

EUROPEAN COMMISSION AGAINST
RACISM AND INTOLERANCE

REPORT ON THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

(seventh monitoring cycle)



Adopted on 17 March 2026

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European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)
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FOREWORD

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), established by the Council of Europe, is an independent human rights monitoring body specialised in questions relating to preventing and combating racism, intolerance and related discrimination (on grounds of “race”, ethnic or national origin, citizenship, skin colour, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics). It is composed of independent and impartial members appointed on the basis of their moral authority and recognised expertise in dealing with racism and intolerance.

Within the framework of its statutory activities, ECRI conducts country monitoring work, which consists of analysing the situation in each of the member States of the Council of Europe regarding racism and intolerance and action against these phenomena, and of drawing up relevant proposals and recommendations to address any issues that have been raised during the monitoring process.

ECRI's country monitoring deals with all member States on an equal footing. The work takes place in cycles of about five years, on average. The first-cycle reports were completed in 1998. Work on seventh-cycle reports started in 2025.

The working methods for the preparation of the reports involve desk research and documentary analyses, a visit to the country concerned, and then a confidential dialogue with the national authorities.

ECRI's reports are not the result of inquiries or testimonial evidence. They are analyses based on information gathered from a wide variety of sources. Desk research and documentary studies are based on a large number of national and international written sources. The in situ visit provides the opportunity to meet with various stakeholders directly concerned (such as relevant public officials, national or local elected officials, prosecutors and judges, representatives of equality bodies, national human rights institutions and civil society organisations working in areas of relevance to ECRI, relevant professionals and people belonging to groups of concern to ECRI) with a view to gathering detailed information. The process of confidential dialogue with the national authorities allows the latter to provide, if they consider it necessary, comments on the draft report, with a view to correcting any possible factual errors which the text might contain. At the end of the dialogue, the national authorities may request, if they so wish, that their viewpoints be appended to the final ECRI report.

The seventh-cycle country reports focus on two topics common to all member States: (1) preventing and combating hate speech and hate crime, and (2) ensuring equal treatment and inclusion in education and healthcare.

In the framework of the seventh cycle, priority implementation is requested by ECRI for two specific recommendations chosen from those made in the report. These recommendations should be implemented within 18 months after the publication of the report on the country in question. A process of interim follow-up is subsequently conducted by ECRI to review action taken to implement them.

The following report was drawn up by ECRI under its own responsibility. It was prepared following a visit to the Slovak Republic from 19 to 23 May 2025. The visit was preceded by an online meeting on 13 May 2025. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the situation up to 4 December 2025; as a rule, developments since that date are neither covered in the following analysis nor taken into account in the findings, proposals and recommendations therein.

SUMMARY

Since the adoption of ECRI's sixth report on the Slovak Republic on 1 October 2020, some progress has been made and good practices have been developed in a number of fields.

A new Conceptual Framework for Countering Radicalisation and Extremism, which was adopted in 2025, has a particular focus on combating hate speech online and children and youth. It also stresses the importance of media literacy in counteracting hateful content.

Efforts have been made to alert young people about dangers of online hate speech, notably through awareness-raising campaigns, and to develop tools allowing for the detection and removal of online hateful comments, including with the use of artificial intelligence.

Measures have also been taken to build better relationship between police officers and groups of concern to ECRI and to increase the number of trainings on preventing and combating hate crime available to police officers.

Teaching on human rights, including on diversity, tolerance, equality and non-discrimination, is included in school programmes and the authorities have provided voluntary training sessions for teachers on those subjects and supported extracurricular activities for students, such as Human Rights Olympiad.

There are some good examples of additional support being provided to Roma children in schools, including through the work of Roma mediators and through partnerships between schools and non-governmental organisations in order to organise extracurricular activities, additional tutoring and career guidance for Roma pupils.

In the area of ensuring equal treatment and inclusion in healthcare, the authorities expanded the scope of healthcare provided to beneficiaries of temporary protection, who now have the right to almost the same level of health services as citizens registered with public health insurance.

The authorities also implemented or supported a number of projects aimed at improving access to healthcare for Roma, including through the employment of Roma health mediators, enhancing initial education and continuous training of medical professionals and supporting civil society activities, such as a programme aimed at providing care and support to pregnant Roma women and young mothers.

ECRI welcomes these positive developments in the Slovak Republic. However, despite the progress achieved, some issues give rise to concern.

The public discourse has become increasingly polarised, and political speech has taken on highly divisive and antagonistic overtones particularly targeting LGBTI persons, migrants and Roma. Derogatory and hateful statements and comments were made especially during election periods, both online and offline. Hate speech, including by prominent politicians, often remains unchallenged.

There have also been a number of violent hate crimes against persons belonging to groups of concern to ECRI, including a terrorist attack against LGBTI persons that took place on 12 October 2022 in Bratislava.

The units within the police which have been tasked with the detection and investigation of hate crimes, have not yet been fully staffed and lack advanced digital tools allowing them to effectively and proactively detect hate speech online.

School attendance and attainment rates among Roma children continue to be significantly lower than among other pupils and the problem of segregation of Roma children in schools persists.

There is still no legal prohibition of non-medically necessary sex assignment treatment and/or surgical intervention on the sex characteristics of intersex children. There are also no data on the number of such procedures that have been performed and no protocols or guidelines for intersex healthcare currently in force.

There are reports about Roma patients verbally abused by medical professionals or being confronted with delays or refusals in access to necessary healthcare services.

The process of legal gender recognition requires presenting a medical opinion and the official guidelines regarding requirements for issuance of such an opinion have been revoked. As a result, there is a lack of legal certainty as to the requirements for legal gender recognition with some registry offices refusing to amend the data in the civil registry or requiring a proof of gender-affirming surgery or other treatment.

In this report, ECRI requests that the authorities take action in a number of areas and makes a series of recommendations, including the following.

In the area of preventing and combating hate speech and hate crime, the authorities should strongly encourage public figures, including high-level officials and politicians on all sides, to take a prompt, firm and public stance against the expression of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech and react to any such expression with counter-speech and alternative speech, as well as to promote understanding between communities, including by expressing solidarity with those targeted by hate speech.

The authorities should significantly increase the capacities of all specialised structures within the police that are tasked with detecting and investigating cases of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech, especially online, including by ensuring sufficient human resources, digital and other technical tools and trainings for police officers working in those structures.*

When it comes to ensuring equal treatment and inclusion in education, the authorities should ensure that school curricula at all levels of education include LGBTI equality issues in a manner which is sensitive, age-appropriate and easy to understand and that discussions organised in schools on LGBTI equality are evidence-based and place particular emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion.

The authorities should also develop and implement a set of measures to facilitate the inclusion of Roma children in the area of education by: (i) developing stronger policies aimed at ending all forms of segregation in schools and ensure their effective and consistent

implementation; (ii) providing tailored support to Roma pupils, their families and schools to decrease performance gaps and school drop-out rates, including by ensuring an adequate number of Roma mediators in schools and devising support measures focusing specifically on transition between primary and secondary education.

In the area of healthcare the authorities should take steps to ensure equal rights and dignity for intersex persons, in particular by (i) taking action towards the development and adoption of legislation that explicitly and specifically prohibits any medical intervention on a person's sex characteristics, including surgical, hormonal and/or mechanical procedures and other treatments, without their prior, free, informed, express and documented consent, and (ii) providing appropriate training to healthcare professionals, placing particular emphasis on intersex persons' right to bodily integrity and diversity.

They should also intensify their efforts aimed at ensuring equal access of Roma patients to quality healthcare, in particular by (i) enhancing training aimed at combating stereotypes among all medical and other professionals working in healthcare facilities, and (ii) ensuring effective mechanisms of accountability for refusal of providing care and for other discriminatory treatment of patients based on their ethnicity.

Moreover, the authorities should ensure that the process of legal gender recognition is quick, transparent and accessible and that it is not contingent on abusive requirements, such as involuntary sterilisation, medical procedures and/or mental health diagnoses.*

* This recommendation, which will be subject to a process of interim follow-up by ECRI, should be implemented within 18 months after the publication of this report.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. PREVENTING AND COMBATING HATE SPEECH AND HATE CRIME¹

Legislation and policy framework

1. The Slovak legislation classifies most cases of hate crime, including criminal forms of hate speech, under the broader category of “crimes of extremism”. It contains several provisions related to criminalised forms of hate speech, including Section 424 of the Criminal Code (CC),² which prohibits incitement to national, racial and ethnic hatred and to restriction of rights and duties of the person based on their protected characteristics. The main provision referring to hate crime is Section 140 (e) CC providing for aggravating circumstance of committing a crime out of “special motive” of hatred towards a group of people or an individual due to their characteristics. The list of protected characteristics in case of both provisions contains actual or perceived affiliation with race, nation, nationality, ethnic group, as well as victim’s actual or perceived origin, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, political opinion or religious beliefs. It does not, however, include gender identity and sex characteristics. Moreover, as indicated in previous ECRI reports, the aggravating circumstance of a special motive regulated in Section 140 (e) CC does not apply to all offences.³
2. ECRI recommends that the authorities bring forward legislative amendments in parliament to expressly include gender identity and sex characteristics as prohibited grounds to the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code and to ensure that committing a criminal offence with a racist or LGBTI-phobic element constitutes an aggravating circumstance for any ordinary offence, in the light of ECRI’s General Policy Recommendations No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination and No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons.
3. As regards governmental policies, combating hate speech and hate crime was one of the priorities of the Conceptual Framework for Countering Radicalisation and Extremism until 2024⁴ and continues to be so in the new Conceptual Framework until 2028.⁵ ECRI positively notes that the new Conceptual Framework has a particular focus on children and youth and combating hate speech online and that it stresses the importance of media literacy in counteracting hateful content, including when generated by artificial intelligence.

Data

4. According to data provided to ECRI by the authorities, the number of cases reported to the police, in which a special motive provided for in Section 140 (e) CC was registered, amounted to 23 in 2023, 28 in 2022, 20 in 2021 and 20 in 2020. The number of reports registered under Section 424 amounted to 13 in 2023, 6 in 2022, 13 in 2021 and 19 in 2020. In addition, there have been cases of other offences related to “extremism”, which include, among others, the production, dissemination or possession of extremist, including hateful, materials, defamation of a nation, race or beliefs or cases of Holocaust denial. Their total numbers amounted to 130 in 2023, 116 in 2022, 128 in 2021 and 180 in 2020. Most cases recorded in police statistics concerned attacks on Roma or were based on the ground of sexual orientation, with other cases concerning attacks against Jews, Ukrainians and other foreigners, as well as Muslims and persons of dark skin colour. The number of cases that were prosecuted with the indication of a special

¹ See definitions of hate speech and hate crime in ECRI’s [glossary](#).

² Act No. [300/2005 Coll.](#)

³ ECRI (2020), [Sixth report on the Slovak Republic](#): § 58; ECRI (2014), [Fifth report on Slovakia](#): §§ 9-10.

⁴ Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (2021), [Konceptcia boja proti radikalizácii a extrémizmu do roku 2024](#).

⁵ Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (2025), [Konceptcia prevencie a boja proti radikalizácii a extrémizmu do roku 2028](#).

motive provided for in Section 140 (e) amounted to 16 in 2022, 13 in 2021 and 16 in 2020, whereas criminal convictions were rendered against five persons in 2023, 12 in 2022, 15 in 2021, and six in 2020.⁶ However, during the visit, all interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation underlined that the official data do not fully reflect the actual number of incidents with hate elements as many instances remain unreported⁷ or are not classified as hate incidents.

5. Against this background, ECRI welcomes the efforts made by the authorities and independent institutions to actively research the scale of underreported hate incidents.⁸ A monitoring report on the state of extremism prepared in 2021 as a part of the implementation of the Conceptual Framework for Countering Radicalisation and Extremism until 2024 indicated that three quarters of the Slovak population observed an increase in hate speech and other forms of hatred, including online.⁹ The same survey indicated that 12.8% of respondents indicated that they had been victims of hate-motivated physical assault or knew someone who had experienced this form of hate.¹⁰

Hate speech in public discourse and online

6. ECRI notes with serious concern that, according to research and many interlocutors met during the visit to Slovakia, public discourse has become increasingly polarised or fragmented, and political speech has taken on highly divisive and antagonistic overtones particularly targeting LGBTI persons, migrants and Roma. Regrettably, research shows that a significant number of statements and comments that were considered to be derogatory and hateful came from prominent politicians and public officials, at both national and local levels. During election periods in particular, inflammatory rhetorics in political and other public discourse reportedly intensified both online and offline.¹¹ In the course of the visit, a number of interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation considered that such a political environment led to some form of “trivialisation” of hateful remarks in public life, heightened societal tensions and generated profound sentiments of marginalisation and exclusion among several segments of the population, especially those already in situations of vulnerability, and went further to warn that such dynamics risk eroding social cohesion and undermining trust in democratic institutions in the country.
7. One of the groups that was reportedly most targeted by hate speech were LGBTI persons. According to social media monitoring conducted by the civil society organisation “DigiQ”, in 2023 and 2024, LGBTI-phobic hate speech constituted the biggest share (46.8%) of hateful comments posted on social media subject to this monitoring exercise, with 40% of them directly calling for violence.¹² Examples of LGBTI-phobic remarks made in political discourse offline included statements from members of the government calling LGBTI equality a “destructive” ideology and

⁶ OSCE/ODIHR (2025), Hate speech and hate crime database, [Slovakia](#).

⁷ See, for instance, Liga za ľudské práva (2021), [Utečenci a migranti ako obeť nenávisťných trestných činov - prevencia, pomoc a ochrana](#): 25-29.

⁸ See for instance a report by the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (SNCHR) on political online hate speech (SNCHR (2023b), [Nenávisťný jazyk na politických facebookových profiloch. Správa z monitoringu nenávisťných prejavov](#)) and an analysis of social media content following terrorist attack in Bratislava in 2022 prepared by the Council for Media Services (Council for Media Services and Trust Lab (2022), [The prevalence of harmful or potentially illegal content on digital platforms following the Bratislava terrorist attack](#)).

⁹ Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (2021b), [Subjektívne vnímanie bezpečia obyvateľmi Slovenskej republiky](#): 16-17.

¹⁰ Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic 2021b: 22.

¹¹ For more details, see SNCHR 2023b: 18-19 and 21-32.

¹² DigiQ (2025), [Results of Social Media Monitoring in Slovakia 2023-2024](#): 12. Other hateful posts were classified as anti-migrant (which included *inter alia* anti-Muslim and anti-Ukrainian content), anti-Roma, antisemitic and other racist speech.

considering it as threat to family and children¹³ and a billboard campaign in which one of the political parties took credit for the withdrawal of public funds for projects supporting equality of LGBTI people, using slogans such as “we protect our children from perverted ideologies”.¹⁴ On occasion, LGBTI-phobic remarks were also made by religious leaders.¹⁵

8. Anti-Muslim hate speech in political sphere and online was often linked to public discourse over migration. It reportedly included statements by high-level politicians linking migrants from countries with a majority Muslim population with terrorism,¹⁶ or presenting this group of foreign nationals as “invaders”.¹⁷ There have also been a significant number of anti-Roma statements and stereotypical portrayals of Roma, most notably during the 2023 electoral campaign. They were said to include belittling comments, insults and hateful remarks being present in campaign speeches, on social networks and even videos and billboards that described Roma as “asocial” and “parasites”.¹⁸

Violent hate crime targeting groups of concern to ECRI

9. Violent hate crimes against persons belonging to groups of concern to ECRI included most notably a terrorist attack that took place on 12 October 2022 in Zámocká street in the centre of Bratislava. Two persons were shot dead and one wounded in a shooting in front of a bar that was a well-known place of meetings for LGBTI community. Prior to the shooting, the perpetrator had posted LGBTI-phobic and antisemitic manifesto online. Reportedly, he had considered also a similar attack on a synagogue.¹⁹ The attack inspired a number of subsequent violent attacks on LGBTI persons, or persons expressing solidarity with the victims and support for LGBTI equality.²⁰
10. There have also been antisemitic and anti-Muslim incidents including vandalising a historic Jewish cemetery with graffiti of swastika²¹ and cases of verbal and physical assaults in public places targeting Muslims, in particular Muslim women wearing a headscarf.²² In addition, Slovak media reported a number of incidents involving violence against Ukrainians.²³
11. More generally, it clearly appears from surveys available to ECRI that many people belonging to groups of concern to ECRI do not feel safe in the country. According to a survey conducted in 2023, 78% of LGBTI respondents in Slovakia avoided holding hands with their partner and 39% avoided certain locations out of fear of being assaulted. Six percent of responders stated that they were physically

¹³ TA3 (2025, February 17), [Šimkovičová nazvala LGBTI ľudí "zhubnou" ideológiou. Evanjelická cirkev sa ich zastala, odmieta šírenie nenávisti](#).

¹⁴ Denník N. (2024, December 6), [SNS sa chváli zastavením dotácií pre LGBTI+ projekty. Môže to vyústiť do ďalších nenávistných prejavov, varuje právnik](#).

¹⁵ See, for instance, Euractiv (2022, November 8), [Archbishop apologises for stance on Bratislava queer bar killings](#).

¹⁶ See Islamic Foundation in Slovakia (2024), [Islamophobia in Slovakia 2023](#): 11-12.

¹⁷ Islamic Foundation in Slovakia (2023), [Islamophobia in Slovakia 2022](#): 18

¹⁸ OSCE/ODIHR (2024), [Slovakia, Early Parliamentary Elections, 30 September 2023: Final Report](#): 19. Anti-Roma narratives also continued to be present after the electoral campaign, especially online (see, for instance, SNCHR (2025), [Report on the Observance of Human Rights Including the Principle of Equal Treatment in the Slovak Republic in 2024](#): 35).

¹⁹ Reuters (2022, October 13), ['Radicalised teenager' killed two outside Slovakia gay bar – PM](#); The Guardian (2024, January 21), ['You will not replace us': a deadly attack on a Slovakian gay bar – and its link to a fast-spreading racist ideology](#).

²⁰ See, for instance, SNCHR (2022b), [Správa z monitoringu nenávistných prejavov a trestných činov extrémizmu za rok 2022](#): 30 and Denník N. (2022, December 12), [Spevákovi v skalickom klube zlomili sánku, keď kapela na pódiu vyvesila dúhovú vlajku](#).

²¹ The Slovak Spectator (2025, February 28), [Jewish graves in Humenné defaced with Nazi swastikas](#).

²² See, for instance, Islamic Foundation in Slovakia 2023: 18.

²³ See for example, The Slovak Spectator (2025, April 24), [Beaten for speaking Ukrainian: foreign students terrorised in Slovak city](#) and Politico (2025, February 3), [Ukraine demands 'impartial' inquiry into death of a citizen in Slovakia](#).

attacked and 56% harassed in a year preceding the survey.²⁴ In another survey conducted in 2021 among Muslims living in Slovakia, 60% of respondents indicated that they or members of their families experienced discrimination, verbal attacks or physical attacks, with half of them indicating having experienced it multiple times. While most of those reports referred to verbal attacks, 7% of responders indicated that they had experienced a physical assault.²⁵

Responses to hate speech and hate crime

12. Some good examples of counter-speech and alternative speech have been reported to ECRI in the recent period. After the terrorist attack on Zámocká street in Bratislava, politicians at higher levels of government, including the then President and Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, spoke publicly against racist and LGBTI-phobic hate and took part in events aimed at expressing solidarity with the victims of the attack. On 18 October 2022, the Slovak Parliament adopted a resolution on the growing manifestations of hatred, including hatred against the LGBTI and Jewish communities, condemning the attack and calling on politicians, public figures and the media to avoid hate speech.²⁶
13. ECRI also welcomes that, in an effort to counter anti-immigrant sentiments and debunk false narratives concerning the alleged burden placed on the Slovak society by the arrival of people displaced from Ukraine, the authorities commissioned a study that includes information on the positive impact of the presence of persons displaced from Ukraine on the Slovak economy and promoted dissemination of its results in the media.²⁷
14. However, according to many civil society interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation during the visit, political hate speech targeting groups of concern to ECRI, in particular LGBTI persons, Roma and migrants often remains unchallenged. It also seems that there is no effective mechanism for the self-regulation of political discourse, be it in the form of internal rules for parliamentarians or rules and disciplinary measures (as, regulated, for instance, in codes of conduct or codes of ethics) within all political parties.
15. ECRI recommends that the authorities strongly encourage public figures, including high-level officials and politicians on all sides, to take a prompt, firm and public stance against the expression of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech and react to any such expression with counter-speech and alternative speech (positive narratives), as well as to promote understanding between communities, including by expressing solidarity with those targeted by hate speech. Elected bodies and political parties should adopt appropriate codes of conduct that prohibit the use of hate speech, call on their members and followers to abstain from engaging in, endorsing or disseminating it, and provide for sanctions. In this respect, ECRI refers to its General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating hate speech, Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech and the Charter of European political parties for a non-racist and inclusive society as endorsed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in its Resolution 2443 (2022).
16. ECRI is pleased to note that significant efforts have been made to alert young people about the dangers of online hateful content, notably through a campaign entitled “Spread Digital Kindness” addressed to school-age children in primary and

²⁴ EU FRA (2024b), EU LGBTIQ survey III. LGBTIQ Equality at a Crossroads: Progress and Challenges [Country Data – Slovakia](#): 1-2.

