



Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
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Federated States of Micronesia

Compilation of information prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the outcome of the previous review.¹ It is a compilation of information contained in relevant United Nations documents, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with human rights mechanisms

2. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.²

3. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia consider acceding to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961. It also recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia consider joining the International Labour Organization.³ UNESCO recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education.⁴

4. The United Nations country team indicated that, since the previous cycle of the universal periodic review, the Federated States of Micronesia had not ratified any additional core international human rights treaties. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia ratify the remaining core international human rights treaties, notably the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.⁵

5. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia consider issuing a standing invitation to the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.⁶

6. During the period under review, the Federated States of Micronesia was covered by the Regional Office for the Pacific of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Support was also provided by a human rights officer in the United Nations multi-country office, who was based in Pohnpei. OHCHR had worked with the Federated States of Micronesia in areas such as the elaboration of the Strategic



Development Plan, youth inclusion and participation in the development space and human rights mechanisms and mainstreaming.⁷

III. National human rights framework

7. The United Nations country team noted that the Federated States of Micronesia had not taken concrete steps to establish an independent national human rights institution. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia establish an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).⁸

8. The United Nations country team indicated that in 2022, a Presidential Executive Order had been issued providing for the establishment of a national human rights and Sustainable Development Goals task force, which would act as the national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up and would prepare the voluntary national review on the implementation of the Goals, for consideration at the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia build the capacity of the task force, including through the participation of its members in the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the Work of the Human Rights Council.⁹

IV. Promotion and protection of human rights

A. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

1. Equality and non-discrimination

9. The United Nations country team noted that, while the Constitution provided for equality and equal protection of the law, it did not explicitly prohibit discrimination on all grounds. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia enact a comprehensive anti-discrimination framework that addressed the gaps in existing legislation to cover additional grounds such as disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and multiple and intersectional discrimination.¹⁰

2. Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law

10. The United Nations country team reported that the 2025 elections in Chuuk State had been marked by conflicting rulings from electoral commissions and courts, concerns over ballot handling and post-election unrest, including warrantless arrests and political violence, resulting in the declaration of a state of emergency. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia consider inviting international observers to monitor elections in the country, including with a mandate to monitor human rights during elections.¹¹

3. Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public and political life

11. The United Nations country team indicated that the constitutional rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, including with regard to academic freedom and cultural events, were largely respected in the Federated States of Micronesia. However, limited Internet access, especially on the outer islands, hampered the full exercise of those rights. The United Nations country team recommended improving structural capacity on the outer islands to address the limited Internet access.¹²

12. UNESCO noted that freedom of information was not guaranteed and that defamation remained a criminal offence in the Federated States of Micronesia.¹³

13. UNESCO recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia introduce an access to information law that was in accordance with international standards and that it decriminalize defamation.¹⁴

14. The United Nations country team noted that the media presence was limited in the Federated States of Micronesia, with only one independent media organization and eight radio stations, four of which were owned by the Government. It recommended promoting a culture of robust media diversity.¹⁵

15. UNESCO had not recorded any killings of journalists in the Federated States of Micronesia since systematic reporting had begun in 2006.¹⁶

4. Prohibition of all forms of slavery, including trafficking in persons

16. The United Nations country team indicated that the Federated States of Micronesia had made significant efforts to eliminate trafficking in persons, including by updating and adopting the standard operating procedures for victim identification, referral and prosecution, establishing shelters for victims of trafficking and training law enforcement stakeholders. However, it noted that the fishing industry – a major economic driver – remained a high-risk sector for both forced labour and sexual exploitation.¹⁷

17. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia finalize and ensure wide dissemination of and funding for the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons. It also recommended raising awareness of trafficking in persons through culturally sensitive information, education and communication materials, to be made available in the languages spoken by migrant communities, and actively engaging migrant communities in awareness-raising campaigns.¹⁸

5. Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

18. The United Nations country team noted that the minimum wage in the Federated States of Micronesia varied by state and by sector, that labour rights were not extensively regulated and that existing norms were often not enforced. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia consider adopting a national minimum wage that would establish a floor for all states and for the private sector.¹⁹

6. Right to an adequate standard of living

19. The United Nations country team noted that the prolonged droughts had intensified concerns over water security in the Federated States of Micronesia, particularly on low-lying islands reliant on rainwater and shallow wells. The risk of severe water shortages was high, with rainfall declining and catchments drying up. The United Nations country team recommended improving climate-resilient water services, especially on remote islands, by focusing primarily on strengthening water security initiatives and policy systems.²⁰

7. Right to health

20. The United Nations country team noted that access to skilled birth attendance was insufficient, particularly on remote islands. In addition, the lack of antenatal care data highlighted monitoring weaknesses in the maternal and newborn care continuum, and health service integration remained limited, affecting the provision of comprehensive care for children and families. The United Nations country team recommended establishing universal healthcare and ensuring that comprehensive maternal, newborn and child health services were accessible across all islands.²¹

21. The United Nations country team noted that abortion was still criminalized in all cases, except where the life of the mother was at risk. That disproportionately affected marginalized women who might lack the resources to access safe alternatives. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia continue to expand access to information and services for sexual and reproductive health and rights and that it decriminalize abortion.²²

22. The United Nations country team noted that the adolescent suicide rate of 30 per 100,000 in the Federated States of Micronesia represented a critical mental health challenge, particularly given the limited access to age-appropriate mental health services. It recommended developing integrated adolescent health services, including mental health support, particularly targeting suicide prevention among young males.²³

8. Right to education

23. UNESCO indicated that no legal provisions enshrining the right to education or a non-discrimination principle in education had been identified in federal or state-specific legislation. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia enshrine the right to education within national legislation.²⁴

24. UNESCO noted that no legal provisions had been identified guaranteeing free and compulsory pre-primary education. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia guarantee in national legislation at least 12 years of free primary and secondary education, of which at least 9 were compulsory.²⁵

25. The United Nations country team stated that the Federated States of Micronesia faced major education challenges, including low rates of enrolment and high out-of-school rates, especially at the secondary level and in early childhood education, and regional and gender disparities in the quality of education. It recommended expanding access to quality early childhood development programmes, particularly on the outer islands, to improve school readiness and learning outcomes.²⁶

26. UNESCO indicated that no legal provisions concerning corporal punishment in school settings had been identified in the legislation of the Federated States of Micronesia. It recommended explicitly prohibiting corporal punishment in the legislation of all four states.²⁷

27. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia develop technical and vocational education programmes aligned with local economic opportunities to improve youth employment prospects and reduce the number of young people not in employment, education or training.²⁸

9. Cultural rights

28. In the wake of her country visit in June 2025, the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights stated that the traditions and cultural practices of the Federated States of Micronesia were the heart of its social fabric. She encouraged the Government to use human rights, including cultural rights, to guide development efforts.²⁹

29. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia continue to protect cultural rights, in accordance with the Constitution.³⁰

10. Development, the environment, and business and human rights

30. The United Nations country team noted that the Federated States of Micronesia faced severe climate change impacts, including sea-level rise, typhoons, erosion and prolonged droughts. Climate change had exacerbated existing inequalities, especially for women, girls and marginalized groups, increased the risk of gender-based violence and disrupted access to health, education and economic opportunities. Children, particularly on remote islands, faced disrupted schooling and reduced access to essential services due to limited infrastructure and emergency response capacity. Between December 2023 and July 2024, El Niño-induced drought had affected over 22,700 residents, especially on remote islands.³¹

31. The United Nations country team acknowledged the mitigation efforts made by the Federated States of Micronesia, such as the adoption of the nationwide integrated disaster risk management and climate change policy, the national disaster response plan, the national standardized risk and vulnerability assessment framework and the promotion of greenhouse gas reduction. The United Nations country team recommended updating the national disaster management plan and standard operating procedure for emergency and disaster response.³²

B. Rights of specific persons or groups

1. Women

32. The United Nations country team acknowledged the commitment the Federated States of Micronesia had made to gender equality and the human rights of women and girls through legislative and policy frameworks, such as the National Gender Equality Policy, 2018–2023.

