

# **Cabo Verde 2024 Human Rights Report**

## **Executive Summary**

There were no significant changes in the human rights situation in Cabo Verde during the year.

There were no credible reports of significant human rights abuses.

The government took credible steps to identify and punish officials who committed human rights abuses.

## **Section 1. Life**

### **a. Extrajudicial Killings**

There were no reports the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings during the year.

### **b. Coercion in Population Control**

There were no reports of coerced abortion or involuntary sterilization on the part of government authorities.

## **Section 2. Liberty**

### **a. Freedom of the Press**

The constitution and law provided for freedom of expression, including for members of the press and other media, and the government generally respected this right. An independent press, an effective judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system combined to promote freedom of expression, including for media members.

### **b. Worker Rights**

#### **Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining**

The law provided for the rights of workers to form or join unions of their choice, to engage in collective bargaining, and to conduct legal strikes. The labor code provided for protection against antiunion discrimination and for the reinstatement of workers who were unfairly dismissed.

The law designated certain jobs essential and limited workers' ability to strike in associated industries. These included employment in the telecommunications, justice, meteorology, health-care, firefighting, postal, funeral, water and sanitation, transportation, private security, and banking and credit sectors. The law stated the government could force the end of a strike when there was an emergency or to provide for the smooth operation

of businesses or essential services of public interest. The law and custom allowed unions to carry out their activities without interference.

The government respected workers' right of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining and effectively enforced applicable laws in the formal sector outside of the essential jobs list. Labor cases advanced slowly in the judicial system. Penalties for violations were commensurate with those for other laws involving denial of civil rights and were regularly applied against violators.

The National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship reported one case of abuse of labor rights during the year.

## **Forced or Compulsory Labor**

See the Department of State's annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/reports/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

## **Acceptable Work Conditions**

### **Wage and Hour Laws**

The law stipulated a monthly minimum wage greater than the official estimate of the poverty income level. The law stipulated a maximum of eight hours of work per day and 44 hours per week, including mandatory rest periods, the length of which depended on the work sector. Although companies tended to respect laws on working hours, many employees, such

as domestic workers, health-care professionals, farmers, fishers, and commercial workers, commonly worked for longer periods of time than the law allowed.

### **Occupational Safety and Health**

The law set minimum occupational safety and health (OSH) standards and gave workers the right to decline work if conditions posed serious risks to health or physical integrity. In specific high-risk sectors, such as fishing and construction, the government could and often did provide, in consultation with unions and employers, OSH rules. The Inspectorate General for Labor inspections detected irregularities in compliance with OSH standards, including violations concerning the right to vacation time and the right to rest between work periods.

Workers could terminate the employment relationship in the event of a serious threat to their health or physical integrity, but the law did not protect the employment of workers who withdrew from a work situation that endangered their health or safety. Many work-related accidents occurred in the construction sector.

### **Wage, Hour, and OSH Enforcement**

The government effectively enforced minimum wage, overtime, and OSH laws. The penalties for violations were commensurate with those for similar crimes, such as fraud or negligence, and penalties were regularly applied

against violators. The Inspectorate General for Labor and the Directorate General for Labor were the main agencies responsible for enforcing wage, hour, and OSH laws. The number of labor inspectors was sufficient to enforce compliance. Labor inspectors had the authority to make unannounced inspections and initiate sanctions. They carried out inspections of workplaces throughout the country to check for and deter violations.

According to the National Institute of Statistics, approximately 52 percent of jobs were in the informal economy, including domestic work and self-employment in tourism, trade, agriculture, livestock-raising, and fishing. Informal sector workers were not covered by wage, hour, OSH, or other labor laws and inspections.

## **c. Disappearance and Abduction**

### **Disappearance**

There were no reports of enforced disappearances by or on behalf of government authorities.

### **Prolonged Detention without Charges**

The constitution and law prohibited arbitrary arrest and detention and provided for the right of any person to challenge the lawfulness of their arrest or detention in court. The government generally observed these

requirements, and prolonged detention without charges was not observed to be a problem in the country.

#### **d. Violations in Religious Freedom**

See the Department of State's annual *International Religious Freedom Report* at <https://www.state.gov/religiousfreedomreport/>.

#### **e. Trafficking in Persons**

See the Department of State's annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/reports/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

### **Section 3. Security of the Person**

#### **a. Torture and Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**

The constitution and law prohibited such practices, and there were no credible reports government officials employed them.

From January 1 to July 31, according to data compiled by national police on allegations of police abuse, six cases were filed and under investigation at year's end.

## **b. Protection of Children**

### **Child Labor**

See the Department of Labor's *Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor* at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/findings>.

### **Child Marriage**

The legal minimum age of marriage was 18, and the government enforced the law.

## **c. Protection to Refugees**

The government had acceded to but not implemented the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. The country did not have legislation nor an institutional body that provided for granting asylum or refugee status. Because the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had no established presence in the country, the International Organization for Migration referred asylum seekers requesting protection and assistance to the UNHCR multicountry office in Dakar, Senegal, which conducted refugee status determinations.

### **Provision of First Asylum**

Asylum applications were rare and were all referred to UNHCR. There were no reports during the year of any applications. Temporary protection

mechanisms and access to basic services were in place for asylum seekers while they awaited a decision by UNHCR's West and Central Africa Bureau in Dakar.

#### **d. Acts of Antisemitism and Antisemitic Incitement**

The Jewish community was very small, and there were no reports of antisemitic incidents.