



SUPPORTING  
AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT  
FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

# **Enabling Environment Snapshot**

**Algeria**

**June 2026**

## Context

Reporting period: September 2025 – June 2026

Since [the end of the Hirak](#) (2019–2021), Algeria has experienced a continuous democratic regression, which was confirmed during the period covered by the report. The presidential system established by the 2020 Constitution has been further consolidated: on 15 March 2026, Parliament, meeting in joint session, [adopted twelve constitutional amendments](#) presented as ‘technical’, but which further concentrate powers in the hands of the executive (composition of the High Council of the Judiciary, judicial appointments by decree, transfer of logistical preparations for elections to the administration), without consultation with civil society. On the legislative front, the period covered by the report was marked by the adoption of [Law No. 26-01 of 17 February 2026](#), which broadened the grounds for revocation of nationality, as well as by an accelerated reform of the Electoral Code. In the run-up to the [parliamentary elections of 2 July 2026](#), the Independent National Electoral Authority (ANIE) rejected, at the end of May 2026, a large number of candidacies from across the political spectrum. Judicial repression against critical voices has intensified, whilst a [limited presidential pardon](#) (March 2026) failed to provide any structural solution. Algeria remains classified as ‘not free’ ([Freedom House, 31/100](#)) and ‘repressed’ ([CIVICUS Monitor](#)). Behind a façade of institutional stability, civic space remains severely restricted, the rule of law is weakened and civil society is often forced to operate informally.

## 1. Respect and protection of fundamental freedoms

Although Articles 51, 52 and 53 of the [Constitution](#) guarantee the freedoms of opinion, expression and association, the exercise of these freedoms remains severely restricted. This gap between constitutional protections and their implementation is reflected in Algeria’s persistent classification as a civic space that is ‘repressed’ by the [CIVICUS Monitor](#) and ‘not free’ by [Freedom House \(31/100\)](#).

During the period under review, the authorities intensified the criminalisation of critical speech, primarily by relying on anti-terrorism legislation (Article 87 bis) and Articles 95 bis, 96 and 196 of the Penal Code. The application of these provisions has increasingly targeted not only political activists and journalists, but also academics and trade unions, reflecting a broadening of the scope of repression.

Several heavy sentences have been handed down, notably a [sentence](#) of seven years [in prison for Saïd Chetouane](#), a figure associated with the Hirak movement, on charges including ‘terrorism’, ‘insulting the president’ and ‘publication detrimental to the national interest’, as well as a further [conviction of the journalist Abdelkrim Zeghileche](#) in Constantine in May 2026 for his critical reporting.

Prosecutions against academics have further exacerbated this trend: [Tahar Ouhachi has been in detention](#) since February 2026 and is due to appear before the Blida Criminal Court, charged with ‘glorifying terrorist acts through information and communication technologies’ and ‘disseminating false information likely to undermine public security and order’, arising from his activities as a lecturer and researcher, whilst the researcher [Munir Saghir was placed in pre-trial](#) detention in Oran in May 2026 for allegedly publishing content likely to undermine the national interest.

At the same time, restrictions on freedom of association persisted. The [closure and sealing of the headquarters of SOS Disparus](#) in March 2026, after twenty-five years of activity, represented not only the dismantling of a long-standing human rights organisation, but also a symbolic narrowing of the already restricted civic space.

Trade unions were also subject to similar attacks: [the national congress](#) of the National Autonomous Union of Public Administration Staff ([SNAPAP](#)) [was blocked](#) due to a lack of administrative authorisation (April 2026), against a backdrop of calls for its dissolution, and [CNAPESTE, a teachers' union, is under threat of dissolution](#), in violation of ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98.

Overall, these developments point to an increasing reliance on judicial and administrative measures to silence independent voices, despite constitutional commitments to fundamental freedoms.

## 2. Supportive legal and regulatory framework

The legal and regulatory environment for civil society in Algeria has become increasingly restrictive over the period covered by the report. Whilst the Constitution guarantees freedom of association, the regulatory framework continues to prioritise state control and security considerations at the expense of civic participation.

The right of association remains governed by Law [No. 12-06](#) of 12 January 2012, which is based on a system of prior authorisation granting the administration broad discretionary powers to approve, suspend or dissolve associations (notably under Articles 8, 30 and 43). Far from bringing the legal framework into line with international standards, the draft organic law intended to replace Law No. 12-06 is reportedly set to introduce even greater state control, including stricter monitoring of foreign funding and enhanced oversight of associations' activities. These provisions risk further limiting the ability of independent organisations to obtain legal status, access resources and operate without administrative interference.