²⁵ Islamic Foundation in Slovakia 2023: 9.

²⁶ SNCHR 2022b: 25 and a [resolution](#) of the Slovak National Council of 18 October 2022.

²⁷ See Deputy Prime Minister’s Office for the Recovery Plan and the Knowledge Economy (2025), [Analysis of the impacts and opportunities of further enlargement of the European Union for the Slovak Republic with a special emphasis on the integration of Ukraine](#).

secondary education and launched in 2024 by the authorities in cooperation with civil society partners.²⁸ The authorities also supported the “No Hate” initiative (“BezHejtu”), which focused on the removal of online hateful comments, including by developing educational resources on combating hate speech online and by the use of artificial intelligence tools to automatically identify and hide comments containing hateful content. The initiative was addressed to managers of websites and digital profiles, both public and private entities and, according to interlocutors met during the ECRI 2025 visit, contributed to a significant decrease in the number of hateful comments displayed on websites of entities that took part in it.²⁹ ECRI considers these initiatives **good practices**.

17. ECRI also welcomes that the Media Services Council, established in 2022,³⁰ was granted a competence to order the removal of illegal content, including online hate speech, and that the Council developed cooperation with social media platforms, thereby allowing for the removal of content considered illegal even before issuing an official order for its removal.
18. At the same time, ECRI regrets to note that many efforts aimed at building more understanding between groups of concern to ECRI and the general population were hindered by what is perceived as an increasingly hostile environment for the work of civil society organisations supporting groups of concern to ECRI. This included statements made by members of government describing organisations working for LGBTI equality as “parasitising” on state budget and pledging to withdraw any public funds from projects implemented by such organisations,³¹ as well as labelling organisations working for equality and inclusion in general as associated with “liberal extremism” and as “foreign agents”.³² In this context, ECRI recalls that civil society organisations have an important role to play in supporting victims of hate speech and hate crime, raising awareness about the dangers of racism and intolerance, and providing valuable expertise on issues pertaining to populations in situation of vulnerability in the country.
19. ECRI recommends that the authorities take action to promote a safe, inclusive, and enabling online and offline civic space in which civil society organisations working against racist and anti-LGBTI hate crime can operate, by ensuring adequate support and protection from threats, harassment or attacks. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on combating hate crime.
20. ECRI is also concerned that, according to several interlocutors met during the visit, the image of persons belonging to groups of concern to ECRI presented in mainstream media is still influenced by stereotypes and that media are often unprepared to effectively counter hate speech.³³ In contrast, persons to whom ECRI delegation spoke during the visit indicated that there are still few positive portrayals, for instance, of LGBTI persons, Roma, Muslims and migrants present in Slovak media.

²⁸ According to data provided by the authorities, in 2024, 3 400 pupils took part in this initiative.

²⁹ For more information, see the [website](#) of the BezHejtu initiative.

³⁰ Media Services Council in a media regulatory body that in 2022 replaced the Broadcasting Council (see the Act No. [264/2022 Coll.](#) on Media Services).

³¹ See e.g. SITA (2024, January 13), [Šimkovičová avizuje, že už nebudú poskytovať dotácie na “školenia mládeže na sexualizovanú šou LGBTI”](#).

³² SNCHR (2024d), [State of Rule of Law in Slovakia 2024](#): 19. In this context see also. CoE Commissioner for Human Rights (2025, April 4), [The letter addressed to the Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the Chairs of the Constitutional Law Committee and the Committee for Human Rights and National Minorities, and the Vice-Chair of the Committee for Public Law and Regional Development](#) and Balkan Insight (2025, May 26) [Slovak Civil Society Fears Chilling New Era as NGO Law Is Implemented](#).

³³ In this connection, an analysis conducted in 2021 showed that print and online media referred to Muslims mostly in the context of conflicts and rarely reported on the situation of Muslims living in Slovakia See Islamic Foundation in Slovakia (2022), [Framing: Mediálny obraz islamu a moslimov na Slovensku](#): 84. See also SNCHR (2024b), [Náboženské skupiny v mediálnom diskurze: Mediálny monitoring](#): 34.

21. ECRI recommends that the authorities, with due regard for the independence of the media, take measures aimed at promoting equality and diversity, raising awareness of the adverse effects of hate speech, and preventing and combating misinformation and negative stereotyping in the media, including by encouraging and supporting training programmes for journalists, editors and online content moderators on inclusive reporting and on preventing and combating hate speech.
22. ECRI notes that there have been some initiatives aimed at building better relationship between police officers and groups of concern to ECRI and at increasing the number of trainings on preventing and combating hate crime available to police officers. A positive example of cooperation between the police and groups of concern to ECRI is provided by the memorandum of cooperation between the Ministry of Interior and the Union of Jewish Communities, which provides for regular exchanges, trainings of police officers on issues related to antisemitism, as well as for the designation of liaison officers for the Jewish communities in every regional police headquarters. The authorities also continued the implementation of its programme for the designation of community officers tasked with maintaining good relationships between the police and Roma.³⁴ When it comes to capacity-building, subjects related to the detection and investigation of hate crimes have been included in a number of police trainings, including those organised in cooperation with the EU Agency for Law enforcement Cooperation (Europol), the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) and the Council of Europe, as well as in a number of handbooks and other materials made available to police officers throughout the country.³⁵
23. However, ECRI notes that, until 2024, the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes fell under the authority of the National Crime Agency and the Special Prosecutor's Office. Those structures were dissolved in March and September 2024 respectively. In the opinion of many ECRI interlocutors met during the visit, this change constituted a step back in action against hate crime as it implied a loss of expertise of specialised police officers and prosecutors who had to be reassigned to other tasks.
24. Hence, ECRI positively notes that the authorities took measures to ensure that each of regional police directorates establishes a unit specialising in the detection and investigation of crimes of extremism, including hate crimes, and that, at the national level, action against extremism is coordinated by a special unit within the Police Force Presidium that is also to have a primordial role in combating online hate speech.³⁶ However, at the time of the ECRI visit to the Slovak Republic, the relevant unit within the Police Force Presidium was still not fully staffed and lacked advanced digital tools allowing it to effectively and proactively detect hate speech online.³⁷ In ECRI's view, it is crucial to strengthen police capacities and resources for the handling of hate incidents and crimes with a view to addressing underreporting and improving investigations into cases involving reports of hate crime, including online.
25. ECRI recommends, as a matter of priority, that the authorities significantly increase the capacities of all specialised structures within the police that are tasked with

³⁴ According to information provided by the authorities, at the time of ECRI visit to the Slovak Republic in May 2025, there were approximately 310 such officers employed in 125 local police departments.

³⁵ They include, for instance, a handbook on tackling hate crime developed partly thanks to the training course "Training against Hate Crime for Law Enforcement Agencies" (TAHCLE), organised by the Office of the Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) and a handbook "Symbolism used by extremist and radical groups" allowing police to identify hateful symbols displayed in public.

³⁶ The authorities informed ECRI that in the area of coordination, this special unit's tasks include the provision of methodological guidance to regional units and the coordination of procedures between them.

³⁷ Some police officers and other interlocutors that ECRI met indicated that the lack of adequate digital tools was especially problematic in the light of the increasing amount of hateful online content generated by artificial intelligence.

detecting and investigating cases of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech, especially online, including by ensuring sufficient human resources, digital and other technical tools and trainings for police officers working in those structures.

26. ECRI also notes that the Prosecutor General issued an instruction obliging all regional prosecution offices to appoint at least one prosecutor specialised in hate crime cases. Such prosecutors are to receive specialised trainings and exchange information and good practices on tackling hate crime cases between prosecution services. ECRI encourages the authorities to promptly provide prosecutors and, as appropriate, judges, with comprehensive training on combating hate crime and to involve relevant civil society actors and persons belonging to groups at risk in the delivery of such training.
27. As regards support to hate crime victims, ECRI positively notes that they are considered under the law as vulnerable victims and as such are entitled to specialised assistance, including legal aid and psychological help. Those measures are provided by accredited civil society organisations. However, ECRI was informed that both organisations specialised in providing support to racist and anti-LGBTI hate crime victims had not received public funds for their work in 2025. ECRI is concerned that this situation may leave victims of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate crimes without the necessary support.³⁸ It therefore strongly encourages the authorities to address this issue, either by ensuring that services provided to victims of hate crime by relevant civil society organisations are sufficiently and sustainably funded or by directly providing such services.

II. ENSURING EQUAL TREATMENT AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE

A. Equal treatment and inclusion in education

Legislation and remedies

28. Discrimination on the grounds of, *inter alia*, religion or belief, race, nationality or belonging to an ethnic group, sexual orientation, colour, language, national or social origin, lineage/gender or other status is prohibited by the 2004 Anti-discrimination Act.³⁹ It provides for remedies for victims of discrimination, including the possibility to lodge a complaint with the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (SNCHR) in its equality body function. In addition, the 2008 Act on Education and Training⁴⁰ provides that education is to be based on the principle of equality in access to education and training, the principle of inclusive education and on the prohibition of all forms of discrimination. The adherence to those principles is supervised by the state school inspectorate.⁴¹ However, according to the information provided by the authorities, in the years 2022-2024, the inspectorate did not register any complaints regarding discrimination on the grounds relevant to ECRI. At the same time, ECRI notes that the SNCHR regularly handles cases concerning alleged discrimination on such grounds.⁴²

³⁸ According to data provided by the authorities, the two organisations in question provided victim support services to 311 persons in 2024; 276 in 2023 and 250 in 2022.

