Granting and Reinstating Omani Nationality



Rights of Inmates and Detainees:

As part of the pardon initiative for inmates, several Royal Decrees were issued to release a group of inmates from the Central Prison who had been convicted in various cases. The total number of inmates granted the Royal Pardon reached approximately (704), including both citizens and non-citizens, distributed as follows:

Dates of the Royal Pardon	No. of released inmates
10 January 2024	207
9 April 2024	154
16 June 2024	169
17 November 2024	174
Total	704



Within the scope of the Oman Human Rights Commission's mandates and responsibilities, and in cooperation with the Royal Oman Police regarding the rights of inmates and detainees, the Commission conducted several field visits to the Central Prison and detention departments affiliated with the Royal Oman Police. These visits aimed to review the services provided to inmates and detainees and ensure that they are delivered in a manner that respects human dignity. The findings are as follows:

Through its field visits to the Central Prison and detention centres, the Commission expresses its satisfaction with the progress made by the Royal Oman Police in their commitment to promoting and protecting human rights, as well as in the services provided to inmates and detainees. These services include health care, education, legal assistance, sports, training, recreation, and opportunities to engage in hobbies.



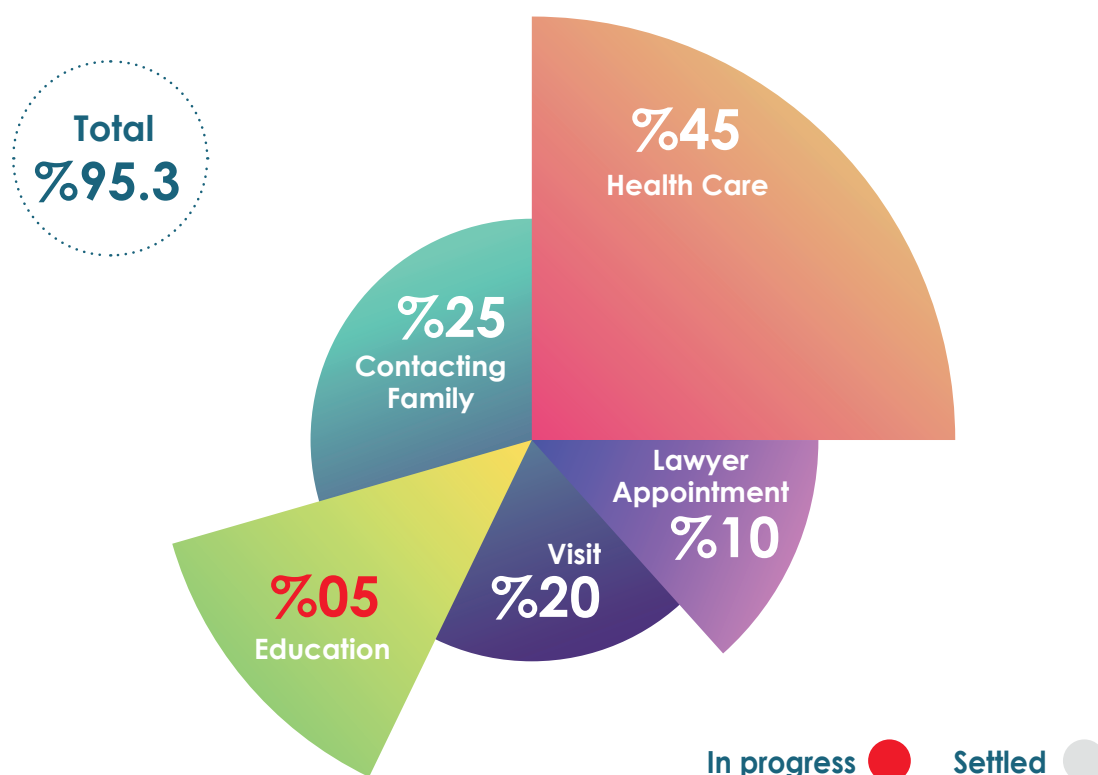
In relation to the monitoring of the rights of inmates and detainees, the Oman Human Rights Commission received a number of complaints, some of which were resolved in coordination with the relevant authorities at the Royal Oman Police. Below is a summary of some of these cases:

- **On 8 May 2024**, the Commission received a complaint from a citizen detained at one of the detention centers, requesting to contact his family and appoint a lawyer. The Monitoring and Complaints Department visited him and confirmed that he had been granted access to legal counsel and allowed to communicate with and meet his family. He had also been examined by a specialist doctor.
- **On 13 May 2024**, the Commission received a complaint from a citizen stating that his brother was being held in one of the detention centres and requested assistance in securing legal representation and accessing legal services to protect and assert his rights and defend him throughout all stages of legal proceedings. The relevant staff at the Monitoring and Complaints Department immediately contacted the centre's administration, whereupon legal services were provided to the detainee, and he was enabled to appoint a lawyer of his own choosing.
- **On 11 June 2024**, the Commission also received a complaint from a citizen stating that his brother was detained and requested assistance in facilitating contact with his family and providing healthcare. The relevant staff at the Monitoring and Complaints Department contacted the detention center, and the detainee was able to speak with his mother, confirming to his family that the necessary medical care was being provided.
- **On 30 June 2024**, the Commission received a complaint from an inmate who reported suffering from a herniated disc and requested enhanced medical care. The Monitoring and Complaints Department immediately contacted the General Directorate of Prisons, which confirmed that the inmate had been examined by the prison doctor and referred to Khoula Hospital and the Police Hospital for treatment. His condition continues to be followed up under a medical care plan.

- **On 29 July 2024**, the Commission received a complaint from an inmate requesting to see his son, whom he had not met for over four years due to the mother's refusal to allow a visit. The Monitoring and Complaints Department contacted the child's mother and, in coordination with the General Directorate of Prisons and the Ministry of Social Development, arranged a meeting between the father and his son.
- **Also on 29 July 2024**, an inmate submitted a complaint requesting a visit to an eye and ENT (ear, nose, and throat) specialist. Coordination with the General Directorate of Prisons revealed that the inmate had been referred to Samail Hospital (Ophthalmology and ENT clinics) for appropriate treatment, and also referred to Nizwa Hospital for further necessary examinations.
- **On 28 August 2024**, the Commission interviewed an inmate suffering from hypertension, diabetes, and poor eyesight. He requested to see a specialist and to be added to the list of inmates receiving special meals due to his health condition. Coordination with the General Directorate of Prisons confirmed that he is receiving medical care under a treatment plan and has been provided meals suited to his health condition.

The following table summarizes the types of requests received in complaints submitted by detainees and inmates, including those that have been resolved and those that are still being processed during the reporting period.

Request Type	Settlement	Under process
Appointing a lawyer	2	-
Contacting family members	5	-
Education	-	1
Visitation	4	-
Healthcare	9	-
Total	20	1



Based on the notable progress achieved by the Royal Oman Police in improving the internal environment of prisons and detention centers, enhancing rehabilitation and reform programs, and striving to establish integrated electronic and digital systems, the Commission recommends the following:

- Utilizing detention center libraries to provide detainees with awareness and education in various fields to support rehabilitation programs educationally, culturally, and psychologically.
- Ensuring that detainees receive direct, continuous, and organized healthcare by deploying specialized medical personnel at all levels of care—preventive and curative—within the medical facilities of detention centers.

Physical Safety

The right to life and physical safety is one of the most fundamental human rights. In this regard, the Commission monitored the Ministry of Social Development's efforts to enhance protection for vulnerable groups exposed to abuse, violence, exploitation, and human trafficking. This included the issuance of Ministerial Decision No. (392/2024) concerning the provisions of the Regulations on the Organization of Temporary Care Homes. These regulations aim to regulate the operation of such homes and ensure the provision of temporary care for families or children when needed, and that they contain comprehensive rules and provisions, including the conditions for service provision, supervision and monitoring mechanisms, and the obligations of care homes in delivering services that meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

The Commission strongly believes in the measures and mechanisms adopted by the competent authorities to protect vulnerable groups and recommends the continued implementation of awareness, education, and training plans that aim to build capacities and promote community participation, in addition to training those responsible for implementing protective and preventive programs.

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of the press is a cornerstone of freedom of expression. In this context, the Commission noted that the Sultanate of Oman advanced 18 places in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index issued by Reporters Without Borders, compared to 2023. This index evaluates press freedom annually across 180 countries using five criteria: political context, legal framework, economic context, socio-cultural context, and safety.

The Oman Human Rights Commission values the issuance of the Media Law under Royal Decree No. (58/2024), which aligns with international agreements in this field. The Commission had previously recommended the adoption of such a law in its 2015 annual report. It now emphasizes the

importance of expediting the issuance of the Executive Regulations for this law, and highlights the need for joint awareness-raising and educational efforts, particularly among media professionals and institutions.

The Commission has monitored the global press freedom index for the Sultanate of Oman for the years 2023–2024, as shown in the table below:



Religious Tolerance:

The Basic Statute of the State affirms that the Sultanate of Oman is an independent Arab Islamic state with full sovereignty. Its religion is Islam, and Islamic Sharia is the basis of legislation, while Arabic is the official language. The Basic Statute also guarantees freedom to practice religious rituals according to recognized traditions, provided this does not disrupt public order or violate morals.

To further promote the values of religious tolerance, Oman hosted in late January 2024 supervisors of houses of worship and designated religious sites within the Sultanate. Allowing individuals to freely practice their religious rituals is one of the State's initiatives to reinforce international peace and security and ensure a dignified life for all.

Expatriate residents in Oman are able to practice their religious rituals in designated places, including mosques, churches, and embassies, while adhering to applicable legal regulations. All communities also have the right to establish private schools, teach their native languages, and celebrate their national and religious events. The Oman Human Rights Commission has observed, through its monitoring mechanisms and awareness programs, that the rights of these communities are respected in accordance with current laws and relevant international human rights conventions.

The Commission has not received any complaints from expatriate residents regarding the practice of religious rituals, alleging discrimination or harm caused by administrative decisions issued by public authorities.

Human Rights Assistance:

As part of its efforts to protect and promote human rights, the Commission provided legal support for 937 cases it received during the year. This support helped individuals resolve their issues in accordance with proper legal frameworks, drawing on national laws and international agreements ratified or acceded to by the Sultanate of Oman. The assistance covered civil and political rights, economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as environmental and developmental rights.