The period covered by the report was marked by an unprecedented tightening of the general legal framework governing the civic space. [Law No. 26-01 of 17 February 2026](#) (published in the Official Journal No. 14), adopted on 22 January 2026, introduced Articles 22a to 22c into the Nationality Code, broadening the grounds for deprivation of nationality — including, for the first time, original nationality — for acts deemed to 'undermine the fundamental interests' of the State. Its implementing decree establishes a commission chaired by the head of government and largely dominated by security service officials. [EuroMed Rights](#) and numerous legal experts have condemned this measure, deeming it unconstitutional and contrary to international obligations (the 1954 Convention, risk of statelessness). The network has documented this reform via its early warning mechanism: the [publication of the decree establishing the Commission on the Revocation of Nationality](#) (June 2026) makes this mechanism fully operational. Beyond its immediate legal implications, this measure is likely to have a deterrent effect on activists, human rights defenders and members of the diaspora engaged in advocacy work, which could discourage participation in civil society activities perceived as critical of state policies.

Furthermore, [the constitutional amendments](#) of 15 March 2026 undermine the independence of the High Council of the Judiciary, and [a reform](#) of the Electoral Code was adopted as a matter of urgency. In July 2025, Parliament passed [Act No. 25-05](#) of 19 July 2025 on general mobilisation, as well as a new Code of Criminal Procedure, established by [Act No. 25-14](#) of 3

August 2025, [two pieces of legislation condemned by civil society](#) (FIDH/OMCT) for undermining fair trial guarantees, prolonging detention without judicial oversight and restricting freedom of movement. These legislative changes must also be assessed in the light of the continued use of criminal provisions against civil society actors, in particular Articles 87 bis, 95 bis and 196 bis of the Criminal Code. Such developments risk further reducing the ability of CSOs and activists to organise, campaign and engage in public advocacy without fear of legal repercussions. Rather than facilitating the establishment and operation of independent organisations, recent legal developments appear to be strengthening control and surveillance mechanisms, thereby increasing the risks faced by CSOs and further restricting civic space in Algeria.

### 3. Accessible and sustainable resources

Access to resources remains severely restricted. [Law No. 12-06](#) of 12 January 2012 on associations, in particular Articles 30 and 43, prohibits associations from receiving funds from foreign diplomatic missions or non-governmental organisations without the prior consent of the competent authority. Failure to comply with this prohibition may result in the suspension of the association and constitute grounds for a request for its dissolution. At the same time, Article 95 bis of the Criminal Code, introduced by [Law No. 20-06 of 28 April 2020](#), makes it a criminal offence to receive funds from within or outside the country where they are intended to commit or encourage acts considered to undermine state security, the stability of institutions, national unity or public order. These provisions place independent organisations — particularly those working to promote human rights — in a situation of structural financial and legal insecurity.

[A detailed analysis](#) of these restrictions is available in the Civic Freedom Monitor on Algeria published by the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law. Public grants awarded by the State, the wilaya people's assemblies and the municipalities remain reserved for registered associations and are allocated according to criteria that leave the authorities considerable discretion. Articles 34 and 35 of Law No. 12-06 on associations make the granting of these grants conditional, in particular, on the recognition that the association's activities are in the general interest or of public utility, as well as on the conclusion of a programme contract.

Available foreign funding is largely limited to thematic programmes approved or implemented in coordination with the government, notably within the framework of cooperation between [the European Union](#) and Algeria, the United Nations Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development in [Algeria 2023–2027](#), or joint programmes such as [the programme](#) for the development of the social and solidarity economy, funded by the European Union and implemented by the UNDP.

During the period under review, the contraction in international aid — notably the freeze on part of US funding decided in 2025 and the massive reduction in USAID programmes — further reduced the resources available to civil society in the region. The US State Department announced [the suspension](#) and review of foreign aid programmes, whilst [Reuters](#) reported that the vast majority of USAID programmes under review in 2025 had been cancelled.

Furthermore, the new legislation on the revocation of nationality further exacerbates the deterrent effect on dual nationals and members of the diaspora, who could be targeted for activities deemed hostile. This framework was established by [Law No. 26-01](#) of 17 February 2026 amending and supplementing the Algerian Nationality Code, and subsequently supplemented by [Executive Decree No. 26-209](#) of 26 May 2026, published on 3 June 2026, which defines the composition and functioning of the commission responsible for examining

cases of revocation of nationality. The risks that this mechanism poses to critical voices and to people residing abroad have also been analysed by [EuroMed Rights](#). In the absence of a structured, fair and protective framework, the financial autonomy, participation and professionalisation of the civil society sector remain severely hampered.

## 4. Open and responsive state

Algeria still lacks a comprehensive law on access to information. Although [Article 55 of the Constitution](#) guarantees the right of access to information, documents and statistics, no implementing legislation sets out the procedures for this. The [Organic Law No. 23-14 on Information](#) mainly concerns media activities and provides for neither a general procedure for accessing administrative documents nor a specific remedy in the event of a refusal. Judicial, prison, migration and budgetary data therefore remain difficult to access, forcing CSOs to rely on informal sources.

Civil society's participation in public decision-making also remains very limited. No legislation requires consultation with CSOs, whilst [Law No. 12-06 on associations](#) effectively excludes unregistered organisations from institutional frameworks. Several major reforms have thus been adopted without meaningful public consultation: the [constitutional amendment](#) of 26 March 2026, [Law No. 26-01](#) of 17 February 2026 amending the Nationality Code, and Organic [Law No. 26-05](#) of 4 April 2026 on the electoral system.