³⁹ Act No. [365/2004 Coll.](#) This provision does not explicitly cover the grounds of gender identity or sex characteristics. For more details on the Slovak anti-discrimination legislation, see ECRI 2014: §§ 20-26 and European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination (2024), [Country report. Non-discrimination. Slovakia 2024](#): 44.

⁴⁰ Act No. [245/2008 Coll.](#)

⁴¹ SNCHR (2023a), [Institutional Structure for the Protection of Fundamental Human Rights at the National Level – Slovakia](#): 43-44.

⁴² See e.g. SNCHR 2025: 74-81; SNCHR (2024c), [Report on the Observance of Human Rights Including the Principle of Equal Treatment in the Slovak Republic in 2023](#): 80-85.

Teaching on equality and tolerance in schools

29. Teaching on human rights, including on diversity, tolerance, equality and non-discrimination, is included in school programmes, mainly within civic education, ethics education⁴³ and parts of history and social studies classes. According to a new curriculum, adopted in 2023, it should also be treated as a cross-cutting theme. As a part of civics classes, it should include media literacy and prevention of hate speech and discrimination. However, interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation during the visit indicated that, as no minimum number of hours is fixed by the authorities for those topics in the school curricula, the amount and quality of teaching on subjects related to human rights and equality depend on schools and teachers and, in many cases, very little or no time is dedicated to discussion on those subjects.⁴⁴
30. In order to remedy this situation, the authorities provide voluntary training sessions, as a part of ongoing teacher training.⁴⁵ Action in this respect is also taken by civil society organisations. This includes training courses focused on building teachers' capacities to discuss issues related to discrimination and prejudices with their pupils.⁴⁶ In this context, ECRI invites the authorities to pursue their efforts to build the capacities of teachers when it comes to teaching subjects related to human rights, especially equality and non-discrimination, and to encourage constructive cooperation between teachers, educational authorities and civil society actors.
31. In the same vein, the authorities support extracurricular activities. Those continue to include the Human Rights Olympiad organised annually for secondary school students.⁴⁷ Schools are also involved in the organisation of a documentary film festival, which focuses on human rights and migration.⁴⁸ ECRI highly praises those initiatives and encourages the authorities to support them accordingly.
32. During discussions with a number of interlocutors during the visit, it clearly emerged that there is a significant vacuum in addressing issues related to sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics in schools. A 2022 research conducted on focus groups of Slovak schoolchildren and teachers showed that both teachers and pupils considered that the topic of human rights of LGBTI persons was very difficult to discuss in classrooms.⁴⁹ It is also often omitted in school textbooks.⁵⁰
33. Regrettably, according to various interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation, criticism in the political sphere about teaching on sexual and gender diversity has a chilling effect on schools and results in an even lower number of schools addressing the need to respect the diversity and human rights of LGBTI people as a part of their activities.⁵¹

⁴³ While civics classes are attended by all students, the ethics classes are attended only by some students, while the others take part in religious education.

⁴⁴ See also CVEK (2022), [Ľudské práva na slovenských a nórskech školách. Ako to vidia deti?](#): 21, 23 and 25.

⁴⁵ For more details, see Runa, T. (2022), [Vzdelávanie a dodržiavanie ľudských práv z pohľadu učiteľov](#): 11.

⁴⁶ Training courses "[Diverse Schools](#)" and "[Stories that Move](#)" are organised by the Milan Šimečka Foundation. See also, European Migration Network (2024a), [Annual Report on Migration and Asylum in the Slovak Republic 2023](#): 68.

⁴⁷ See also the [website of NIVAM](#).

⁴⁸ The festival [One World](#) is organised by the organisation [People in Peril](#). See also European Migration Network 2024a: 68.

⁴⁹ CVEK 2022: 17.

⁵⁰ SNCHR (2024a), [Ľudskoprávne princípy v učebniciach občianskej náuky. Analýza učebníc občianskej náuky pre druhý stupeň základných škôl podľa Referenčného rámca kompetencií pre demokratickú kultúru](#): 69-70. See also EU FRA 2024a: 3.

⁵¹ See also The Slovak Spectator (2024, October 4), [School forced to cancel event commemorating Zámocká shooting victims](#). See more generally IGLYO (2025), [LGBTQI Inclusive Education Report 2025](#): 190.

34. ECRI recommends that the authorities ensure that school curricula at all levels of education include LGBTI equality issues in a manner which is sensitive, age-appropriate and easy to understand and that discussions organised in schools on LGBTI equality are evidence-based and place particular emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion.
35. As to the representation of other persons belonging to groups of concern to ECRI in school education, in 2024, the National Institute of Education and Youth (NIVAM) commissioned a study on the extent to and the way in which Roma were portrayed in textbooks approved for use in Slovak schools.⁵² The study concluded that, while Roma are mentioned in some textbooks, it is often in a sporadic matter or only in relation to persecution during the Second World War. It recommended that pupils in all school grades learn about Roma culture and history, including through presentations of positive role models from the Roma community.⁵³
36. In this context, ECRI welcomes the fact that NIVAM developed a new set of educational materials on the Romani language, and Roma history and culture.⁵⁴ It notes, nonetheless, that the materials in question were developed as a part of a broader project addressed primarily to Roma pupils and teachers working with them. ECRI recognises the important role of teaching those subjects to Roma pupils.⁵⁵ However, it also recalls that teaching all children about the history, culture and contribution to the society of people belonging to groups of concern to ECRI constitutes an important component of building tolerance and understanding between members of those groups and the general population.⁵⁶ Hence, ECRI encourages the authorities to build on the above-mentioned project and research, as well as other resources, in order to ensure that Roma history, culture and contribution to the society are part of curricula taught to all children and that school textbooks are free from stereotypes and prejudices concerning Roma.

Preventing and combating racist and LGBTI-phobic bullying in schools

37. There are no official disaggregated data available on racist and LGBTI-phobic bullying in schools.⁵⁷ However, surveys conducted among groups of concern to ECRI suggest that this problem is present in Slovak schools. In the 2023 survey of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (EU FRA), 60% of LGBTI respondents from the Slovak Republic indicated that, during their education, they experienced ridicule, teasing, insults or threats because they were LGBTI.⁵⁸ In a similar survey conducted among Roma, 13% of respondents indicated that their children experienced verbal attacks or insults and 5% that their children were physically attacked because they were Roma.⁵⁹ Interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation during the visit also indicated that bullying was experienced by foreign children, especially displaced children from Ukraine, who attended Slovak schools. While it

⁵² NIVAM (2024), [Analýza učebníc so schvaľovacou a odporúčacou doložkou Ministerstva školstva, výskumu, vývoja a mládeže Slovenskej republiky - dejepis, geografia, občianska náuka, etika](#). The study covered textbooks on history, geography, civics, and ethics.

⁵³ NIVAM 2024: 39-40.

⁵⁴ The materials are available on the website of the project [Together with Roma, we will achieve more](#).

⁵⁵ In this respect, reference is made to the work of the Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, for instance CoE ACFC (2022) [Fifth Opinion on the Slovak Republic](#): § 237.

⁵⁶ See ECRI (2007a), [General Policy Recommendation No.10](#): Combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education.

⁵⁷ In general, one in five school children in Slovakia reported that they frequently experienced bullying (European Commission (2024), Education and Training Monitor 2024: [Slovakia](#), p. 11).

⁵⁸ It constitutes a significant increase in comparison with 40% of respondents declaring such experiences in 2019 (EU FRA (2024a), [LGBTIQ Equality at Crossroads. Progress and Challenges](#): 59). At the same time, 42% of LGBTI persons hid being LGBTI when in school (EU FRA 2024b: 3).

⁵⁹ Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (2021), [Príjmy a životné podmienky v marginalizovaných rómskych komunitách: Vybrané ukazovatele zo zisťovania EU SILC MRK 2020](#): 90.

seems that in most instances bullying concerns relations between pupils, inappropriate remarks were also said to be on occasion made by teachers.⁶⁰

38. The authorities took a number of measures to prevent and combat bullying, including through the adoption of a revised Directive on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying in schools,⁶¹ promoting good practices, as well as organising relevant seminars for teachers.⁶² They also created an online platform for educational professionals aimed at supporting them in preventing and counteracting risky behaviour, including various forms of bullying and discrimination among pupils.⁶³ The authorities also informed ECRI that there have been initiatives at regional level aimed at creating easy ways for pupils to report cases of bullying, including anonymously.⁶⁴ ECRI welcomes all those efforts and initiatives. It nonetheless observes that the lack of national data collection on bullying incidents at school, which would include specific reasons for bullying behaviour, may impede the authorities' capacity to address the root-causes of bullying and to develop effective and targeted measures aimed at preventing and addressing racist and LGBTI-phobic incidents at schools.
39. ECRI recommends that the authorities put in place a national system for the monitoring of bullying incidents in schools and that they gather disaggregated data on such incidents, which would include specific reasons for bullying behaviour and pay particular attention to incidents of a racist or LGBTI-phobic nature.

Situation of foreign children in the area of education

40. According to official data for the school year 2024/2025, there were 22 707 foreign children enrolled in Slovak school system. They constituted 1.88% of pupils in kindergartens, 2.62% in primary schools and 2.56% in secondary schools. The capacities of the Slovak school system to fully integrate foreign children were put to a test with the arrival of people displaced from Ukraine, many of whom were children.⁶⁵
41. All children legally present in Slovakia have a right to attend school under the same conditions as Slovak citizens. At the same time, until the school year 2024/2025, only children permanently residing in the country had such an obligation. Children beneficiaries of temporary protection were not considered permanent residents and consequently could, but were not obliged to, enrol into Slovak schools.⁶⁶ According to some interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation during the visit, this resulted in a significant number of Ukrainian children remaining outside of the Slovak school system,⁶⁷ partly due to the availability of online classes from Ukraine.⁶⁸

⁶⁰ Denník N. (2025, February 11), [O rasistickej poznámke učiteľky všetci mlčia: ona, riaditeľka aj košická župa ako zriaďovateľ](#); Košicak.sk (2025, February 12), [Na Strednej zdravotníckej škole v Košiciach mala učiteľka fyziky rasistickú poznámku, študent sa ospravedlnenia nedočkal](#).