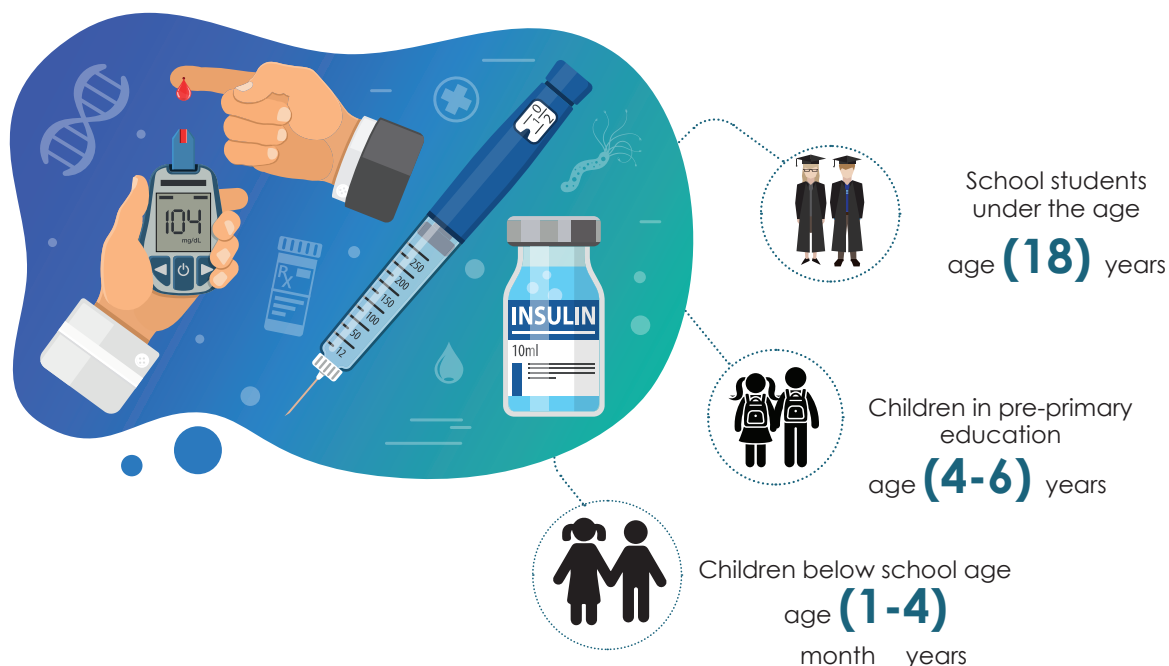
Healthcare:

The right to healthcare is among the most fundamental human rights. Enjoying this right goes beyond the absence of illness or disability, it is closely linked to other human rights such as the right to food, housing, work, education, dignity, life, and equality. All of these are interconnected and contribute to achieving the highest attainable standard of health.

Within the scope of the Oman Human Rights Commission's responsibilities and in continuation of its cooperation with relevant entities regarding human rights, the Commission held several field meetings with institutions active in the healthcare sector, including the Royal Hospital and Khoula Hospital. These meetings aimed to discuss challenges and opportunities to enhance the quality of services and ensure accessibility for all, especially persons with disabilities.

In the same context, the Commission monitored Royal Directives from His Majesty the Sultan approving an annual budget for the Ministry of Health to provide electronic glucose monitoring devices and insulin pumps for individuals with diabetes, as detailed in the table below:

Type of Medical Device	Targeted Group
Electronic glucose monitoring devices and insulin pumps for individuals with diabetes	Children below school age
	Children in pre-primary education
	School students under the age of 18



On 26 December 2024, the Commission received a complaint regarding a child suffering from a hereditary genetic disorder that manifests as muscle weakness, atrophy, and continuous deterioration in health. Despite receiving intensive care from public health institutions, the child's condition required the provision of a ventilator, a nebulizer, and a medical bed for home use. In its efforts to ensure the child's right to access adequate healthcare, the Commission coordinated with the relevant authorities to provide the necessary medical equipment and included preventive health measures in the treatment plan to avoid any unexpected health complications.

In order to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce the incidence of disease, and in light of the rising costs of diagnostics, treatment, and medical services due to rapid advancements in medical technologies and the inflation of medication and medical supply prices, which have significantly increased government healthcare expenditure (a key challenge in Oman's health sector), the following proposals were made to expand the comprehensive healthcare system:

Accelerate the implementation of the "health insurance" scheme as a suitable alternative to keep pace with healthcare development.

Strengthen efforts to reduce waiting times in emergency departments, as emergency care represents a fundamental right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health.

Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (Right to Housing):

Housing is a fundamental human right, vital for enhancing the standard of living, family stability, and social well-being.

In this regard, the Commission handled two complaints in 2024, one of which was resolved. Additionally, two other complaints received in 2022 and 2023 were also resolved. Below is a summary:

- On 21 February 2024, the Commission received a complaint from an inmate at the central prison requesting suitable housing for his family,

who were unable to pay rent and lacked proper shelter. A field visit revealed that the family had applied for housing assistance at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning. The Commission referred the complaint to the Ministry, and the family's request was approved under the "SAS" project of the Al Rahma Charity Association, as they were considered a low-income family. Construction of a social housing unit for them was initiated.

- A complaint received in 2023 concerned a citizen whose home was damaged by Cyclone Shaheen and no longer met basic living standards. Following a field visit, the Commission submitted a report to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, resulting in the citizen being granted a social housing unit in 2024 to mitigate the impact of the disaster.
- In 2022, the Commission received a complaint from a citizen living in inadequate housing that posed risks to the safety of vulnerable individuals. The case was resolved by granting the family a social housing unit, thereby ensuring sustainable protection, family stability, and improved living conditions.

Despite national efforts to enhance the living conditions of various population groups through the provision of adequate housing, the Commission emphasizes the continued need to:

- Reconsider the minimum income threshold required for housing assistance to reflect inflation and the cost of living.
- Strengthen partnerships with the private sector to expedite the provision of housing assistance and facilitate property ownership.

Right to an Adequate Standard of Living (Social Protection):

Social care is the cornerstone of ensuring an adequate standard of living from economic, social, and cultural perspectives. It also supports and protects families as the fundamental unit of society, reinforcing security, belonging, and citizenship.

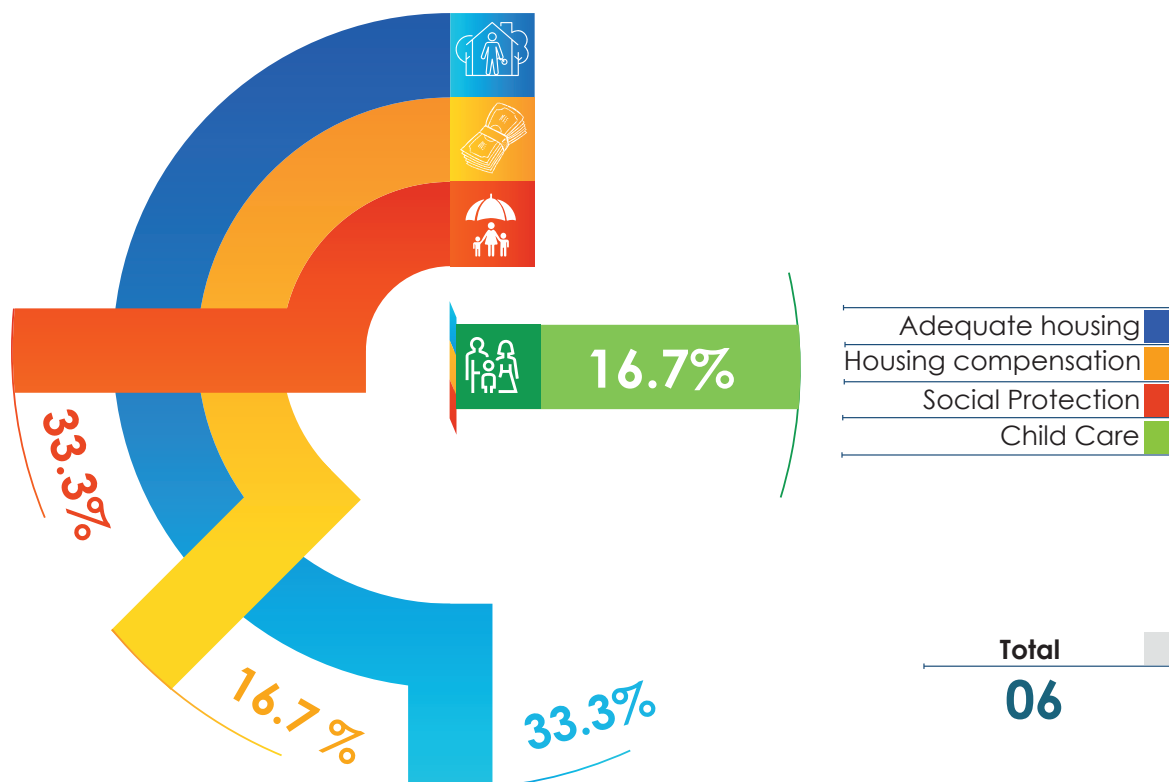
Social protection is essential for promoting sustainable economic progress and ensuring that no one is left behind. Within this framework, the Commission received a complaint on 17 January 2024 from an inmate at the central prison concerning the inclusion of his son in the social protection system. The son's social security allowance had been suspended upon reaching the age of 18, despite having no guardian and being a student at a local university. The Commission contacted the Ministry of Social Development, and the son was reinstated in the social protection program.

To ensure that all groups in society can enjoy a dignified life, the Commission received a complaint on 11 June 2024 from a citizen requesting temporary electricity service for his home while resolving outstanding bill payments. In consideration of the family's humanitarian circumstances—particularly as most members were among the most vulnerable groups (children, women, and an elderly woman with chronic illnesses)—the Commission contacted Nama Company, which restored electricity service and arranged for the settlement of overdue payments.

In the area of family and health care, the Commission resolved a complaint in October 2023 from a citizen employed by the Ministry of Education requesting a transfer to a school closer to home due to the special care needs of her two children—one with a physical disability requiring ongoing rehabilitation, and the other with health conditions needing constant maternal care. Recognizing that the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration in all administrative decisions, the Commission submitted a report to the Ministry of Education, which subsequently approved her transfer to a nearby school, enabling her to provide the necessary care for her children.

The table below outlines the types of requests received in complaints related to the right to an adequate standard of living that were resolved during the reporting period:

Request Types	No.
Adequate housing	2
Housing compensation	1
Social Protection	2
Child Care	1
Total	6



Labour and Workers:

The Commission handled several labour-related complaints involving issues such as monthly wages, transfer to a new employer, passport retrieval, and provision of travel tickets. The following is a summary of some of these complaints:

- On 22 January 2024, the Commission received a complaint from a domestic worker of Madagascar nationality, stating that her employer had refused to return her passport and personal belongings, preventing her from returning to her home country. The Monitoring and Complaints Department contacted the employer, and the worker was able to retrieve her passport, receive her monthly wages, and return to her home country.
- On 24 April 2024, the Monitoring and Complaints Department resolved two complaints from two Kenyan domestic workers. One of them refused to renew her employment contract with the employer, while the other complained that her employer withheld her monthly wages. Both workers were able to obtain their due salaries, retrieve their passports, and were provided with travel tickets to return to their home country.
- In May 2024, the Commission received two complaints from the organization Do Bold regarding two Kenyan domestic workers. One requested her unpaid monthly wages and return to her home country, while the other sought to transfer her employment to a new employer due to the former employer's failure to pay her wages. Following investigation, it was found that both workers had not received their salaries. The employer was summoned, and the matter was resolved: the salaries were paid, one worker was transferred to a new employer, and the other returned to her home country after receiving all due wages.
- On 11 June 2024, the Commission received a complaint concerning a domestic worker of Indian nationality who had been placed in a shelter run by the Ministry of Labour following an «absconding» report

filed by the employer, despite the fact that the worker had been handed over to a domestic recruitment agency due to a financial dispute between the employer and the agency. The Commission contacted the Ministry of Labour, leading to the worker's release. She was also informed of the legal procedures available to claim compensation for damages incurred.

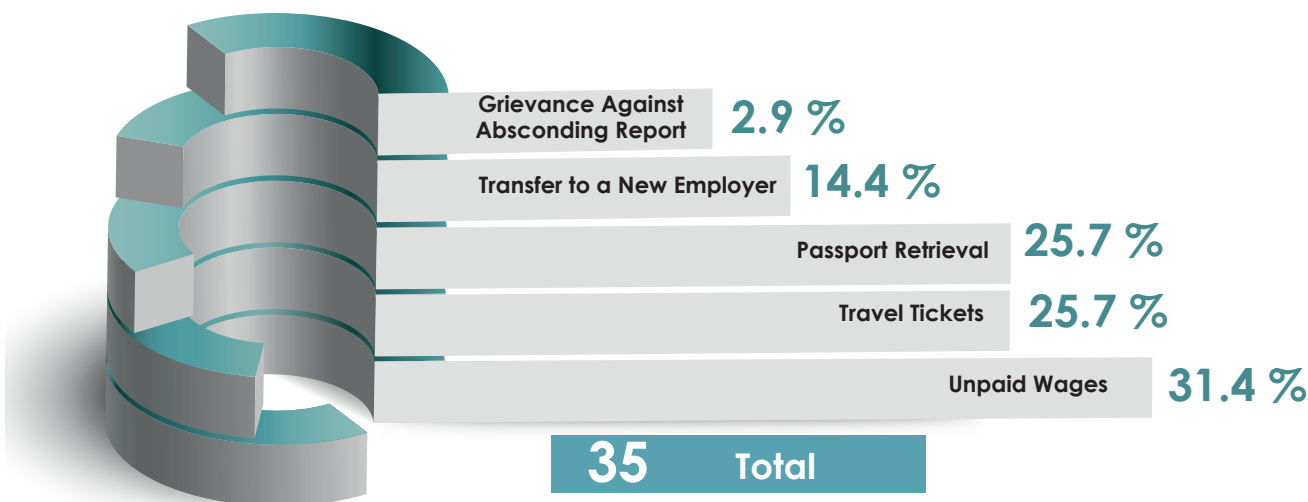
- On 17 July 2024, the Commission received a complaint from an Indian worker stating that although his employment contract with a company was still valid, he wished to transfer to another branch of the same company. However, his employer rejected the request and suspended him from work. The Monitoring and Complaints Department contacted the company's management, and the worker was reinstated and allowed to transfer to the branch of his choice.
- The Commission received a complaint from another Indian worker employed as a travel agent in a company. After two months of employment, he faced mistreatment from his employer, non-payment of wages, and threats of deportation. He sought assistance in receiving his unpaid wages and transferring his sponsorship to another employer. The Monitoring and Complaints Department contacted the employer, and the matter was resolved: the worker received all his entitlements and was able to transfer to another company.
- A Sri Lankan woman filed a complaint with the Commission, stating that she had been working as a radiology technician at a private clinic. Her employment contract had expired, and she informed her employer that she did not wish to renew it and wanted to return to her home country. However, the employer refused to end her employment, withheld her passport, and declined to provide a return ticket or pay her overdue salaries, insisting on renewing her contract. The Monitoring and Complaints Department contacted the employer, and the worker eventually retrieved her passport, received her salaries, and returned to her home country.

- On 10 October 2024, a Bangladeshi worker submitted a complaint indicating that he had been working as a building cleaner in a company. His employment contract had expired, and he informed his employer that he did not wish to renew it and wished to return to his country. However, the employer refused to terminate the contract, withheld his passport, failed to provide a travel ticket, and did not pay his overdue wages. The Commission intervened, and the worker was able to retrieve his passport, receive a return ticket, and obtain all his financial entitlements.

The table below outlines the types of requests received through these complaints and resolved by the Commission during this period.

Request	No.
Unpaid Wages	11
Travel Tickets	9
Passport Retrieval	9
Transfer to a New Employer	5
Grievance Against Absconding Report	1
Total*	35

* Note: Some submitted complaints include more than one request.





In the Context of this Right the Commission carried out a field visit to the Duqm Industrial Zone to examine the labour services and care provided to workers in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. The visit assessed compliance with occupational protection standards and the suitability of the work environment, as well as the general conformity of facilities with occupational safety and health measures and international standards for workers' accommodations. The visiting team expressed satisfaction after reviewing the labour clusters and accommodations and meeting with the workers. The Commission's team conducted field visits to the Ras Markaz workers' camp affiliated with the Oman Tank Terminal Company, the Nahda Labour Village accommodations, and the Karwa Motors workers' camp. The delegation reviewed the services provided to workers, monitored their health

and environmental conditions, and ensured that safety and security services complied with international human rights standards. During the visit, the team met with many workers, listened to their views, discussed issues related to their rights, introduced the Commission's work, explained the complaint and monitoring mechanisms, and informed them of the communication channels available to both citizens and residents. The delegation concluded the visit by meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, where they reviewed the zone's master plan and future development strategies, highlighting its role in providing top-level infrastructure, services, and a business-friendly environment for Omanis, residents, and investors. They also discussed the ongoing monitoring of labour accommodations to ensure adherence to occupational safety and health standards.

In light of this right, the Commission recommends the following:

- Intensifying inspections to combat illegal labour practices in order to minimize their negative impact and protect the rights of all parties fairly and equitably.
- Despite efforts to ensure equality across all social groups, there is still a need to increase the employment quota for persons with disabilities in the private sector from 2 % to 3 %.
- Expanding the concept of labour complexes to other industrial zones in the Sultanate of Oman.

Education:

In the context of the right to education, the Commission received four complaints this year, some of which can be summarized as follows:

- A complaint was submitted by a Lebanese woman stating that her son (also Lebanese) was studying in a private school in Oman but could not complete his academic year due to the expiry of the family residence permit in mid-May 2024. As a result, he had to return to Lebanon, and the school refused to issue his academic transcript because of unpaid tuition fees. This hindered his enrolment

in educational institutions in Lebanon. The Commission contacted the Ministry of Education, and the student was granted his academic transcript to continue his studies in his home country.

- The Commission also received a complaint regarding a Sudanese father preventing his two children, residing with him in Oman, from continuing their education. In coordination with the Child Protection Committee, the Commission ensured the children's return to school on equal terms with their peers, in accordance with the rights guaranteed under the Child Law (Royal Decree No. 22/2014) and the School Education Law (Royal Decree No. 31/2023).
- Another complaint concerned a Sudanese father who removed his daughter's information from the Ministry of Education's educational portal due to a family dispute that led to divorce. This prevented the girl from enrolling in school. The Commission coordinated with the Ministry of Education to re-register the girl and ensure her return to school.

In line with the principle of the right to education and ensuring access for all, the Commission believes it is essential to:

- Enhance funding and infrastructure for schools and educational institutions to ensure a stimulating learning environment that supports sustainability and addresses economic challenges by fostering partnerships with civil society and the private sector.
- Improve the level of education provided to students with disabilities, particularly those with autism spectrum disorder, to include Grade 10 and beyond, and support their access to higher education. This includes allocating seats in public universities and scholarship programs and adapting eligibility criteria to accommodate this group.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

In implementation and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and the Commission's role in protecting and advancing those rights, the Oman Human Rights Commission conducted a study on "Tactile Warning

Indicators for the Visually Impaired in Public Spaces.” The results of this study were submitted to Muscat Municipality and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning. Muscat Municipality responded by confirming the incorporation of the study's findings into its future projects. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning also responded that specific standards will be included in the national urban planning standards outlined in the National Urban Development Strategy and added to Oman's Building Code Guide.

Accordingly, the Commission recommends continued efforts to enable persons with disabilities to access all public facilities, and emphasizes the importance of independence for persons with visual impairments and ensuring equal opportunities for access to services, facilities, employment, buildings, institutions, and other places.

Older Persons:

On 3 July 2024, the Commission monitored the issuance of Ministerial Decision No. (190/2024) regarding the Regulatory Framework for the Care of Older Persons in Alternative Families. The regulation allows the care of older persons through alternative families as a form of volunteer work performed without compensation. The Ministry of Social Development may provide support to such families to enable them to care for older persons.

The regulation specifies that the older person must be an Omani citizen, without a family to care for them, and free from contagious diseases. For the alternative family, at least one member must be Omani, socially stable, able to meet the older person's needs (as confirmed by a social study), with a fixed income that meets family needs. All members of the family must be free from contagious diseases and behavioural disorders, and the family residence must be suitable. The regulation mandates that the responsible department at the Ministry or its branches must follow up with the alternative family at least once every three months or as needed. The family must report any health or behavioural changes or incidents involving the older person and immediately inform the department in case of death. If the older person is harmed by the family or others, the department must take appropriate

legal action. The regulation also defines the cases under which care by the alternative family ends, including requests by the older person or the family, proven neglect by the family, or the death of either party.

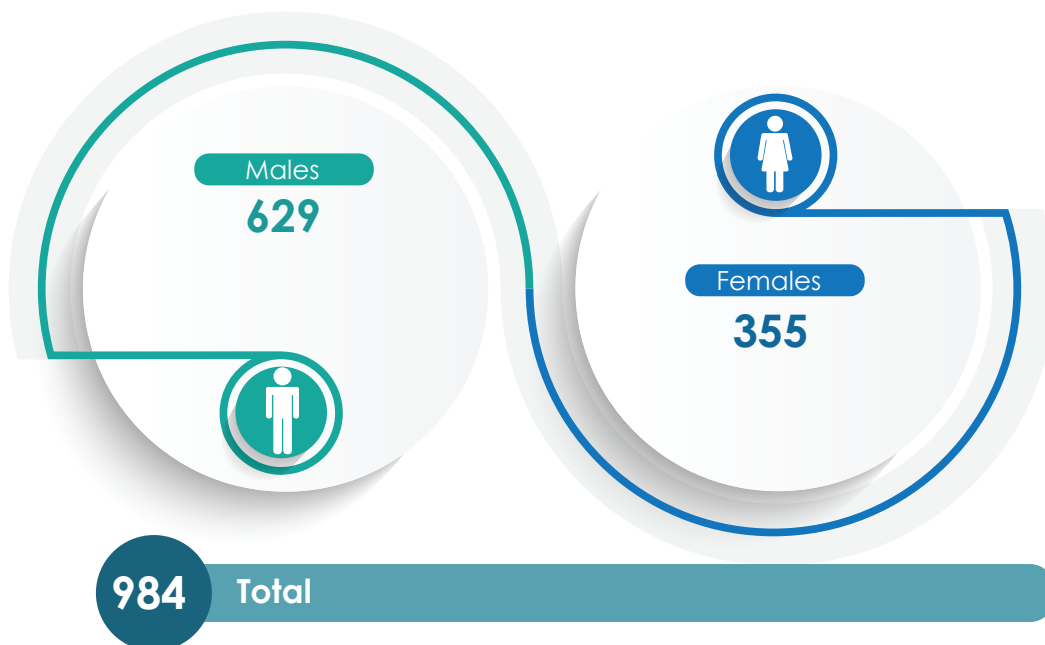
Statistics:

Number of Complaints and Monitored Issues Received by the Commission in 2024:

By Gender:

The table below shows the number of cases received by the Commission relating to complaints and human rights support, categorized by gender (male – female):

Gender	Total
Males	629
Females	355
Total	984



Second: Settlements, Human Rights Support, and Ongoing Procedures:

The table below shows the number of settlements, human rights support cases, and matters currently under process that the Commission has received:

Type of Action	number
Settlement	34
Human Rights Support	937
In Progress	13
Total	984



Third: By Type of Rights

The following table shows the number of cases monitored and received by the Commission by type of rights during the period from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024. The number of complaints amounted to 47, while 937 cases received human rights support from the Commission. Additionally, the number of monitored cases totalled 22.