At the same time, the crackdown has affected existing organisations. On 16 March 2026, the headquarters of SOS Disparus was [closed and sealed](#) off. Independent trade unions also continue to face restrictions. The National Human Rights Council remains largely inactive and insufficiently independent, despite the recommendation by the United Nations Special Rapporteur Mary Lawlor to [bring it into line with the Paris Principles](#).

This shrinking of public space particularly affects women, young people, migrants, minorities and LGBTQI people. These groups remain under-represented in consultative bodies. The criminalisation of same-sex relationships, notably under [Article 338 of the Criminal Code](#), prevents the legal establishment of LGBTQI organisations and their organised participation in public life.

## 5. Supportive public culture and discourses on civil society

The dominant official and media discourse continues to discredit independent civil society, which is portrayed as being manipulated by 'foreign forces' or as hostile to the state. This rhetoric is directed in particular at organisations working in the fields of human rights, governance and freedoms, which are suspected of undermining sovereignty or national unity. The law on the revocation of nationality has reinforced a discourse on national loyalty that pits 'loyal' citizens against critical voices, particularly within the diaspora. The concentration of state advertising resources, channelled through the National Agency for Publishing and Advertising ([ANEP](#)), perpetuates an information hierarchy that disadvantages independent media. The state media give little coverage to the work of civil society organisations, whilst legal proceedings against journalists ([Hassan Bouras, arrested in April 2026](#)) and activists foster a climate of self-censorship. [The incident that occurred during a book-signing event and the closure of the Beaux-Arts bookshop in Algiers](#) (April 2026) illustrate how this stigmatisation has spread to the cultural sphere. Iconic organisations (the LADDH, dissolved in 2022; the

RAJ) remain excluded from the legal sphere. This prevailing discourse contributes to the isolation of independent initiatives, in violation of the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression and association.

## 6. Access to a secure digital environment

By the end of 2025, Algeria had around 37.8 million internet users, representing an internet penetration rate of 79.5 per cent of the population, according to the [Digital 2026: Algeria](#) report. According to data from [the International Telecommunication Union](#), a 5 GB mobile data plan cost around \$2.23 per month in 2025, representing 0.49 per cent of monthly gross national income per capita. However, these national averages mask a [territorial and social digital divide](#), particularly in rural and remote areas and amongst low-income groups.

[Inequalities in access](#) to broadband and digital resources observed in rural Algerian municipalities may limit the ability of civil society organisations located outside major urban centres to communicate, document violations, organise training and mobilise citizens online.

The digital sphere, which has become the main refuge for freedom of expression, is subject to close surveillance. [Law No. 20-05](#) of 28 April 2020 on combating discrimination and hate speech, as well as Article 196 bis of [Law No. 20-06](#) amending and supplementing Ordinance No. 66-156 of 8 June 1966 on the Criminal Code (“dissemination of false information”), are frequently invoked to prosecute peaceful opinions expressed online. Virtually all of the high-profile prosecutions during this period were based on social media posts: [Munir Saghir](#) (Articles 87 bis and 96), [Tahar Ouhachi](#) (Articles 87 bis 4, 87 bis 12 and 196), [Abdelkrim Zeghileche](#), [Wafia Tidjani](#) and [Latifa Dib](#). On 15 June 2026, [Latifa Dib](#), a lawyer struck off the roll and president of an association of professional women, was sentenced to four years’ imprisonment for online posts deemed contrary to the ‘national interest’ (Article 96). [Wafia Tidjani was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment](#) (April 2026) for posts on Facebook deemed to be acts linked to terrorism and separatism. The second decree on the [presidential pardon of March 2026](#) targeted certain offences related to cybercrime and social media, but lacked a clear scope of application or structural impact. Civil society organisations have only limited technical and financial capacity to secure their communications, data and tools; there is no public programme aimed at supporting cybersecurity in this sector. Internet access remains unstable, with a risk of targeted restrictions during election periods — a growing concern in the run-up to the election on 2 July 2026. This situation seriously undermines the exercise of civic rights online, which are nevertheless essential for citizen mobilisation and participation.

## Challenges and opportunities

The next six months are set to be decisive. The parliamentary elections on 2 July 2026, preceded by a mass rejection of candidacies, risk exacerbating mistrust and being accompanied by targeted digital restrictions. The implementation of the law on the revocation of nationality — through the commission that is now operational (decree published in June 2026) —, the enforcement of security legislation already adopted (general mobilisation, Code of Criminal Procedure) and the possible adoption of the new draft law on associations could institutionalise increased control over civil society.

Opportunities nevertheless remain: international mechanisms (special UN bodies and procedures, the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights) and regional networks (EuroMed Rights, AfricanDefenders, CIVICUS, the EU’s Early Warning Mechanism for South-

East Europe) offer avenues for redress and advocacy, supported by the resilience of actors on the ground. To address these challenges, civil society must strengthen its capacities in the areas of advocacy, digital and legal protection, and secure broader access to international forums.

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