⁶¹ Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic (2025), [Smernica č. 1/2025 k prevencii a riešeniu šikanovania detí a žiakov v školách a v školských zariadeniach](#).

⁶² See, for instance, the [webinar](#) on "Prevention of bullying and other forms of violence in a multicultural environment" organised by NIVAM.

⁶³ The platform [e-Counseling](#), which is managed by the Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology.

⁶⁴ The authorities informed ECRI that a region of Banská Bystrica was testing an application ("Don't Let it be") that would allow pupils to anonymously report bullying.

⁶⁵ As of January 2025, 132 453 people have been granted temporary protection in the Slovak Republic, 31% of them (41 345) under the age of 18. See Bahna M. et al. (2025), [People from Ukraine: From Acceptance to Integration. A Social Survey of Ukrainian Migrants in Slovakia](#): 9.

⁶⁶ See also CoE SRSG Migration and Refugees (2022), [Report of the fact-finding mission to the Slovak Republic](#): §§ 64-66.

⁶⁷ The estimates as to the number of those children still present in the Slovak Republic at the time of ECRI's visit in May 2025 varied between 3 000 and 8 000. See also Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic (2025), [Audit Report: Education of Children of Foreigners in Slovak Schools](#): 6.

⁶⁸ For more details, see UNHCR (2024), [Slovakia: Socio-Economic Insights Survey. Final Report. November 2024](#): 14-15.

42. As of the school year 2025/2026, all children beneficiaries of temporary protection are obliged to attend schools, which ECRI considers a welcome development. ECRI was informed that in order to address the increase in the demand for places in schools, the authorities put in place a system according to which children who cannot be enrolled in the school of their choice may address directly the relevant regional educational authorities, which are obliged to find adequate placement.
43. ECRI was also informed that if children do not have a sufficient command of the Slovak language, additional language classes should be organised for them. However, it emerged from ECRI's findings during the visit that this principle was not being effectively implemented.⁶⁹ Major obstacles to the organisation of Slovak language classes include the fact that it is up to individual schools to obtain financing from the regional authorities and organise such classes, and that there is a general lack of teachers trained to teach Slovak as a second language and of relevant educational materials. As a result, language classes are not organised systematically, and many schools do not provide any other form of Slovak language support.⁷⁰
44. Against this background, ECRI positively notes that a new Educational Programme for Primary Schools, adopted in 2023, included standards for teaching of the Slovak language as a second language.⁷¹ It also welcomes initiatives aimed at including Ukrainian teachers into the Slovak system of education, including by building their linguistic skills so that they can support Ukrainian students, as well as at strengthening cooperation between the authorities, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and civil society actors to provide *ad hoc* language support to Ukrainian children and to prevent them from dropping out from schools.⁷² It notes, however, that those projects were of limited scope, systemic solutions are still needed and the lack of proper linguistic support negatively affects not only Ukrainian but also all migrant children.
45. According to various interlocutors met during the ECRI visit, the lack of linguistic support is also problematic in the context of the examination that foreign children have to take in order to transition from primary to secondary education. Children who lack fluency in Slovak tend to achieve lower results, which do not fully reflect their knowledge and may negatively influence the possible choice of secondary schools or even lead to school drop-out.
46. ECRI recommends that the authorities take the necessary measures to enable foreign children to obtain a sufficient level of language proficiency in Slovak for successful inclusion into the education system. In doing so, the authorities should in particular improve the system of language instruction by facilitating the organisation of an appropriate number of language classes, developing adequate learning materials and providing other forms of support for foreign children at all levels of education.

Situation of Roma children in the area of education

47. While no recent data on school attendance and attainment rates of Roma children is available at the time of the 2025 visit, there was consensus among all interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation to say that those rates continue to be

⁶⁹ See also UNICEF (2025), [PATHWAYS Initiative: Documentation of the Pathways model – Supporting Ukrainian refugee youth with their transition from learning to earning in Slovakia](#); 22 and a press release by the Slovak Chamber of Teachers (2025, May 16), [Komora žaluje SR za porušovanie práv detí z Ukrajiny](#).

⁷⁰ Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic 2025: 6. See also CVEK et al. (2022a), [Integrácia ľudí z Ukrajiny](#) 21-23 and CVEK et al. (2022b), [Integration of people from Ukraine. Recommendations from civil society organisations](#): 5.

⁷¹ European Migration Network 2024a: 63.

⁷² UNICEF 2025: 22.

significantly lower than among other pupils.⁷³ During the visit, several interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation further underlined that, as a consequence, the drop-out rate among Roma children, especially Roma girls, is widely considered to be markedly higher than in the general school-age population.

48. Educational professionals with whom the ECRI delegation spoke underlined that an important factor in the prevention of early dropouts is good communication with parents, as well as providing Roma pupils with an early school career guidance and building their confidence in their skills and educational perspectives.⁷⁴ In this regard, a crucial role is played by Roma mediators, who serve as a link between schools and Roma communities, as well as by various initiatives, including by civil society actors, aimed at providing continuous support to Roma children in their paths of education. During its visit, ECRI's delegation was pleased to learn about examples of successful cooperation between schools and civil society partners, including in the primary school in Zlaté Klasy, where teachers and the school administration partnered with the non-governmental organisation "People in Peril" in order to provide extracurricular activities, additional tutoring and career guidance to Roma children. ECRI considers such cooperation as **good practice**.
49. It also clearly emerged during the ECRI visit that another significant obstacle to Roma inclusion in the field of education is the persisting problem of school segregation.⁷⁵ ECRI positively notes that the authorities have recognised this issue as one priority policy area, which led to changes in legislation that formally recognised segregation as a form of discrimination,⁷⁶ as well as to the development of new policy documents and guidance aimed at desegregating schools.⁷⁷ Most of those documents and guidance were addressed to individual schools, which may have contributed to a more even distribution of Roma and non-Roma children between classes in certain schools. However, this seems not to have effectively addressed the issue of schools with a disproportionate number of Roma pupils. Moreover, the authorities indicated to ECRI that the lack of comprehensive and regularly updated national data on school segregation and the fact that desegregation projects were often implemented as time-limited national or European projects posed challenges as to assessment of the long-term impact of measures taken in this area. Consequently, overall, the measures introduced so far resulted in relatively little progress when it comes to effectively ending school segregation.⁷⁸
50. At the same time, during the visit, the ECRI delegation saw a good example in a primary school in Plavecký Štvrtok, which used to be marked by systemic segregation of Roma children.⁷⁹ Due to the strong commitment of the educational professionals working there and the introduction of projects focused on supporting

⁷³ See, for instance, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (2025b), [Analýza rizik viacnásobnej diskriminácie rómskej mládeže](#): 15.

⁷⁴ See also, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (2025b): 17.

⁷⁵ See also ECRI 2020: §§ 86-90; ECRI 2014: §§ 125-132; ECRI (2009), [Fourth report on Slovakia](#): §§ 41-46; ECRI (2004a), [Third report on Slovakia](#): §§ 99-108; ECRI (2000), [Second report on Slovakia](#): §§ 60-62. In this connection, see [Opinion of the Advocate General Čapeta](#), CJEU, Case No. C-799/23, European Commission v. Slovak Republic delivered on 1 August 2025.

⁷⁶ Section 2 (ai) of the Act on Education and Training (Act No. [245/2008 Coll.](#)) as amended in 2023. On controversies regarding this legislative change see European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination 2024: 46 and SNCHR (2023d), [Stanovisko Slovenského národného strediska pre ľudské práva k medzerám a nedostatkom prijatého znenia definície segregácie vo výchove a vzdelávaní](#).

⁷⁷ Those include, for instance, [Methodological Guide to Desegregation in Education and Training](#) and [Standards for Compliance with the Prohibition of Segregation](#).

⁷⁸ According to preliminary data collected by the authorities in 2025, 66% of Roma children still attended schools where majority of their classmates were Roma and 36% of Roma children attended Roma-only classes. In 2020, those numbers amounted to 66% and 43% respectively.

⁷⁹ See judgment of the ECtHR, [Salay v. Slovakia](#), no. 29359/22, 27 February 2025.

Roma schoolchildren and making the school more attractive to the general population, the school in question appeared to be addressing the issue effectively.

51. Against this background, ECRI is pleased to learn that the authorities initiated a project aimed at working directly with thirteen municipalities and towns in order to map school segregation there and develop appropriate and tailor-made measures to prevent and combat it.⁸⁰ Yet, it shares the concerns expressed by some of the ECRI delegation's interlocutors who indicated that the scope of the project was relatively modest in the light of the scale of school segregation in the country and that there was not yet any clear plan to secure its sustainability and transmit the results to other municipalities.⁸¹ The authorities also informed ECRI about an initiative to re-test Roma children who might have been erroneously placed in special schools and providing for their gradual transition into mainstream education.⁸² ECRI welcomes this initiative.
52. In contrast, the pilot project regarding the creation of a primary school for Roma pupils in the village of Rakúsy, which was initiated in 2024, and possible plans to create more schools of the kind, raise serious questions.⁸³ Certainly, one declared objective of the project was to provide better opportunities for Roma children and education in Romani.⁸⁴ However, the project has been criticised by independent institutions and civil society actors as having been implemented without appropriate consultations with Roma communities and as potentially perpetuating Roma school segregation.⁸⁵ ECRI recognises the need for better quality education for Roma children and more opportunities for them to master their language skills in Romani. However, it stresses that such a goal should be pursued while taking action aimed at meeting the objectives of desegregating Roma children in all schools and ensuring the adequate development of their proficiency in the Slovak language.⁸⁶
53. ECRI recommends that the authorities develop and implement a set of measures to facilitate the inclusion of Roma children in the area of education by: (i) developing stronger policies aimed at ending all forms of segregation in schools and ensure their effective and consistent implementation; (ii) providing tailored support to Roma pupils, their families and schools to decrease performance gaps and school drop-out rates, including by ensuring an adequate number of Roma mediators in schools and devising support measures focusing specifically on transition between primary and secondary education.
54. Kindergarten and preschool education play an important role in facilitating the future success of Roma schoolchildren, especially those whose native language is not Slovak. Therefore, ECRI is pleased to note that the authorities took measures aimed at increasing the number of Roma children attending early child education, including by introducing a legal obligation to attend pre-school as of the age of five

⁸⁰ See the [website](#) of the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic.

⁸¹ See also Amnesty International and ERRC (2025), [Separate and Unequal. School Segregation Persists for Roma in Slovakia](#): 21.

⁸² More information is available on [the website](#) of the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic. Children who are identified as ones that should transition to mainstream education will do so after attending special adaption classes. According to the information provided by the authorities, the implementation of this project started on 1 January 2025 and is planned until the end of 2027. It targets children from marginalised Roma communities and socially disadvantaged backgrounds, aged 6 to 10, who have been diagnosed with a mild intellectual disability.

⁸³ European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination (2024, July 18), [Flash report: The Ministry of Education plans to establish a pilot ethnic primary school with a Romani teaching language](#). See also European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination (2025), [Country report. Non-discrimination. Slovakia 2025](#): 54-55.

⁸⁴ According to estimation by the authorities, approximately 60% of Roma in Slovakia speak Romani at home.

⁸⁵ See, for instance, Amnesty International and ERRC 2025: 28; DennikN (2024, July 3), [Národnostné vzdelávanie nemôže konzervovať deti v oddelených školách](#); SNCHR 2025: 67-70.

⁸⁶ On this subject see in particular CoE ACFC (2024), [Thematic Commentary No. 1 on Education under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#): §§ 84, 109-110.

and an entitlement to attend kindergarten as of the age of three.⁸⁷ The reform was accompanied by considerable efforts to expand the capacities of kindergartens, including by renovating existing and constructing new facilities and – according to preliminary data made available to ECRI – contributed to an increase in the number of Roma children attending pre-school and kindergarten education.⁸⁸ Yet, the number of Roma children attending such school education is still significantly lower than the national average.⁸⁹ There have also been reports according to which some of the projects aimed at enhancing capacities of kindergartens were conducted in a way that could reinforce the segregation of Roma children in kindergarten education.⁹⁰

55. ECRI recommends that the authorities continue to enhance the capacities of kindergarten and preschool education in order to ensure the effective enrolment of Roma children in kindergarten and preschool education, paying particular attention to avoiding any form of segregation of Roma children in pre-school establishments.

B. Equal treatment and inclusion in healthcare

Legislation, remedies and data

56. The general prohibition of discrimination in the 2004 Anti-discrimination Act (see section II.A. above) also applies to the healthcare sector.⁹¹ In the Code of Ethics for health professionals established in the 2004 Act on Healthcare Providers, Professionals and Professional Organisations, an obligation is placed on healthcare professionals to respect life and protect, support and restore health regardless of, *inter alia*, the patient's nationality, race, religion and sexual orientation.⁹² In addition to using general remedies against discrimination under the Anti-Discrimination Act, persons who consider that they have been discriminated against and as a result have not received adequate medical care may also complain to the Health Care Surveillance Authority ("the HCSA").⁹³ According to the information provided by the authorities, the HCSA has not recorded any complaints of racial or LGBTI-phobic discrimination.
57. At the same time, surveys conducted among persons belonging to groups of concern to ECRI suggest that the scale of discrimination in the area of healthcare remains significant, with most cases apparently not being reported to any official bodies. For instance, according to the surveys conducted by the EU FRA in 2021 and 2023 respectively, 9% of LGBTI respondents and 13% of Roma respondents from the Slovak Republic reported that they had felt discriminated against due to being LGBTIQ or Roma when accessing health services within the 12 months preceding the respective survey.⁹⁴ ECRI also notes that the SNCHR and the Public

⁸⁷ The latter solution was being introduced gradually with children of the age of four being entitled to kindergarten education as of the school year 2024/2025 and children of the age of three as of the year 2025/2026.

⁸⁸ According to first data gathered in the spring of 2025, 55% of Roma children aged 3-6 attended some form of pre-school education, in comparison to 33% in 2020.

⁸⁹ According to data from 2023, 78.6% of children from the age of 3 up to the age of beginning of compulsory education in Slovakia attended early education (European Commission 2024: 4).

⁹⁰ Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic (2022), [Správa o výsledku kontroly 2022. Naplnenie Stratégie SR pre integráciu Rómov do roku 2020 v oblasti vzdelávania](#): 8. See also, Amnesty International and ERRC 2025: 21.

⁹¹ Act No. [365/2004 Coll.](#)

⁹² Act No. [578/2004 Coll.](#) Annex No. 4.

⁹³ For an overview of mechanisms aimed at protection and promotion of patient's rights see SNCHR (2022a), [Možnosti riešenia diskriminácie a porušení ľudských práv v súvislosti s poskytovaním zdravotnej starostlivosti](#): 21-33.

⁹⁴ EU FRA 2024b: 2; EU FRA (2022), [Roma Survey 2021 – main results](#), 2022: 49. The same surveys show that in general only 3% of Slovak Roma and 9% of LGBTI persons reported the most recent incident of discrimination that they allegedly had experienced (EU FRA 2022: 30 and EU FRA 2024a: 47). For an analysis of reasons for underreporting of discrimination by Roma, see also Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (2025a), [Analýza prekážok nedostatočného uplatňovania antidiskriminačnej legislatívy vo vzťahu k Rómom a Rómkam](#): 35-65.

Defender of Rights both worked on issues related to discrimination in the area of healthcare, notably discrimination against LGBTI and Roma persons.⁹⁵

Situation of LGBTI persons in the area of healthcare

58. As the Slovak Republic does not provide for the legal recognition of same-sex unions, same-sex partners do not have possibility to access the medical files of their partners and are not authorised to make decisions on their medical treatment in cases where the patients themselves cannot do so. In 2022, the Parliament examined a bill that was meant to allow same-sex partners' access to their partners' medical records in case of medical emergency.⁹⁶ Regrettably, the bill was not adopted.⁹⁷ ECRI invites the authorities to provide for effective solutions allowing same-sex partners to obtain medical information and take informed decisions about urgent medical care, in the light of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons⁹⁸ and the relevant case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.⁹⁹
59. ECRI also learned that the practice regarding blood donation requires potential male donors to answer a question whether they had sexual relations with men in the last 12 months.¹⁰⁰ Positive answer results in exclusion from blood donation. In 2023, the SNCHR noted that such a practice had discriminatory effects on gay and bisexual men. It recommended that the blood donor questionnaire be modified to ensure an individual assessment of the risk of sexual behaviour, regardless of the sexual orientation of the donor, in order to protect the health of blood transfusion recipients, while respecting the right of gay and bisexual men to the protection of their private life without discrimination.¹⁰¹ ECRI encourages the authorities to implement the recommendations made by the SNCHR in this regard.
60. Transgender persons still face difficulties when accessing gender affirming healthcare and other medical services. According to interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation during the visit, the number of specialists qualified and willing¹⁰² to work with transgender persons is rather limited in the country, which may cause delays in access to adequate treatment or prompt transgender persons to seek treatment abroad.¹⁰³ Transgender persons indicate that medical professionals, including general practitioners, are often unaware of the specific needs of transgender patients.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁵ See, for example, SNCHR (2024c), [Report on the Observance of Human Rights Including the Principle of Equal Treatment in the Slovak Republic in 2023](#): 89-90. Moreover, both bodies issued analysis of a general character that include information concerning racial and anti-LGBTI discrimination in the area of healthcare.

⁹⁶ The draft law and motives for its submissions are available [here](#).

⁹⁷ Amnesty International (2024, May 6), [Slovakia: Lessons in Discrimination. Submission to the 46th Session of the UPR Working Group](#): § 18.

⁹⁸ See in particular paragraph 31 and recommendation 16.

⁹⁹ See most notably [Fedotova and Others v. Russia](#) [GC], nos. 40792/10, 30538/14 and 43439/14, 17 January 2023.

¹⁰⁰ Questionnaire for donors of blood, plasma and blood cells is available in English and Slovak on the website of [the National Transfusion Service](#).

¹⁰¹ Equinet (2024), [Advancing LGBTIQ+ Equality in Europe: The role of Equality Bodies](#): 45 and SNCHR (2023c), [Obmedzenie gejev a bisexuálnych mužov pri darovaní krvi v Slovenskej republike](#).

¹⁰² Reportedly, some medical professionals refuse to provide gender-affirming healthcare on religious or moral grounds (Adams N., D. Ganesan D. (2023) [The State of Trans-Specific Healthcare in the EU: Looking Beyond the Trans Health Map 2022](#): 12). See also information about some healthcare professionals, who protested against ensuring gender-affirming healthcare in the Slovak Republic (ILGA Europe (2024), [Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe and Central Asia 2024](#), Slovakia and Amnesty International (2022, December 15), [Stanovisko Amnesty International Slovensko k Vyjadreniu psychiatrov, psychológov a iných odborníkov k transsexualizmu](#)).

¹⁰³ See also, SME (2021, July 8), [Trans ľudia nenachádzajú pomoc. Lekári sa riadia štyridsať rokov starým usmernením](#).

¹⁰⁴ See for instance Balkan Insight (2023, February 7), [In Shadow of Attack, Situation of Slovakia's Trans Community Remains Precarious](#); Iniciatíva Inakosť (2021, June 14), [Som Johann](#).