Monitoring			Legal Support	Complaints	Monitoring			Legal Support	Complaints
01	Nationality	3	10	2	10	Adequate Housing	-	23	2
02	Right to Identity	-	-	2	11	Social Protection	-	85	4
03	Judiciary	-	55	-	12	Labor and Workers	3	346	17
04	Prisoners and Detainees	5	85	14	13	Education	-	15	4
05	Physical Safety	3	5	1	14	Persons with Disabilities	1	6	-
06	Personal Freedom	2	2	-	15	Older Persons	1	-	-
07	Freedom of Expression	2	-	-	16	Financial Assistance	-	26	-
08	Religious Tolerance	1	-	-	17	Personal Issues	-	251	-
09	Healthcare	1	27	1	Total		22	937	47

An abstract graphic featuring several overlapping, rounded, wave-like shapes in various shades of teal and blue. These shapes are positioned at the bottom and middle of the page, creating a sense of movement and depth. A thin, dark teal line arches over the text, starting from the left edge and ending on the right edge.

Respond to the Reports of International Organizations

The Oman Human Rights Commission responds to both governmental and non-governmental international reports, as well as questionnaires from special rapporteurs. It also monitors all publications regarding the human rights situation in the Sultanate of Oman, tracks any observations in the field of human rights, and coordinates with relevant authorities to verify and respond to such observations. In this regard, the Commission carried out the following activities this year:

International Reports

Parallel Report on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

The Oman Human Rights Commission prepared the parallel report on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which addressed several priority topics, including legislative developments related to the implementation of the Committee's recommendations, equality and non-discrimination, the rights of women and children with disabilities, awareness and education about disability rights, legal recognition and access to justice, as well as general challenges.

The report provided several recommendations to the government, most notably: reviewing and amending the current Law on the Care and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities to align with the Convention; enhancing the participation of women with disabilities in social, economic, political, and cultural life; and establishing platforms and programs that enable effective involvement in national development plans. It also called for improved capacity in hospitals, health centers, nurseries, and primary schools for early detection and accurate diagnosis of disabilities in children, thereby supporting the development of a reliable database for persons with disabilities and necessary rehabilitation and early intervention programs. Furthermore, the recommendations emphasized the right to quality education for persons with disabilities and proposed improving education quality

in inclusive schools, implementing capacity-building programs for parents and caregivers, and educating them on treatment and rehabilitation plans. It also recommended raising awareness among government officials at all levels about the rights and needs of persons with disabilities to ensure their participation in strategy design and planning. Regarding equality before the law and access to justice, the Commission recommended creating a reliable database of persons with disabilities under guardianship to define legal recognition and support mechanisms, and encouraging qualified persons with disabilities to work in the justice system. In terms of crisis situations, the Commission encouraged establishing alternative mental health services and psychosocial support, along with educational activities to ensure continued care, education, and rehabilitation at home, including support and training for caregivers.

Response to Amnesty International's Annual Report:

The Commission responded to the topics raised in Amnesty International's Annual Report on the Human Rights Situation in Oman (2022/2023), which addressed freedom of expression, freedom of religion and belief, labor and migrant workers' rights, and women's rights.

Recommendations included enhancing the protection of freedom of opinion and expression while safeguarding religious sentiments and freedoms, maintaining social peace, and preventing incitement to hatred or racism. On labor rights, the Commission emphasized the need to monitor companies to ensure continuous compliance with occupational health and safety standards and to impose penalties on non-compliant institutions. Regarding women's rights, it recommended facilitating the legal status of children born to Omani women married to non-Omanis, reviewing nationality eligibility conditions for these children, raising awareness on women's empowerment, and establishing shelters for domestic violence victims in regions beyond the capital, Muscat.

Response to the U.S. Department of State's Annual Human Rights Report:

The Commission responded to the 2023 U.S. State Department report on human rights in Oman, which addressed individual rights, respect for human dignity, civil liberties, political participation, government cooperation with international investigations, societal discrimination, and labor rights. The Commission aimed to verify the content and provide comments based on Omani laws and procedures.

It recommended bolstering protections for freedom of opinion and expression, maintaining societal peace, preventing incitement, increasing inspections of recruitment agencies to ensure legal contracts, and launching awareness programs for domestic workers about their rights and how to report abuse or forced labor.

Response to “BBC Africa Eye” Report:

The Commission responded to the BBC Africa Eye article titled “How a Malawian WhatsApp Group Helped Rescue Women Trafficked to Oman”, which cited over 50 Malawian women trafficked to Oman for forced labor. The Commission investigated these cases in coordination with relevant authorities and clarified the measures taken.

It recommended strengthening regulations for domestic workers, enforcing stricter oversight of recruitment agencies, and continuing awareness campaigns to protect workers and employers.

Response to U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report:

The Oman Human Rights Commission monitored the report issued by the U.S. Department of State on combating trafficking in persons in the Sultanate of Oman for the year 2023, which addressed the status of anti-trafficking efforts during 2022. The Commission analyzed and verified the information contained in the report through investigation, data collection, and meetings with the relevant authorities. The response included clarifications on the information presented, a review of the Commission's efforts, the challenges it faces, and appropriate

recommendations to enhance all measures aimed at combating trafficking in persons.

The Commission's recommendations highlighted the need to strengthen laws and legislation related to combating trafficking in persons in accordance with the best international standards and practices. They also emphasized the importance of developing a victim referral mechanism that ensures a prompt response and timely provision of services to victims, as well as intensifying awareness and education campaigns on trafficking crimes, targeting law enforcement authorities on the one hand, and society at large on the other, especially groups most at risk of becoming victims of trafficking.

Questionnaires

Contribution to a survey on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Armed Conflicts (Asia-Pacific Region): Aimed at preparing a practical guide for NHRIs on promoting and protecting human rights before, during, and after armed conflict.

Contribution to a survey on Human Rights Council Resolution No. 53/6 on the preparation of a report on human rights and climate change. The response addressed the general impact of climate change on human rights in the Sultanate of Oman, the measures taken by the State to address the effects of climate change on human rights from legislative, institutional, and practical perspectives, the main national challenges to advancing efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change on human rights, and the proposed solutions.

Contribution to the survey received from the Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order. The response addressed the national framework that contributes to the promotion of a democratic and equitable system, the current obstacles and underlying reasons limiting the promotion and protection of such a system at the regional and international levels, good practices for advancing a democratic and equitable system, as well as a set of

recommendations and proposals for the Independent Expert to support outcomes that serve the cause of democracy and identify the challenges and barriers it faces.

The Commission contributed to the general comment on children's rights in accessing justice and effective remedies. In its submission, the Commission addressed several topics, including its mandate to provide advice and recommendations to state institutions on children's access to justice; the preparation of studies and proposals to enhance various aspects of children's rights, both legislatively and in practice; and the implementation of awareness programs on children's rights, including the right to access justice, targeting various groups and relevant institutions. The Commission also offered its observations and recommendations to help ensure a better understanding of the challenges children face in accessing justice and ways to address them.

Contribution to the survey related to the multi-stakeholder consultation session on "Effectiveness of the Universal Periodic Review Process in Light of its Fifth Cycle." The response addressed national practices in engaging with the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, the challenges faced by Member States and their relevant institutions, the extent to which concerned institutions benefit from programs supporting the UPR process, and the proposed solutions to overcome challenges encountered during the review process.

The Commission contributed to the response to a questionnaire on mental health and human rights. The response reviewed the normative and policy measures implemented at the national and regional levels to realize the human rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities, the challenges encountered in implementing those measures, and proposed additional policies to advance a human rights-based approach to mental health, emphasizing the centrality of mental health to the full realization of the right to health.

First Parallel Report to the Arab Charter on Human Rights Committee:

Pursuant to Article (11) of its Statute, annexed to Royal Decree No. (57/2022), the Oman Human Rights Commission prepares parallel reports on the human rights situation in the Sultanate of Oman and submits them to the relevant treaty bodies responsible for monitoring the implementation of regional and international human rights conventions and treaties to which the Sultanate of Oman is a party.

The Commission committed to preparing the parallel report submitted to the Arab Human Rights Committee in accordance with the methodology followed in the preparation of reports by both the Oman Human Rights Commission and the Arab Human Rights Committee. In drafting this report, the Commission adopted a consultative approach involving relevant civil society organizations and other stakeholders and partners. During October and November 2024, the Commission held meetings with five civil society organizations concerned with the report's themes, namely: the Omani Women's Association – Muscat, the Omani Journalists Association, the General Federation of Oman Workers, Children First Association, and the Omani Association for Persons with Disabilities.

The first parallel report submitted by the Oman Human Rights Commission to the Arab Human Rights Committee aimed to review the human rights situation in the Sultanate of Oman in accordance with the Arab Charter on Human Rights, the guidelines on the form and content of reports to be submitted by State Parties, the procedure for the consideration of State Party reports, and the guide for the participation of national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations, and relevant bodies. The report also took into account the national report submitted by the Sultanate of Oman under review. The Commission's report included recommendations aimed at strengthening the human rights situation in the Sultanate of Oman, following the sequence of the articles set forth in the Arab Charter on Human Rights.

The recommendations urged all relevant entities, particularly service-oriented government bodies, to exert greater efforts to build the capacity of their staff in adopting a human rights-based approach in delivering services to all segments of society. They also called for the implementation of awareness programs targeting the general public, especially vulnerable groups and migrant workers, to educate them about their rights and freedoms and the services provided by the State to protect and promote those rights. Regarding human rights in times of crisis, the Commission recommended increasing public awareness about the risks associated with exceptional circumstances such as cyclones and floods. This includes ensuring that information reaches all segments of society and conducting mandatory practical training for various State institutions on the best practices for immediate emergency response. It also recommended strengthening community participation in relief and shelter programs following such events, using organized and systematic methods to ensure that aid reaches all affected individuals.

Moreover, the relevant authorities monitoring exceptional weather conditions were advised to enhance their rapid response mechanisms using the latest technologies to issue timely warnings, enabling people to take necessary precautions and relocate to safe areas and shelters. The recommendations also called for establishing a mechanism to issue decisions on suspending studies in schools and universities and halting work, when necessary. The Oman Human Rights Commission further recommended that the government intensify awareness, education, and training programs targeting law enforcement agencies on international best practices in the prevention of torture and all forms of inhuman or degrading treatment. It also encouraged continued cooperation with United Nations mechanisms to fulfil its obligations under the Convention Against Torture, including the timely submission of national reports.

To strengthen the judicial system and its reliance on a human rights-based approach in adjudicating various types of cases, the Oman Human Rights Commission recommends enhancing awareness, education, and

capacity-building programs for judicial personnel, including judges and their assistants, to enable them to address rulings based on international human rights conventions.

With regard to the independence of the judiciary and the right to access it, the Oman Human Rights Commission recommends that the competent authorities expedite the issuance of laws regulating litigation procedures, in accordance with Royal Decree No. 35/2022, and in line with the principles established by the Basic Statute of the State concerning judicial independence, prompt adjudication of disputes, and other principles governing the exercise of judicial authority. The Commission also recommends the establishment of a constitutional court and the incorporation of alternative penalties and procedures within the legislative system that can achieve the objectives of punishment, namely deterrence and rehabilitation. These include the use of electronic monitoring bracelets and a partial liberty system under specific regulations and guarantees. Additionally, the Commission calls for a legal provision allowing the replacement of remaining custodial sentences with fines. All of this requires the issuance of a dedicated law on alternative penalties.

The Oman Human Rights Commission also recommends strengthening post-release care programs that ensure the monitoring and support of released offenders to guarantee their successful reintegration into society. It advocates activating parole and other systems that fulfil the purpose of punishment while preventing the incarceration of the offender. Additionally, the Commission calls for conducting several studies to assess the effectiveness of rehabilitation and treatment programs for incarcerated drug addicts, examining related statistics and their rates of recidivism. Furthermore, it recommends studying the current status of alternative penalties within the legislative framework, analyzing judicial reliance on them statistically, and evaluating their effectiveness in achieving the goals of punishment, both deterrence and rehabilitation.

Regarding women's rights, the Commission recommends conducting studies and surveys to understand the reasons behind women's reluctance

to run for elections compared to men. It calls for intensifying awareness, training, and empowerment programs to encourage women to run for parliament and fully perform their political roles on equal footing with men. Additionally, the Oman Human Rights Commission recommends taking temporary measures to accelerate equality in women's representation in the Consultative Council (Majlis al-Shura) in line with Article 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to which the Sultanate of Oman is a party and which forms part of the country's binding law, ensuring the enhancement of women's rights in political and public life on par with men.

Regarding civil and political freedoms, the Oman Human Rights Commission recommends that the concerned authorities contribute to overcoming challenges and difficulties by reviewing, updating, and reorganizing the Law on Civil Associations issued under Royal Decree No. (14/2000). This should enable the establishment of associations and the independent exercise of their activities in accordance with human rights standards. The Commission also recommends establishing rules and regulations for civil society organizations that support good governance and ensure transparent and accountable structures. Additionally, it calls for implementing empowerment and professional development programs for civil society institutions to enhance their role in organizational management, strengthen communication and dialogue skills, and prepare awareness programs highlighting the importance and effectiveness of voluntary work in the development process.

With regard to emerging issues related to children's rights, the Oman Human Rights Commission recommends conducting a study on the reality of verbal, physical, and cyberbullying in Omani society, particularly in schools, and proposing national anti-bullying policies. These policies should include community awareness programs on the dangers of bullying and offer intervention and treatment methodologies that address both the bully and the victim. The Commission also stresses the importance of training teachers and social workers in schools on the risks of bullying and

on identifying and addressing such cases using scientifically approved methods and tools. Furthermore, it recommends providing schools with psychological specialists to deliver necessary treatment when needed.

With regard to the right to health care, the Oman Human Rights Commission recommends establishing independent specialized health institutions for childbirth cases, as well as for the follow-up of maternal, gynecological, and pediatric health. These institutions should be equipped with advanced medical facilities and qualified medical staff proportionate to the average number of births in the main governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

With regard to the rights of persons with disabilities, the Oman Human Rights Commission recommends the establishment of an accurate national registry for persons with disabilities, based on precise assessment procedures aligned with recognized methodologies in this field. The Commission also urges the expedited issuance of the new Law on the Care and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, ensuring its alignment with the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the amended Basic Statute of the State, the Penal Code, and other relevant legislation. This is to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy their rights fairly and equally with other segments of society.

With regard to the right to education, the Commission recommends integrating technology into school education and fostering innovation among male and female students in line with the latest technologies and international developments. It also underscores the importance of the Ministry of Education issuing the executive regulations for the School Education Law, and of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation issuing the executive regulations for the Higher Education Law, given that many of the rights stipulated in the two aforementioned laws remain suspended pending the issuance of these regulations in particular.

The meetings aimed to discuss the latest developments related to human rights in the Sultanate of Oman in each of their respective fields,

to examine the challenges at the level of legislation and policies, and the difficulties on the ground. They also included reviewing and discussing proposed solutions to enhance the state of human rights in Oman.

The parallel report addressed several topics related to the rights stipulated in the provisions of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, including the promotion of human rights values and principles, the culture of human fraternity and tolerance; ensuring actual equality in the enjoyment of all rights and freedoms without discrimination; special measures related to the imposition of states of emergency; the right to life and physical integrity; combating slavery and human trafficking; the independence of the judiciary and the right to access it; political and civil liberties; the right to individual property; freedom of opinion and expression; the protection of the family, especially women and children; the right to work and freedom of association and professional unions; the right to development; the right to health; the right to a decent life for persons with mental and physical disabilities; the right to education; and cultural rights.

An abstract graphic featuring several overlapping, flowing shapes in various shades of teal and blue. These shapes resemble stylized waves or hills, creating a sense of movement and depth. The shapes are layered, with some appearing in front of others, and they span across the lower half of the page.

Internal Activities and Events

Visit of the Public Prosecutor and Discussion on Ways to Cooperate in the Promotion of Human Rights

His Excellency Nasr bin Khamis Al Sawa'ee, the Public Prosecutor, visited the headquarters of the Oman Human Rights Commission, where he met with Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi, Chairman of the Commission, a number of its members, and the Secretary of its Technical Secretariat, in the presence of representatives from the Public Prosecution. The Meeting discussed a number of issues of mutual interest and explored ways to enhance cooperation and coordination between the Oman Human Rights Commission and the Public Prosecution in areas related to human rights, in a manner that ensures the protection and promotion of the rights of citizens and residents in the Sultanate of Oman.



Exploring Areas of Cooperation with the Arab Human Rights Charter Committee

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi, Chairman of the Oman Human Rights Commission, met with Counselor Jaber bin Saleh Al Marri, Chairman of the Arab Human Rights Charter Committee, and his accompanying delegation. The Meeting discussed the Commission's role in monitoring, receiving complaints, and preparing parallel reports.



Meeting of the Chairman of the Oman Human Rights Commission with the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi met with Her Excellency Ambassador Cindy Dyer, the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Combating Trafficking in Persons, and her accompanying delegation. A visual presentation was delivered about the Commission's mandates and its role in monitoring and receiving complaints.



Meeting with Officials from the British Embassy

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi met with officials from the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Oman, during which the Commission's mandates, system, and work mechanisms in monitoring and handling complaints were introduced.

Meeting with the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi met with the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. A visual presentation was given on the Commission's work and mandates, and the meeting touched on the Netherlands' experience in developing national human rights strategies.

Visit of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

A delegation from the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union visited the Oman Human Rights Commission, where the Commission's mandates and work mechanisms in monitoring international reports, verifying information, conducting field visits, and following up on the human rights situation in places of detention and labor gatherings were presented.



Meeting with the UNICEF Representative in Oman

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi met with the UNICEF Representative in Oman. The meeting reviewed the Commission's structure, monitoring mechanisms, and complaint reception process, as well as its international memberships. The UNICEF Representative presented the organization's role in supporting children's rights, education, and awareness programs.

Visit of Medical Services Officers of the Sultan's Armed Forces

A number of medical officers from the Sultan's Armed Forces visited the Commission's headquarters, where they learned about the Commission's mandates and its mechanisms for monitoring and complaint reception. The visit included a discussion on the differences between International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law, as well as the Commission's regional and international efforts.



Meeting with Members of Al-Noor Association for the Blind

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi met with members of Al-Noor Association for the Blind. The meeting introduced the Commission's responsibilities and work mechanisms, and discussed ways of cooperation to serve and promote the rights of persons with disabilities.



Meeting with Civil Society Organizations

The Oman Human Rights Commission held a meeting with several civil society organizations and the General Federation of Oman Workers. The Meeting discussed ways to improve humanitarian work mechanisms and addressed issues related to vulnerable groups.

Visit to Injured Palestinians

A team from the Oman Human Rights Commission visited injured Palestinians affected by the Israeli aggression on Gaza, who are receiving treatment at Khoula Hospital. The visit aimed to check on their health conditions and reflect the depth of fraternal relations and Oman's unwavering humanitarian stance in support of the Palestinian people.



Visit to the Royal Hospital

A delegation from the Commission visited the Royal Hospital to discuss the health services provided to persons with disabilities and review efforts to improve care for this group, including early screening, health staff training, and emergency intervention mechanisms.

Visit to Al-Massarrah Hospital

A delegation from the Commission visited Al-Massarrah Hospital and received a detailed briefing on the psychological and rehabilitation services provided to patients, particularly children, adolescents, and addiction patients. The delegation also visited the Recovery Homes Center affiliated with the hospital, which specializes in rehabilitating addiction patients under the supervision of the Ministry of Health.

Meeting with UNICEF Working Group

A team from the Commission met with representatives of UNICEF to discuss cooperation in awareness and education on child rights. The Commission's delegation reviewed monitoring mechanisms, complaint reception, and follow-up on the conditions of vulnerable groups, as well as the Commission's relationships with international organizations.

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Association "Children First"

The Oman Human Rights Commission signed a memorandum of understanding with the Association "Children First" to promote awareness of children's rights and the rights of those working with them. The MoU aims to expand cooperation in implementing awareness programs and projects across Oman's governorates, including among education and rehabilitation professionals.



Exhibitions, Conferences, Seminars, and Awareness Lectures:

Participation in the Muscat International Book Fair (28th Edition)

The Commission participated in the 28th Muscat International Book Fair with a dedicated awareness booth that included its publications, a video display screen, and a children's corner accessible to people with disabilities. Activities included dialogue sessions and educational competitions. An electronic form was launched to track visitors, along with an interactive competition using QR codes.