The biennial National Women's Conference fostered dialogue between the Government and diverse women's groups.³³

33. The United Nations country team noted that the National Policy to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls (2021–2025), which highlighted efforts to address gender-based violence and promote social inclusion, had been endorsed by all four states. In addition, domestic violence and family protection legislation had been strengthened in Kosrae and Pohnpei, resulting in higher rates of prosecution in those states. However, survivors of gender-based violence on outer islands continued to have limited access to all services. The Government had yet to commit to adequately financing the implementation of the national strategy, including capacity-building, policy and system strengthening, and data collection and analysis for a coordinated approach across states.³⁴

34. The United Nations country team noted that the recent election of a woman as lieutenant governor of Pohnpei had marked the first time that a woman had been elected to one of the top executive offices in the country. Nevertheless, in general there had been limited progress in women's participation in positions of power in the public sector and a slight decrease since the previous election cycle. Temporary special measures had yet to be adopted at both the state and federal levels. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia implement temporary special measures for women in politics, starting with leadership training, awareness-raising campaigns and measures to address harassment, discrimination and other forms of violence against women in politics.³⁵

35. The United Nations country team reported that marital rape had not been criminalized and that there was no prohibition of sexual harassment in the Federated States of Micronesia. The United Nations country team recommended including sexual assault and sexual abuse perpetrated in marriage or in de facto relationships within the classification of rape under federal and state laws by 2027 for all individuals regardless of gender, race and sexual orientation.³⁶

2. Children

36. The United Nations country team noted that the Federated States of Micronesia had a young population – 36 per cent of the population was aged under 18 years. Nevertheless, critical gaps remained in child health, education and protection. Child mortality remained high and children remained vulnerable to vaccine-preventable diseases. In addition, there were data gaps concerning nutrition, stunting, wasting and exclusive breastfeeding rates, which hindered evidence-based interventions.³⁷

37. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia conduct a comprehensive Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey to establish baseline data on child nutrition, protection and well-being indicators to inform evidence-based programming and policy development. It also recommended strengthening immunization systems to achieve 95 per cent coverage, and implementing school feeding programmes and nutrition interventions targeting the critical 1,000-day window to address malnutrition and support educational outcomes.³⁸

38. The United Nations country team indicated that data gaps affected child protection efforts, as no statistics were available on using violence as a means of disciplining children, child marriage or child labour. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia develop and implement a national action plan on child protection that addressed violence against children, child marriage and child labour and had adequate resource allocation and monitoring mechanisms.³⁹

39. UNESCO noted that no legal provisions setting a minimum age for work had been identified in national legislation. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia set a minimum age for work, aligned with the age at which children completed compulsory education.⁴⁰

3. Older persons

40. The United Nations country team reported that older persons faced significant barriers in access to information on public policies and human rights owing to limited Internet access and digital literacy, which hindered their participation in public affairs.⁴¹

4. Persons with disabilities

41. The United Nations country team noted that, while the states of Chuuk, Kosrae and Pohnpei had passed disability laws, there was no comprehensive national strategy for habilitation and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. Especially on the outer islands, persons with disabilities often faced barriers to healthcare, education and social services. Moreover, women and girls with disabilities had limited access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services, and children with disabilities faced substantial barriers accessing educational services.⁴²

42. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia support the active, free and meaningful participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes relating to public policies, including development planning and participation in elections.⁴³

5. Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers

43. The United Nations country team noted that, owing to the country's development challenges, the number of persons migrating from the Federated States of Micronesia to the United States of America in pursuit of employment opportunities, family reunification and higher education had increased. That had resulted in a reduction in the workforce, a rising number of deportees back to the Federated States of Micronesia and challenges concerning the transmission of traditions to younger generations. The United Nations country team recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia finalize and implement the national migration policy by 2027 to ensure that the country could fully harness the potential of migration and protect people on the move.⁴⁴

44. The United Nations country team also recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia incorporate the customary international law principle of non-refoulement into domestic law, establish national laws, regulations and policies to govern the treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees, and establish operational-level procedures for the identification and referral of asylum-seekers.⁴⁵

45. The United Nations country team noted that asylum-seekers were not granted social protection, including access to work, education and health services to enable them to meet their basic needs and avoid dependency.⁴⁶

46. The United Nations country team also noted that national legislation did not provide for the right to work for asylum-seekers, despite the fact that such provision could have positive outcomes for asylum-seekers and local communities. It recommended that the Federated States of Micronesia facilitate the right to work for migrants, through bilateral agreements with other Member States, and for asylum-seekers.⁴⁷

Notes

¹ [A/HRC/47/4](#), [A/HRC/47/4/Add.1](#) and [A/HRC/47/2](#).

² UNESCO submission for the universal periodic review of the Federated States of Micronesia, para. 26. and United Nations country team submission for the universal periodic review of the Federated States of Micronesia, para. 9.

³ United Nations country team submission, paras. 9 and 44.

⁴ UNESCO submission, para. 21 (i).

⁵ United Nations country team submission, paras. 3 and 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 9.

⁷ OHCHR, *United Nations Human Rights Report 2021*, pp. 77, 323, 325 and 326, *United Nations Human Rights Report 2022*, pp. 293 and 294, *United Nations Human Rights Report 2023*, pp. 234, and *United Nations Human Rights Report 2024*, pp. 242 and 256–259.

⁸ United Nations country team submission, para. 13.

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- ⁹ Ibid., para. 13.
¹⁰ Ibid., paras. 15 and 16.
¹¹ Ibid., para. 33.
¹² Ibid., paras. 34 and 35.
¹³ UNESCO submission, paras. 12 and 13.
¹⁴ Ibid., paras. 22 and 23.
¹⁵ United Nations country team submission, para. 35.
¹⁶ UNESCO submission, para. 17.
¹⁷ United Nations country team submission, para. 36.
¹⁸ Ibid., para. 36.
¹⁹ Ibid., paras. 42 and 44.
²⁰ Ibid., paras. 37 and 41.
²¹ Ibid., paras. 47 and 50.
²² Ibid., paras. 47 and 50.
²³ Ibid., paras. 49 and 50.
²⁴ UNESCO submission, paras. 3 and 21.
²⁵ Ibid., paras. 4 and 21.
²⁶ United Nations country team submission, paras. 26, 29 and 51–53.
²⁷ UNESCO submission, paras. 6 and 21.
²⁸ United Nations country team submission, para. 55.
²⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/06/federated-states-micronesia-must-embrace-opportunity-become-example-self-led>.
³⁰ United Nations country team submission, para. 12.
³¹ Ibid., paras. 56–58.
³² Ibid., paras. 60 and 62.
³³ Ibid., para. 17.
³⁴ Ibid., para. 18.
³⁵ Ibid., paras. 21 and 23.
³⁶ Ibid., paras. 18 and 23.
³⁷ Ibid., paras. 24 and 25.
³⁸ Ibid., para. 29.
³⁹ Ibid., paras. 27 and 29.
⁴⁰ UNESCO submission, paras. 7 and 21.
⁴¹ United Nations country team submission, para. 32.
⁴² Ibid., paras. 30 and 31.
⁴³ Ibid., para. 31.
⁴⁴ Ibid., paras. 11 and 12.
⁴⁵ Ibid., para. 12.
⁴⁶ Ibid., para. 41.
⁴⁷ Ibid., para. 44.
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