61. Until 2023, there were no clear up-to-date medical standards on the provision of gender-affirming healthcare. In March 2023, the Ministry of Health approved a standard procedure for the “diagnosis and comprehensive healthcare management of adults with transsexualism (F.64.0)”, which had been prepared by a group of experts from different medical backgrounds, as well as representatives of organisations of patients and the Ministry. The document stated that healthcare for transgender persons should be provided by a multidisciplinary team of specialists and aimed to promote a non-stigmatising, non-discriminatory and non-pathologising approach to transgender persons among health professionals and the general public. It did not, however, cover some medical interventions that were still not available in the country.
62. While ECRI welcomes this development, it notes with regret that the document was officially repealed by the Minister of Health as of 3 April 2024.¹⁰⁵ In a related statement, the Ministry indicated that it agreed with its professional content, but that the document also had a significant ethical and societal impact and had been issued without sufficient communication with the public. The Ministry further referred to inconsistencies in administrative procedures regarding legal gender recognition.¹⁰⁶ In the light of this, the Slovak Psychiatric Association decided to endorse the standard procedure as a professional standard.¹⁰⁷ In this connection, ECRI invites the authorities to take action aimed at raising awareness among healthcare professionals about the needs of transgender persons and ensuring that future decisions related to the provision of healthcare to them are based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination.
63. In relation to the situation of intersex persons, ECRI notes that, despite the recommendation made in its previous report (§ 32), the Slovak law still does not prohibit non-medically necessary sex assignment treatment and/or surgical intervention on the sex characteristics of children (so-called “sex-normalising” surgeries). There are no official data on the number of such procedures that have been performed and no protocols or guidelines for intersex healthcare currently in force. In addition, it emerged from the ECRI delegation’s findings during the visit that the general level of knowledge about the needs of intersex persons among medical professionals was still considered insufficient.
64. ECRI recommends that the authorities take steps to ensure equal rights and dignity for intersex persons, in particular by (i) taking action towards the development and adoption of legislation that explicitly and specifically prohibits any medical intervention on a person’s sex characteristics, including surgical, hormonal and/or mechanical procedures and other treatments, without their prior, free, informed, express and documented consent, and (ii) providing appropriate training to healthcare professionals, placing particular emphasis on intersex persons’ right to bodily integrity and diversity. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons and Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)7 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on equal rights for intersex persons.

Situation of foreign citizens in the area of healthcare

65. Access to healthcare for foreigners is dependent on their legal status and employment. The biggest challenges were met in relation to the arrival of a high

¹⁰⁵ Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (2024, April 2a), [Oznámenie o zrušení štandardného postupu “Štandardný postup pre diagnostiku a komplexný manažment zdravotnej starostlivosti o dospelú osobu s transsexualizmom \(F.64.0\)”](#). See also The Slovak Spectator (2024, April 2), [Health Ministry praises transgender care guideline, but scraps it in political trade-off](#).

¹⁰⁶ Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (2024, April 2b), [Zmeny pri starostlivosti o osoby s transsexualizmom](#). On that subject see section III.B below.

¹⁰⁷ Slovak Psychiatric Association (2024), [Štandardný postup pre diagnostiku a komplexný manažment zdravotnej starostlivosti o dospelú osobu s transsexualizmom, \(F64.0\)](#).

number of persons displaced from Ukraine. While these persons were initially entitled to urgent and necessary healthcare only, as of September 2023, beneficiaries of temporary protection have the right to almost the same level of health services as citizens registered with public health insurance.¹⁰⁸ ECRI considers this as a positive development. Yet, it notes that, as the costs involved for the provision of healthcare to them is covered by the relevant Ministry, beneficiaries of temporary protection are not registered in the electronic system of insured persons, persons displaced from Ukraine are reportedly still being refused treatment by some healthcare providers.¹⁰⁹ ECRI strongly encourages the authorities to ensure that all healthcare providers are familiar with the rules and applicable administrative procedures regarding access of foreign citizens, including beneficiaries of temporary protection, to healthcare.

66. It emerged from ECRI's findings during the visit that the possibility for foreign citizens to receive an adequate level of healthcare is impeded by the lack of solutions regarding interpretation needs between doctors and foreign patients. With respect to people displaced from Ukraine, this problem was addressed in some cities by establishing clinics that specialised in treating this category of foreigner and provide the necessary interpretation, such as at the Rovniankova Health Centre in Bratislava, the functioning of which ECRI considers a **promising practice**.¹¹⁰
67. In addition, many international and civil society organisations stressed the need for specialised psychological support for displaced persons as a result of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.¹¹¹ While surveys show that the accessibility of such care significantly improved (with 91% of persons seeking mental health and psychosocial being able to receive the required help), many beneficiaries of temporary protection reported not seeking such support, notably because they were not aware of such support being available or due to language barrier.¹¹² A number of interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation during the visit also pointed to the insufficient availability of mental support for children and youth displaced from Ukraine. ECRI encourages the authorities to strengthen the system of mental health and psychosocial support for beneficiaries of temporary protection, including children and youth, and to raise awareness on the availability of such services.

Situation of Roma in the area of healthcare

68. Roma, especially those living in marginalised communities, remain a group with a lower life expectancy¹¹³ and worse health outcomes than the majority population.¹¹⁴ Factors that impact the state of health of Roma include geographical distance to health facilities and poor living conditions.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ See European Migration Network (2024b), [Country Factsheet: Slovakia](#): 3; European Migration Network 2024a: 54.

¹⁰⁹ According to a survey conducted in 2024, 21% of beneficiaries of temporary protection in need of medical assistance failed to access the necessary care. Out of those 29% indicated inability to make an appointment as a main reason, 24% said that they were refused care by medical staff, 21% indicated as a reason lack of knowledge, 20% - waiting times and 17% pointed to a language barrier. See UNHCR 2024: 24. See also CVEK et al. 2022a: 33.

¹¹⁰ In parallel, according to the information provided by the authorities until May 2025, a total of 550 medical professionals from Ukraine (medical doctors, dental doctors, pharmacists and nurses-assistants) were included in Slovak healthcare facilities under the supervision of medical professionals already working in the country. See also UNICEF (2024, February 28), [Ukrainian pediatrician treats children in Slovakia through UNICEF-supported programme](#).

¹¹¹ See e.g. CoE SRSG Migration and Refugees 2022: §§ 73-75; CVEK et al. 2022a: 33 and CVEK et al. 2022b: 6.

¹¹² UNHCR 2024: 25. Some services in this respect have been provided by civil society organisations, see CVEK et al. 2022a: 33 and information provided through the website [Welcome to Slovakia](#).

¹¹³ See EU FRA 2022: 48.

¹¹⁴ See ERGO Network (2022), [Roma access to quality, inclusive and affordable health and long-term care in Slovakia](#): 3 and SNCHR 2022a: 3-14.

¹¹⁵ See, for instance, ERGO Network 2022: 5. See also, Belak A. (2020), [Úroveň podmienok pre zdravie a zdravotné potreby vo vylúčených rómskych osídleniach na Slovensku](#): 95-98.

69. The Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy 2030, which was adopted in October 2021, names health as one of the priority areas for governmental policies and aims *inter alia* to decrease the gap in life expectancy between Roma and the general population and combat discrimination against Roma in healthcare. To that aim, the authorities continue to implement the “Healthy Communities” programme,¹¹⁶ which – at the time of the 2025 visit – employed over 320 trained Roma health mediators working directly with Roma communities in approximately 270 municipalities. In addition, 20 trained Roma health mediators worked in hospitals, primarily in gynaecological, obstetric and paediatric departments. Health mediators employed within the framework of the programme play a pivot role in raising health awareness among Roma and supporting them in accessing the healthcare system, including through mediation during medical appointments and hospitalisation.¹¹⁷ ECRI considers the “Healthy Communities” programme as a **good practice**.
70. Measures taken to increase the quality of healthcare provided to Roma include integrating subjects related to the provision of care to marginalised Roma communities into the curricula of medical schools and continuous training for medical professionals, the organisation of trainings for medical staff by the “Healthy Communities”, in cooperation with the SNCHR, and providing financial support to civil society actors working in this area. Among those, ECRI welcomes the project entitled “Mission 1000”, which is focused on providing care and support to pregnant women and young mothers through a network of trained midwives (“*babice*”) working directly in Roma communities.¹¹⁸ ECRI considers the implementation of this project as a **good practice**.
71. Nevertheless, Roma patients often report cases of verbal abuse by medical personnel, longer waiting times in medical facilities and incidents of refusal to provide the necessary healthcare services.¹¹⁹ By way of illustration, there have been multiple reports of emergency health services refusing to dispatch an ambulance to Roma settlements,¹²⁰ including in cases of women in labour who had no other way of going to a hospital.¹²¹ During the visit, the ECRI delegation also received allegations according to which emergency services dispatched an ambulance only after confirmation of an emergency situation by a health mediator on site.
72. One alleged form of discrimination against Roma patients in healthcare settings that was brought to the attention of ECRI was about involuntary placement in separate rooms or wings in hospitals, especially in maternity and paediatric wards.¹²² It emerged from the delegation’s findings during the visit that cases involving allegations of segregation of Roma patients in healthcare facilities

¹¹⁶ See ECRI 2020: § 99. For more information see also [website](#) of the organisation “Healthy Regions” – a state-funded organisation of the Ministry of Health responsible for the implementation of this programme.

¹¹⁷ On the positive impact of the work of mediators under the previous Strategy, see also Rafael V. et al. (2021), [Externé hodnotenie implementácie Stratégie Slovenskej republiky pre integráciu Rómov do roku 2020](#): 44-46.

¹¹⁸ European Public Health Alliance (2022, July 8), [Mission 1000: Midwives help with antenatal care and care of babies in Slovakia](#). For more on this project, implemented by the Association for Culture, Education and Communication (ACEC), see also [its website](#).

¹¹⁹ Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities 2025b: 34-36; SNCHR 2022a: 13-14.

¹²⁰ SNCHR 2024c: 89; Ort-Mertlová S., D. Jerotijević (2025), [Causes of health disadvantages and consequences of stigmatization in the Roma community in Slovakia](#): 5-6.

¹²¹ Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva (2024, May 28), [Stretli sme sa s operačným strediskom záchrannej zdravotnej služby v Košiciach](#).

¹²² Public Defender of Rights (2021), [Let's talk about childbirth: a human rights-based approach in the context of childbirth](#): 47-49; Ort-Mertlová S., D. Jerotijević 2025: 5; Ivanco Š., J. Lorenci, A. Spítalszky (2022), [Equality and justice on the sidelines: Comparative report on discrimination against Roma and their access to justice in Slovakia and Slovenia](#): 10. See also UN CEDAW (2023), [Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Slovakia](#): §§ 42(b) and 43(b), Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva (2024a), [NGO alternative report to Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning shortcomings in the implementation of the Convention in Slovakia](#): 12-14 and UN CRC (2025), [Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Slovakia](#): §33(a).

pointed to prejudice from both healthcare professionals and other, non-Roma, patients. In this context, ECRI learned that the authorities had initiated a project aimed at analysing the situation in some hospitals where Roma patients were said to be segregated, understanding the causes of any such practices and designing measures to prevent and counteract them. In the view of ECRI, this project should be completed within a reasonable timeframe and assist the authorities in taking future action to prohibit and eliminate any such practices.