Seminar on “National and International Mechanisms for the Protection of Human Rights”

The Commission organized a specialized seminar as part of the Book Fair's activities. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Director of Legal Affairs presented working papers on the Commission's mandates and human rights mechanisms. The seminar was streamed live via the Commission's social media channels.

Children and Families Corner at the Book Fair

The Commission organized the event “With My Coloring I Know My Rights” at the Book Fair, which featured coloring educational posters, children's activities, and awareness competitions, along with the distribution of commemorative gifts to participants.

Foreign Schools Competitions

The Commission organized awareness activities and competitions for foreign school students in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, as part of the Book Fair. The activities included human rights questions, recreational events, and gift distribution.

Seminar on Respecting and Supporting the Rights of Persons with Autism

The Commission held a virtual seminar in cooperation with the Asia Pacific Forum, with participation from researchers and human rights institutions. The Seminar addressed the challenges, legal and social rights of persons with autism, and best practices to promote their rights.

Workshop on Data Collection and Human Rights Indicators

The Commission held a training workshop in collaboration with the United Nations Training and Documentation Centre to strengthen the capacity

of participants in the use of human rights data and indicators and apply them in national and international reports.



Training Workshop with the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking

The Commission organized a training workshop on anti-trafficking efforts, in cooperation with the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, Royal Oman Police, and the Social Protection Home. The workshop covered the roles of relevant authorities in victim protection.

Dialogue Session on Cultural Rights

In cooperation with the Cultural Club, the Commission organized a dialogue session on the concept of cultural rights, their reality in Oman, and their intersection with education, identity, and media, within the framework of Oman Vision 2040.



Etiquette Course on Dealing with Persons with Disabilities

The Commission organized a training course for its staff on communication skills with persons with different disabilities, including Braille training and mechanisms for inclusive interaction.

Launch of the Commission's Specialized Library

The Commission launched a specialized human rights library that includes national and international resources, accessible through an online platform on its website, to support researchers and enhance human rights knowledge.

Joint Program with the Ministry of Education

The Commission continued implementing its joint awareness program with the Ministry of Education, through school lectures on rights and duties, child rights, and protection from abuse. Awareness publications were distributed, and interactive activities were conducted to enhance understanding.

Summer Program for School Students: “Summer of Determination and Values”

The Commission participated in the summer program “Summer of Determination and Values” by delivering lectures and awareness workshops in 13 summer centers across various governorates. Over 700 students were reached, 1,500 awareness materials were distributed, and video content on children’s rights was presented.



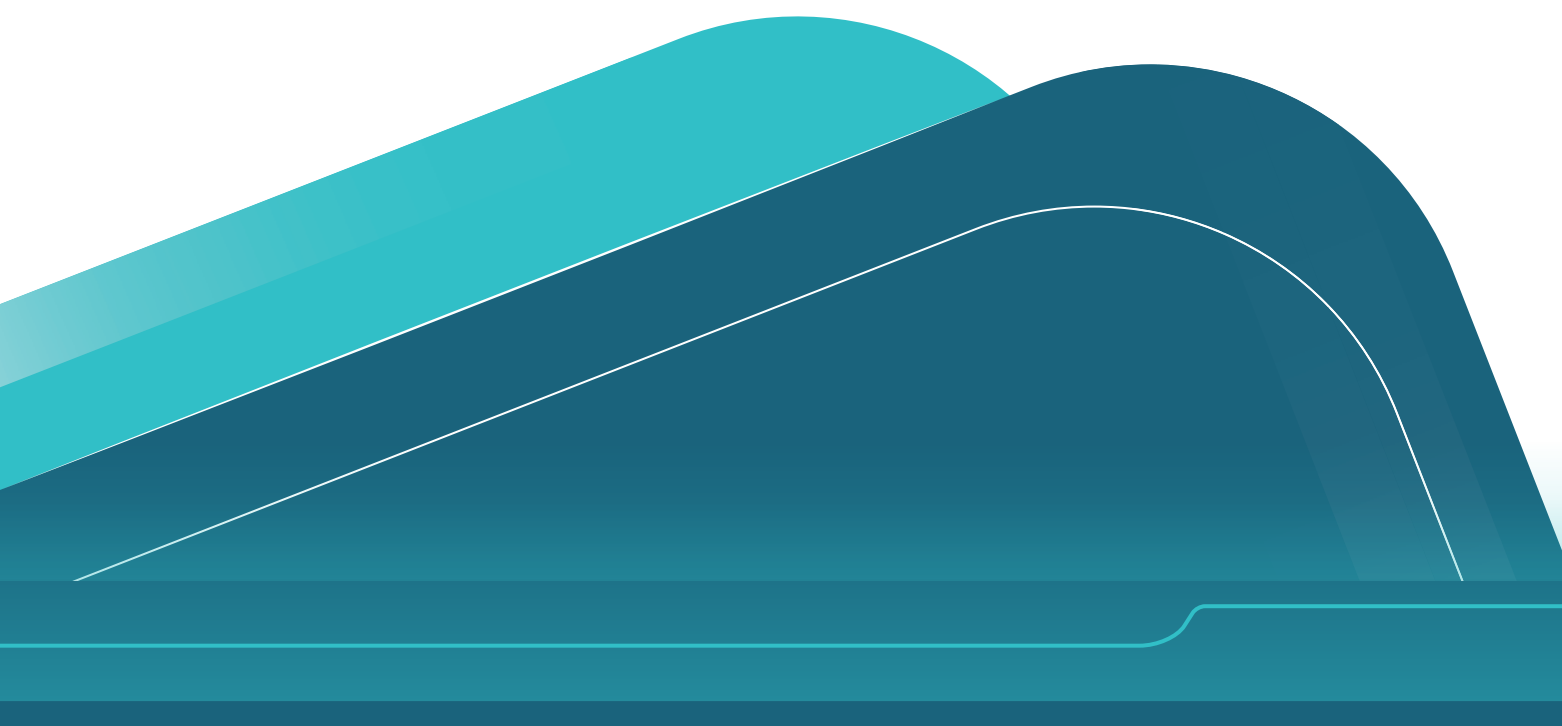
Awareness Lecture for Staff of Sarh Al Jaameah Private School

The Commission delivered a lecture for staff of Sarh Al Jaameah Private School as part of Professional Development Week. The Lecture covered children's rights, the role of educators in protection, reporting mechanisms, and introduced the Commission's mandates and work.

Discussion Session on Women's Rights in the Omani Legislations

The Commission participated in a discussion session organized by the Family Development Department at North Al Sharqiyah Governorate in cooperation with the Omani Women's Association in Ibra. The Commission presented a working paper on women's rights in national laws and international conventions, along with legal protection and awareness mechanisms.





External Activities and Events

Meeting Between the Commission's Chairman and His Qatari Counterpart

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi, Chairman of the Commission, visited Doha, the capital of Qatar, where he met with H.E. Maryam bint Abdullah Al Attiyah, Chairman of the National Human Rights Committee of the State of Qatar. The meeting addressed ways to strengthen cooperation and exchange expertise in the field of human rights, and reviewed the Qatari experience.



Meeting with the Secretary-General of the Arab Network

The Commission's delegation also met with H.E. Sultan bin Hassan Al Jamali, Secretary-General of the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions, to discuss future cooperation and the organization of training workshops in the Sultanate of Oman.

International Conference on Food Justice

The Commission participated in the international conference titled “Food Justice from a Human Rights Perspective,” held in Doha, the Capital of Qatar. The Chairman of the Commission led a panel discussion and presented a working paper highlighting the Commission’s role in realizing the right to food and Oman’s efforts in enhancing food security.



CEDAW National Report Review Sessions

A delegation from the Commission, headed by Vice-Chairman Lawyer Saud bin Salih Al-Maawali, participated in the sessions reviewing Oman's national report before the United Nations. The delegation also met with officials of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and briefed them on the Commission's working mechanism.

Meeting of the Arab Permanent Committee on Human Rights

A delegation headed by Minister Plenipotentiary Aqeel bin Alawi Baomar participated in the 53rd meeting of the Arab Permanent Committee on Human Rights. The meeting discussed Arab cooperation, condemned the Israeli aggression on Gaza, and focused on activating the Arab Human Rights Strategy.

Meetings of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)

Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi participated in GANHRI meetings, which discussed the international action plan, reviewed the outcomes of the “Kyiv-Copenhagen” conference, and addressed issues such as the rights of displaced persons and stateless individuals.



Executive Committee Meeting of the Arab Network

The Commission participated in the Executive Committee meeting of the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions on the sidelines of the GANHRI conference. The meeting reviewed the 2024 work plan, support for Palestinian institutions, and updates to the Network's strategy.

٢٣rd Session of the OIC's Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission

The Commission participated in the meetings of the OIC's Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission with a delegation led by Lawyer Saud bin Salih Al-Maawali, Vice-Chairman of the Commission. Discussions covered the impact of artificial intelligence on human rights and the International Court of Justice's rulings concerning Gaza.



Regional Review Conference on Migration

The Commission took part in the Safe Migration Conference, which focused on enhancing the rights of migrant workers, ensuring access to essential services, and the role of the UN Network in implementing the Global Compact for Migration.

Regional Dialogue Forum on Combating Discrimination – Doha

A delegation from the Oman Human Rights Commission, headed by Mr. Abdulaziz bin Ali Al Saadi, participated in the Regional Dialogue Forum on Combating Discrimination, held in Doha. The forum addressed ways to combat discrimination and racism, the rights of migrant workers, and using sports to promote tolerance and equality.

57th Session of the Human Rights Council

A delegation from the Commission, led by Mr. Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Owaisi, member of the Commission, participated in the 57th session of the Human Rights Council. The session included interactive discussions on education, enforced disappearances, and tolerance, as well as side events on violence against women and girls.



International Conference on Gender Equality

A delegation headed by Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi participated in the International Conference on Gender Equality held in Kathmandu, Nepal. The conference adopted the “Kathmandu Declaration” and involved an exchange of experiences on integrating gender perspectives into national institutions.

29th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF)

A delegation led by Professor Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi participated in the annual meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting discussed issues of equality, climate change, and human rights defenders. Dr. Salih bin Hamad Al Barashdi presented a paper on the Commission’s efforts in addressing the impact of climate events in the Sultanate of Oman.



Executive Staff Meeting

Ms. Shatha bint Abdulmajid Al Zadjali, Director of the Department of International Organizations and Relations, participated in a coordination meeting for executive staff in Bangkok. The meeting focused on improving institutional work and sharing experiences among national institutions.

Roundtable on Prison Overcrowding

A delegation headed by Lawyer Saud bin Salih Al-Maawali participated in a roundtable organized by the High Commissioner and Penal Reform International in Amman, Jordan. The discussion covered the impact of overcrowding in detention centers across the region, showcasing international experiences and efforts to address the issue.



Conference of the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions

A delegation headed by Mr. Abdulaziz bin Ali Al Saadi participated in the Arab Network Conference and its General Assembly meeting. The event addressed support for Arab human rights institutions, the repercussions of violations in Palestine and Lebanon, and mechanisms for advancing Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Inaugural Dialogue on Business and Human Rights

A delegation headed by Dr. Yahya bin Mohammed Al-Hinai participated in a regional dialogue on business and human rights. The meeting reviewed Arab efforts to implement the UN Guiding Principles and promote responsible business practices in Gulf countries.

