

Report on visit to Slovak Republic

15 to 19 June 2015

Positives



Systematic work for the implementation of human rights

- » adoption of the first National Human Rights Strategy (NHRS).
- » envisaged ratification of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)

Action against discrimination

- » recent amendments to the Anti-discrimination Act, extending the possibility to take affirmative action measures to private entities
- » pilot projects and recent legislative proposals aimed at preventing the placement of Roma children in segregated special schools
- » on-going legislative reform aimed at prohibiting the full legal incapacitation of persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities
- » commitment made by the authorities to deinstitutionalising social care services and to enabling persons with disabilities to live independently within the community
- » progress made in strengthening the policy and institutional framework for the promotion and protection of the human rights of LGBTI persons

Concerns



Systematic work for the implementation of human rights

- » inadequate support and resources available to the national human rights structures
- » the current educational approaches in schools do not provide pupils with adequate competencies in valuing diversity and equality and combating all forms of discrimination and violence

Action against discrimination

- » varied level of protection against discrimination depending on the applicable discrimination grounds
- » manifestations of anti-Gypsyism and hate speech, especially by local authorities
- » excessive use of force by police officers during raids carried out in Roma settlements and discontinuation or slow pace of investigations into these incidents
- » pervasive segregation of Roma children in the education system and their very high drop-out levels
- » lack of access of Roma to adequate housing and the continued practice of segregation of Roma settlements from non-Roma communities
- » persistence of large institutions housing thousands of persons with disabilities away from the community
- » negative public discourse and hate speech directed against LGBTI persons

Recommendations

Systematic work for the implementation of human rights

- » provide the Ombudsperson and the National Centre for Human Rights with adequate support and resources to effectively carry out their mandates
- » accede to Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which provides for a general prohibition of discrimination
- » ratify the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter Providing for a System of Collective Complaints
- » devise an efficient monitoring mechanism to ensure the accountability of local and regional authorities in the implementation of human rights
- » promote schools' teaching methods that encourage critical thinking and create a participatory learning environment free from discrimination and intolerance

Action against discrimination

- » accede to the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems
- » ensure that law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges are systematically trained to be able to recognise and effectively investigate and sanction hate crime
- » ensure that all allegations of ill-treatment by law enforcement officers, including those with an alleged racist motive, are promptly and effectively investigated
- » adopt and promote inclusive education policies and take measures to reduce the isolation of Roma children in segregated schools
- » stop and prevent the evictions of Roma from informal settlements or other dwellings without the provision of adequate alternative accommodation
- » do not deprive persons with disabilities, including with intellectual impairments, of their right to vote and to be elected by any law limiting their legal capacity
- » refrain from placing additional persons with disabilities in residential institutions and address the deficiencies in domestic legislation which support the practice of placing children with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in special schools
- » consider favourably the possibility of providing legal recognition to same sex couples
- » counter unlawful practices imposing medical interventions and non-marriage requirements for the official recognition of gender reassignment
- » extend the provisions of domestic hate speech legislation to cover sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics