



Did You Know?

States have a legal obligation to respect, protect & fulfil the right to health.

(Article 12 of 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights)

ruralhealthcompass.com



What is the Right to Health?

It is the “right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health”. This includes access to health care and addressing social determinants of health.

ruralhealthcompass.com



How is the Right to Health evaluated?

The AAAQ Framework looks at availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality. This is reviewed every 5 years by the UN Committee on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights.

ruralhealthcompass.com



The Right to Health in Europe

As of 2026, the Right to Health (ICESCR) has been ratified in all EU member states. This creates a high-level legal obligation for governments to align national policies to these standards.

ruralhealthcompass.com



Did You Know?

States are expected to show “progressive realization” of the Right to Health. This means moving towards meeting the standards as quickly and effectively as possible.

ruralhealthcompass.com



Rural Health & the Right to Health

All services, goods and facilities must be available, accessible, acceptable and of good quality. Medical deserts, workforce shortages, and lack of public infrastructure are ongoing barriers.

ruralhealthcompass.com



Rural Proofing & the Right to Health

Rural proofing should be used to meet the non-discrimination clause. “Lack of funds” should not be used to justify withdrawal of services in rural areas as this constitutes a violation of the clause.

ruralhealthcompass.com



Learn More

*The Right to Health Fact Sheet
(WHO)*

*Tackling inequalities in public service
coverage to “build forward better” for
the rural poor (UN 2021)*

ruralhealthcompass.com