Arab Praise for the Commission's Efforts

The Arab Charter Committee on Human Rights and the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions commended the Commission's parallel report submitted to the Charter Committee, describing it as objective and reflective of the Commission's commitment to independence and transparency in monitoring human rights challenges and achievements.

Participation in the 26th Session of the Arab Charter Committee on Human Rights

A delegation led by Professor Dr. Rashid bin Hamad Al Balushi took part in the discussion of Oman's initial report. The Commission presented its views during a special hearing on Oman's obligations under the Arab Charter on Human Rights.





Regional Forum

The Oman Human Rights Commission, the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar, and the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions, in cooperation and partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the Arab Charter on Human Rights Committee, organized the regional forum on the role of national human rights institutions in planning and monitoring the implementation of national visions in fields related to human rights; this took place on July 24-25, 2024.

The Forum aimed to enhance the role of national human rights institutions and empower them to monitor the implementation of national visions in areas related to human rights; to identify human rights priorities within these national visions; to align laws and legislations with human rights principles during the execution of the national visions; to build capacities in human rights-related fields for those responsible for implementing the national visions and for human rights practitioners; to create effective communication channels between national human rights commissions and those executing the national visions; to activate compliance with the Paris Principles in support of implementing the national visions; and to provide indicators, data, information, and statistics related to the national visions to measure progress made in human rights-related fields.

More than 170 participants took part in the forum, representing over 50 institutions and organizations, including the United Nations, international and regional organizations, relevant authorities, national human rights institutions, government entities, and civil society organizations with expertise on the forum's subject at the national, regional, and international levels.

The key speeches, working papers, interventions, and discussions encompassed a range of themes and principles, including applying a human rights-based approach in planning and implementing national visions; ensuring equality and non-discrimination within national visions; achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda and integrating UN human rights concepts into national visions; incorporating the Sustainable

Development Goals into national visions; guaranteeing transparency and accountability during the implementation of national visions; and monitoring and following up on progress made in the field of human rights during the execution of these national visions.

The participants agreed that the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development serves as a comprehensive framework that contributes to realizing national visions in areas related to human rights, and that national human rights institutions are key actors in ensuring these goals are achieved in a manner that respects and promotes human rights.

They also emphasized that progress toward achieving national visions largely depends on the ability of states to integrate human rights into their national policies and strategies, and on activating the role of national human rights institutions in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of these policies.



Based on the opening remarks, working papers, discussion sessions, and interventions presented, several key recommendations were made, including:

- Calling on states to integrate international human rights obligations into their national visions and plans, and to align national legislation and policies with these obligations.
- Emphasizing that human rights must be a central pillar in every development plan, with a focus on fundamental principles such as equality, non-discrimination, and accountability.
- Highlighting the crucial role of national human rights institutions in promoting a human rights-based approach throughout all stages of planning and implementing national visions, including active participation in national consultations and providing insights and recommendations grounded in international standards.
- Emphasizing the need for national human rights institutions to enjoy independence and have access to the necessary resources to effectively fulfil their mandates.
- Stressing the importance of broadening consultations to include civil society organizations and groups in need of special protection.
- Promoting transparency and accountability, and ensuring the participation of all stakeholders in the decision-making process.
- Establishing clear and sustainable mechanisms for consulting and engaging civil society at all stages of planning and implementing national visions.
- The need to strengthen the institutional capacities of national human rights institutions, including training and awareness-raising on the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and how to link them to human rights and national visions.
- Ensuring the effectiveness of monitoring, evaluation, and implementation of national strategies related to human rights.

- Increasing efforts in capacity-building related to the collection and analysis of data concerning human rights and sustainable development.
- Enhancing cooperation among national human rights institutions in the region, and promoting the exchange of experiences and best practices in planning and monitoring the implementation of national visions, in collaboration with the United Nations and other international organizations.
- Sustaining cooperation and coordination between countries and institutions to enhance capacities and achieve shared objectives in areas related to national visions and human rights.



- Emphasizing the importance of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to eradicating poverty, achieving gender equality, ensuring quality education, promoting good health, ensuring access to clean water and sanitation, promoting decent work and economic growth, and ensuring that these goals are fully integrated into national visions.
- Emphasizing that the achievement of national visions and the Sustainable Development Goals requires the concerted efforts of all and joint action in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity. The participants pledged to continue working together to realize these noble goals, with full commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights in all areas.

The participants in the Regional Forum on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Planning and Monitoring the Implementation of National Visions in Human Rights-Related Areas expressed their sincere thanks and deep appreciation to the organizing entities of this important forum: the Oman Human Rights Commission, the National Human Rights Committee in Qatar, and the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions. They also extended their gratitude to the Sultanate of Oman for its generous hospitality, excellent organization, and for providing this valuable opportunity to exchange experiences and knowledge and to discuss the best ways to promote human rights within the context of national planning and future visions.



Celebration of International Human Rights Day



As part of its ongoing efforts to protect and promote human rights in the Sultanate of Oman, the Oman Human Rights Commission organized a celebration marking International Human Rights Day under the theme: "Pillars of the Nation: Sustainable Steps to Protect and Promote the Rights of Older Persons." The event was held under the patronage of H.E. Sheikh Abdul Malik bin Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council, and attended by representatives from government institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, and various media outlets.

The event focused on older persons, in recognition of their pivotal role in nation-building and their valuable contributions across all spheres of life. Oman remains committed to providing comprehensive care for this group and ensuring their fundamental rights through laws and regulations that safeguard their dignity and protect them from neglect or abuse. This event reaffirmed the Commission's dedication to raising awareness about the rights of older persons and spotlighting the ongoing efforts to uphold these rights.

Program Highlighted the celebration included a range of activities, such as, a documentary film produced by the Commission highlighting the role of older persons as key contributors to national development, a theatrical performance depicting the challenges faced by older persons, aimed at raising public awareness on the importance of inclusion and addressing the barriers they encounter, and a visual presentation showcasing key complaints and reports related to the rights of older persons and the Commission's approach in handling them, along with national statistics illustrating the current situation of older persons in Oman.

In recognition of national efforts, the event featured the announcement of major initiatives and projects launched by government and civil society institutions that have significantly contributed to the protection and promotion of older persons' rights. This announcement aimed to inspire institutions and individuals to adopt sustainable initiatives that support and empower this group.



The event also included a presentation of key recommendations from the Dialogue Session held by the Commission on 2 December 2024, with participation from government units, the private sector, and civil society. The Session aimed to strengthen cooperation among stakeholders to ensure the rights of older persons and enhance the services provided to them in line with international best practices.

An exhibition was also held on the sidelines of the event, featuring publications and materials from institutions that serve older persons. Participating organizations included providers of medical services, assistive devices, and developmental solutions. Additionally, an art and photography exhibit showcasing works themed around older persons was organized in collaboration with the Omani Society for Fine Arts.

Pioneering Initiatives Serving Older Persons in Oman

Social Protection Fund Benefit for Older Persons

A groundbreaking initiative providing financial stability to all older persons in Oman, significantly improving their quality of life.

Isaf" Initiative – Ihsan Association

This service facilitates the transportation of bedridden older persons to and from hospitals, airports, and family events. Since its inception, the initiative has supported over 5,000 families.

Al-Misfah Village for Older Persons – Ministry of Health

Recognized by the World Health Organization as Oman's first age-friendly village. It promotes active aging by improving opportunities for health, participation, and overall well-being.

Al-Rustaq Social Care Home – Ministry of Social Development

Is dedicated to sheltering and caring for older persons who are unable to receive adequate care within their family or social environment. The facility provides comprehensive services, including healthcare, social,

psychological, and recreational care, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for its residents. It also contributes to the social integration of older persons by organizing various activities and events, and by hosting visits from governmental, civil, and private institutions, thereby enhancing their social engagement. The Ministry of Social Development has also launched several notable initiatives, including: The Alternative Family Project, the Elderly Care Guideline Initiative, the Joint Home Care Program for older persons in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the Regulatory Framework for Social Care Centers for Older Persons

Learning Village Initiative – Ministry of Education

Launched by the Ministry of Education, this initiative is one of the innovative programs aimed at eradicating illiteracy and targets all illiterate individuals, including older persons. By the end of the 2023/2024 academic year, approximately 31 villages had participated. The initiative contributed to raising social, economic, and environmental awareness, fostered a spirit of cooperation and volunteerism within communities, and offered supportive programs including religious, health, and awareness-raising lectures. As a result, it positively impacted the quality of life of older persons by empowering them with literacy skills and increasing their awareness of health and social issues.

Pure Hearts Club Initiative– Omani Women's Association in Bahla

It is a humanitarian initiative dedicated to older women. The club holds weekly meetings every Saturday, where participants engage in a variety of activities and events covering social, recreational, and educational aspects, in addition to public outings. The initiative aims to revive the energy and vitality of older women and provide a supportive environment for social interaction, thereby contributing to an improved quality of life and enhancing their sense of belonging and community participation. It also highlights their important role in society and offers them the opportunity to share experiences and knowledge.

Oman's First Forum on Elderly Care Initiative

Held on 29 May 2023 and organized by the digital newspaper and platform Oyoon, the forum aimed to raise community awareness about the importance of physical, mental, and healthcare for older persons, and to promote their status in society. The forum recommended the enactment of a law to protect older persons, the development of a national strategy on ageing, and the establishment of institutions and bodies dedicated to the care of older persons. It featured working papers and visual presentations, and included panel discussions that addressed topics such as social, psychological, and health care for older persons, with the aim of enhancing public awareness and ensuring the necessary care for them.

Our Elders, Endless Giving Initiative

Launched in the Wilayat of Sadah in the Governorate of Dhofar, the initiative aims to support older persons of both genders. It is implemented by a group of young volunteers in cooperation with the Health Committee and the Social Development Committee of the Wilayat, and under the patronage of the Office of the Wali of Sadah. The initiative seeks to provide the necessary care for older persons, in complementarity with the health services provided by the relevant institutions

Final Recommendations of the Dialogue Session- Protecting and Promoting the Rights of Older Persons in the Sultanate of Oman”

The Dialogue Session entitled “Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Older Persons in the Sultanate of Oman” was held on 2 December 2024, organized by the Oman Human Rights Commission, with the participation of more than 40 entities representing government institutions and relevant civil society organizations. A total of 12 academic papers were presented across three sessions, focusing on various social, health, economic, legislative, and media-related aspects concerning older persons. The event was attended by a distinguished group of specialists and stakeholders.

The Session aimed to review efforts made in caring for older persons in Oman, evaluate existing programs and legislation and their alignment with international standards, discuss the challenges facing older persons, develop innovative solutions to improve their quality of life, and formulate practical recommendations to promote their rights. These recommendations were presented as part of the celebrations for International Human Rights Day, observed on Tuesday, 10 December 2024.

Based on the working papers, panel discussions, and participants' contributions, several key recommendations and insights were formulated, summarized as follows:

- Establish a mechanism to ensure coordination and integration among all stakeholders involved in delivering services to older persons.
- Enact comprehensive legislation to protect and promote the rights of older persons in Oman in line with relevant international standards, and update existing laws to reflect demographic and social changes.
- Develop indicators to assess the level of services provided to older persons, and establish a comprehensive national database to guide national planning aimed at improving their quality of life.

- Integrate ageing issues into sustainable development plans and Oman Vision 2040, and draw on successful international experiences in the field of elder care.
- Designate a national day for older persons to raise awareness of their rights, and introduce a culturally resonant title to honor their status and the services they have rendered to the nation.
- Follow up on the implementation of the Arab Strategy for Older Persons in Oman and measure annual progress.
- Enhance home healthcare programs and mobile medical visits to serve older persons in their communities, conduct health awareness campaigns to promote healthy lifestyles among them, and provide specialized training for healthcare workers to address the health and psychological needs of the elderly.
- Encourage private and public institutions to provide facilities and services to older persons, recognizing them as a priority group for care in society.
- Strengthen sports club programs targeting older persons, and offer social, educational, and recreational activities within clubs. Organize workshops and dialogue sessions involving community members and families of older persons.
- Launch sustainable media campaigns focusing on highlighting the role of older persons in society and promoting respect for them, continue producing radio and TV programs that reflect their experiences and contributions, and involve them in content creation.
- Support civil society organizations and charities working in elder care, and encourage volunteer involvement in their programs.
- Promote alternative family arrangements for older persons without supportive families.
- Provide simplified training programs to teach older persons how to use modern technology, enabling them to access government and

healthcare services. Offer free courses on using smartphones and digital platforms, and develop specialized applications for services such as medical appointments, medication reminders, and social support.

- Encourage part-time or volunteer work opportunities for older persons, in line with their capacities and expertise.
- Support scientific studies on ageing and its health, social, and economic impacts; conduct continuous research to assess the needs of older persons and improve services in accordance with regional and international standards; and promote the role of universities and colleges in becoming elder-friendly environments for lifelong learning.

Project: National Human Rights Strategy 2026- 2035:

The project of “Developing a National Human Rights Strategy” is at the forefront of the mandates of the Oman Human Rights Commission, as stated in Article (11), paragraph one, of the Commission’s Statute issued by Royal Decree No. 57/2022. The Statute mandates the Commission to “develop a national human rights strategy and follow up on its implementation with all entities concerned with human rights.” Preparing the strategy requires establishing a comprehensive framework that addresses various dimensions in order to promote and protect human rights in the Sultanate of Oman. This must be in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State, the international conventions and treaties to which Oman is a party, and the applicable national legislation, reflecting the Commission’s core objective.

Following coordination with the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation and Follow-up Unit, the Commission commenced work on the National Human Rights Strategy project by forming a main task force. The team began its work by reviewing the experiences of peer countries and studying national and regional models for developing human rights strategies. It also worked on defining the strategic direction and key pillars of the strategy, including: legislation and policies; public awareness and

education; human resources; partnerships and international cooperation; protection and accountability mechanisms for civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as the rights of priority groups; monitoring and follow-up mechanisms; and the use of technology. The strategic direction was endorsed during a side meeting held as part of the regional forum “National Visions” in Dhofar Governorate, with the participation of international experts from various global organizations.

An executive team was also formed, comprising local experts from relevant entities. A workshop on human rights indicators was held, featuring joint discussion sessions with all relevant stakeholders. These discussions led to the development of a reference guide for indicators and the adoption of a media plan to accompany the preparation of the National Human Rights Strategy.

Additionally, a team was designated to participate in the preparation of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan in coordination with the Ministry of Economy. The Commission contributed to all themes and priorities related to human rights that align with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, ensuring that the initiatives and indicators of the Oman Human Rights Commission are integrated into the plans and efforts of all participating entities.

Study: The Reality, Challenges, and Aspirations for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Sultanate of Oman:

As part of its commitment to monitoring the rights of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the Sultanate of Oman, the Oman Human Rights Commission conducted a study entitled “The Reality, Challenges, and Aspirations for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Sultanate of Oman.” The study was carried out in collaboration with specialized researchers and targeted parents of children with ASD as well as professionals working with them, with the aim of identifying the current state of services provided, the challenges faced, and the desired improvements in supporting this group. The study was implemented in partnership with the National Centre for Statistics and Information, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Education, the Association for Children with Disabilities, the Omani Autism Society, the National Autism Centre, Al-Massarrah Hospital, the University Medical City, the Military and Security Services Medical City, the College of Education at Sultan Qaboos University, and the Ministry of Health, in addition to the Ihtiwaa Clinic, and a group of parents and specialists working with children with autism.

The findings revealed that challenges facing persons with ASD recorded the highest average compared to both the reality and aspirations. The main challenges included social isolation, a lack of training and rehabilitation programs that help develop essential life skills, and a shortage of healthcare facilities adequately equipped to meet their needs.

The current reality of services was found to be weak, particularly in terms of the availability of medical equipment, assistive technology in educational and rehabilitation programs, and overall technological support. As for the aspirations, the study highlighted the need to develop flexible training programs targeting both families and specialists, improve early diagnosis strategies and therapeutic intervention methods, and to provide supportive facilities and technologies tailored to the needs of children with ASD.

At the conclusion of the study, several recommendations were presented, foremost among them being the unification of governmental and community efforts in this field to ensure a better quality of life for individuals with autism and their families.

Conclusion:

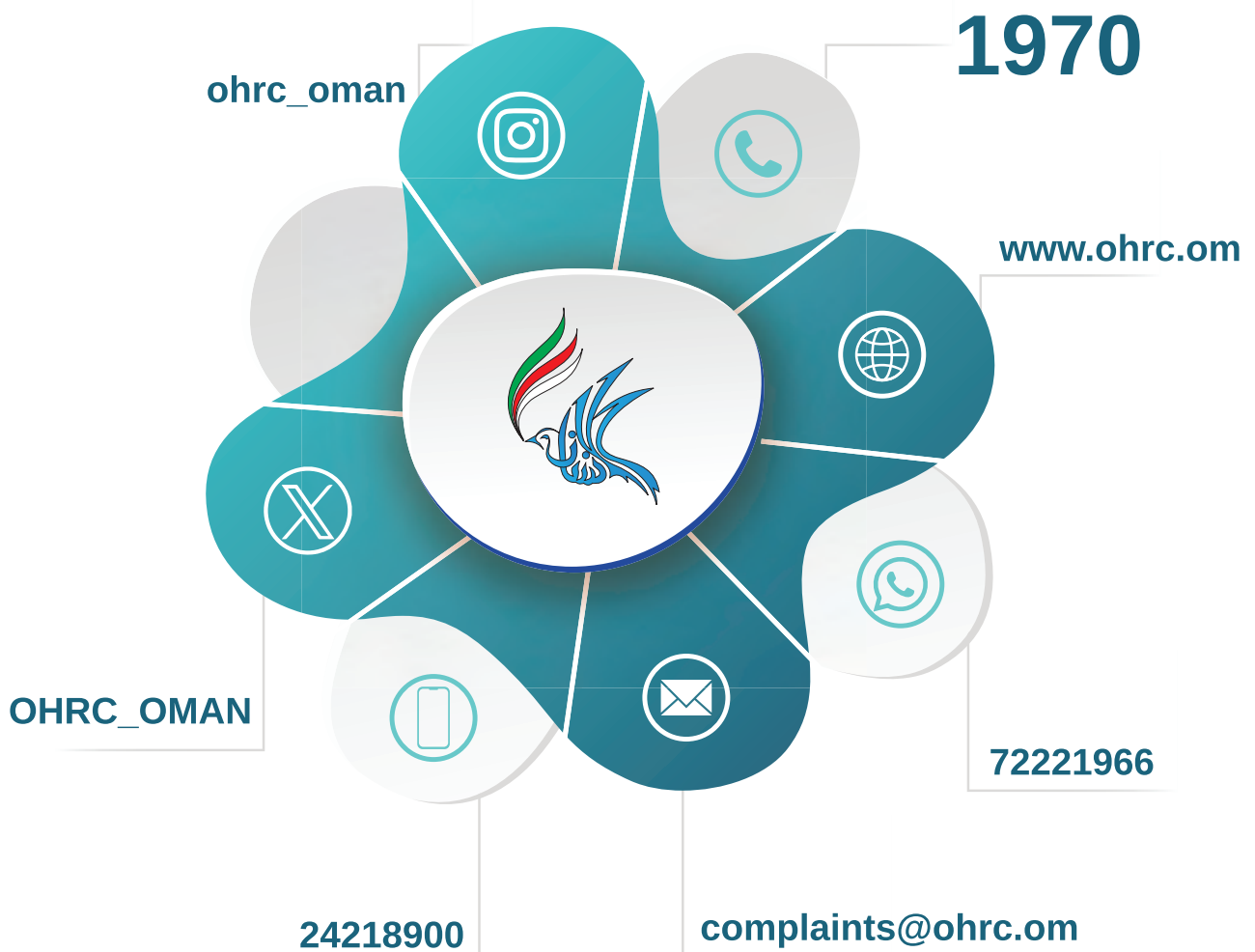


The Oman Human Rights Commission reaffirms its commitment to continuing its mission of promoting and protecting human rights in the Sultanate of Oman, in accordance with the Basic Statute of the State and the international conventions to which the Sultanate is a party. The Commission remains dedicated to developing its operational mechanisms, expanding its impact, and strengthening its partnerships with national and international entities to ensure more effective outcomes. It also renews its pledge to support national efforts in fostering a culture of rights and responsibilities, and to monitor the implementation of legislation and policies that support human rights, in alignment with Oman Vision 2040, which places the individual at the heart of sustainable development and affirms the values of justice, equality, and human dignity.

As the Commission looks forward to continuing its role in protecting and promoting human rights, it extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to all governmental and private entities, civil society organizations, regional and international institutions, and everyone who contributed to supporting its efforts throughout the year. It also expresses its gratitude to all individuals who engaged with the Commission, participated in its activities, or shared their feedback and suggestions.

The journey of human rights is a continuous and evolving endeavor that requires cooperation and collective effort from all. The Oman Human Rights Commission will therefore persist in exerting all possible efforts to advance this journey in a manner that reflects national priorities and keeps pace with regional and international developments.

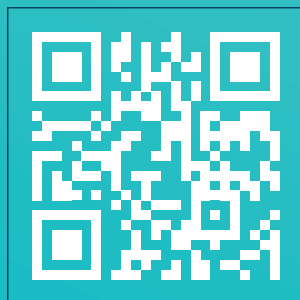
Means of Receiving Reports and Complaints at the Oman Human Rights Commission



ISBN 978-99992-1-292-2



9 789999 212922 >



 www.ohrc.om

  ohrc_oman  72221966  1970  complaints@ohrc.om  24218900