73. ECRI recommends that the authorities intensify their efforts aimed at ensuring equal access of Roma patients to quality healthcare, in particular by (i) enhancing training aimed at combating stereotypes among all medical and other professionals working in healthcare facilities, (ii) ensuring effective mechanisms of accountability for refusal of providing care and for other discriminatory treatment of patients based on their ethnicity, and (iii) completing, within a reasonable timeframe, their analysis of potential segregation practices of Roma patients in healthcare settings and taking action, as appropriate, to prohibit, eliminate and prevent any such practices.
74. Regarding the situation of Roma women who were subjected to sterilisation without their free and informed consent,¹²³ ECRI welcomes that, in 2021, the government issued an official apology and admitted that it constituted a violation of the “personal integrity” and human rights of Roma women.¹²⁴ It notes, nonetheless, that there is still no compensation scheme for victims of such sterilisations.¹²⁵ ECRI was informed that a bill aiming at establishing such a scheme had been prepared and would be submitted to parliament. It was also informed that the draft had not yet been the subject of consultations with civil society or representatives of victims.¹²⁶
75. ECRI recommends that the authorities pursue their efforts towards the establishment of an effective compensation scheme for Roma women who have been sterilised without free and informed consent. The scheme should be introduced after meaningful consultations with relevant civil society organisations and representatives of the women concerned.

III. TOPICS SPECIFIC TO THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

A. Preventing and combating racism and intolerance within the police

76. In its previous report on the Slovak Republic (§§ 104-109), ECRI raised concerns about allegations of acts of violence committed by police officers against Roma and the lack of effective and independent investigations into cases involving such allegations. It considered that the authorities should substantially reinforce the independence of the Police Force Inspectorate or task another independent and adequately resourced body with investigating allegations of police abuse falling within its mandate and to generalise the wearing of body cams by police officers during interventions.
77. ECRI regrets to note that the legal and organisational status of the Police Force Inspectorate, which remains responsible for investigating all cases of police abuse, including racist police abuse, has not significantly changed, and the involvement of the Minister of Interior in the process of appointing and recalling the director of

¹²³ See ECRI 2020: §§ 100-101. See also: Center for Reproductive Rights and Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva (2003), [Body and Soul: forced sterilization and other assaults on Roma reproductive freedom in Slovakia](#).

¹²⁴ Balkan Insight (2025, July 23), [Too Young, Too Poor, Too Romani: The Women Sterilised Without Consent](#). See also the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (2021, November 24) [Splnomocnenkyňa Andrea Bučková víta ospravedlnenie vlády SR za sterilizácie rómskych žien v rozpore s právom](#).

¹²⁵ See Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva (2024b), [Submission to the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities concerning Slovakia](#): 2-4. On governmental works on this subject see also Public Defender of Rights (2024), [Správa o činnosti verejného ochrancu práv za obdobie kalendárneho roka 2023](#): 39-42.

¹²⁶ In this respect see also CoE Commissioner for Human Rights (2025), [Memorandum on the human rights of Roma in the Slovak Republic](#): §§ 55-60.

the inspectorate has been increased.¹²⁷ As a result, a number of interlocutors met by the ECRI delegation during the visit continued to raise doubts as to the independence and effectiveness of this body in addressing racist and other forms of police abuse. In relation to the wearing of body cams by police officers during interventions, ECRI welcomes that the authorities initiated pilot programmes aimed at testing the use of such devices and that a number of them has been deployed.¹²⁸ It trusts that their use will be generalised in the context of all relevant police operations.

78. While it seems that a stop has been put to violent police raid operations in Roma settlements, ECRI still received reports of abuse of Roma, including minors, by law enforcement officials, in the form of racial profiling, verbal abuse and physical violence.¹²⁹ In parallel, it appeared from the ECRI's findings that there still is insufficient accountability in cases involving allegations of racist police abuse, notably with respect to older incidents that had been investigated for long periods of time. For instance, in its previous report (§ 104), reference was made to allegations of serious acts of violence committed by police officers during an operation in Moldava nad Bodvou in 2013. Following a 2020 judgment, in which the European Court of Human Rights held that the lack of effective investigation into those allegations, including into a potential discriminatory aspect of the violence experienced by the applicants, constituted a violation of Article 3 and Article 14 in conjunction with Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights,¹³⁰ the Government issued an official apology for the manner in which this operation had been conducted and agreed to pay compensation to the alleged victims.¹³¹ Nonetheless, despite a number of proceedings concerning this operation and a significant time that had passed since the events in question, it appeared that no police officers have been held responsible for the manner in which it was conducted.¹³²
79. In this context, ECRI stresses that the authorities have a positive obligation in combating racism and intolerance within the police. It recalls that any perception of virtual impunity for perpetrators of racist police abuse would tarnish the profession and jeopardise the work of all those police officers who comply with police ethics and the law. They also undermine public trust in the police.¹³³ It is therefore essential to create a police culture where racist abuse is regarded as

¹²⁷ Public Defender of Rights (2022), [Activities of the Public Defender of Rights During Her 2017-2022 Tenure](#): 37-38. See also UN CERD (2022), [Concluding observations on the thirteenth periodic report of Slovakia](#): §§ 20-21.

¹²⁸ According to the information received by the authorities, one of such programmes initiated in December 2024 included testing of 608 body cams. At the time of the ECRI visit there were plans to expand it further, following preparation of a feasibility study. On this subject see also CoE CPT (2025), [Report to the Slovak Government on the visit to the Slovak Republic carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment \(CPT\) from 28 November to 9 December 2023](#): § 39.

¹²⁹ See, for instance, ERRC (2023), [Justice Denied: Roma in the Criminal Justice System of Slovakia](#): 25-27; ERRC (2025, January 16), [ERRC Submits Complaint Over Police Brutality in Košice, Slovakia](#) and Romea.cz (2025, March 4), [Slovakia: Police officer allegedly kicked and slapped Romani children at a school, lawmaker Peter Pollák says he must be held accountable](#). Against this background, it should be borne in mind that some reported incidents brought to ECRI's attention may be the subject of ongoing investigations and proceedings.

¹³⁰ [R.R. and R.D. v. Slovakia](#) (no. 20649/18, 1 September 2020). The execution of this judgment is subject to [enhanced supervision](#) conducted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

¹³¹ [M.H. and Others against Slovakia](#) (dec.), no. 14099/18, 3 May 2022. See also decision [T.K. and Others against Slovakia](#) (dec.), no. 57085/18, 5 March 2024, concerning similar police operation conducted in 2015 in Vrbnica.

¹³² On most recent developments in this case, see Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva and the ERRC (2024), [Rule 9.2. Submission with regard to the execution of R.R. and R.D. v. Slovak Republic](#): 4-5; SME (2023, May 23), [Raziu v Moldave rieši ten istý vyšetrovateľ, ktorý pred rokmi hovoril, že Rómovia si vymýšľali](#) and The Slovak Spectator (2025, July 30), [News digest: In surprising twist, case into infamous raid in Roma settlement reopened](#).

¹³³ It is especially visible among groups of concern to ECRI. For instance, according to a 2021 survey conducted by the EU FRA, only 27% of Roma in the Slovak Republic trusted the police, while the corresponding number among general population amounted to 42%. Both indicators were among the lowest among all countries surveyed. See, EU FRA 2022: 33.

having no place within law enforcement agencies and racism is actively prevented and combatted under all circumstances.

80. ECRI recommends that the authorities take decisive action to ensure effective investigations into any cases involving allegations of racist abuse by law enforcement officials and that, where warranted, perpetrators are the subject of appropriate disciplinary sanctions and/or criminal proceedings, in the light of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 11 on combating racism and racial discrimination in policing and the relevant case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

B. Legal gender recognition

81. The procedure of legal gender recognition requires changing a person's registered name, gender and personal identification number ("birth number"). Changes are made by registry offices under the authority of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry itself (when it comes to the personal identification number). This requires presenting a medical opinion indicating that the person concerned has undergone "a sex change". Until 2022, there was no legal framework specifying the exact conditions for issuing such an opinion. However, it was widely understood that this implied undergoing surgical treatment resulting in permanent sterilisation.¹³⁴ On 19 October 2022, the Supreme Administrative Court issued a judgment in which it stated that the legislation, read in the light of international human rights standards, could not be understood as requiring undergoing gender-affirming surgery in order to obtain legal gender recognition.¹³⁵
82. In order to clarify the requirements in question, the Ministry of Health issued professional guidelines on the harmonisation of procedures for the provision of healthcare for gender reassignment prior to the issuance of a medical opinion.¹³⁶ The guidelines were first adopted in April 2022 and came into force with some delay in March 2023.¹³⁷
83. Certainly, the guidelines were criticised for not being fully in line with existing international standards.¹³⁸ However, in the view of ECRI, they constituted a positive development providing clarity to persons willing to obtain legal gender recognition and assuring that surgical treatment was no longer required to complete this process.¹³⁹ ECRI therefore regrets to note that, in November 2023, the Ministry of Health decided that those guidelines were no longer applicable, citing disagreements within the government coalition as a reason for such decision.¹⁴⁰ According to various interlocutors met during the ECRI visit, the revocation of these guidelines resulted in a lack of legal certainty as to the requirements for legal gender recognition, with some registry offices refusing to amend the data in the

¹³⁴ In this respect see ECRI 2020: § 30 and recommendation made in § 32.

¹³⁵ [Judgment of 19 October 2022](#), case no. 1Sžk/38/2021.

¹³⁶ Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (2022, April 6), [Official Journal of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic](#).

¹³⁷ See also ECRI (2023a), [Conclusions on the implementation of the recommendations in respect of the Slovak Republic subject to interim follow-up](#).

¹³⁸ See for instance Amnesty International (2022, April 12), [Odborné usmernenie na zjednotenie postupov poskytovania zdravotnej starostlivosti k medicínskej tranzícii je pozitívny krok smerom k ochrane ľudských práv, ale má viaceré nedostatky](#).

¹³⁹ The guidelines did, however, require undergoing hormonal treatments and evidence of "real-life experience" of living in accordance with their gender identity, hence failing to be fully in line with ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 (see, ECRI 2023b: recommendation 25).

¹⁴⁰ Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (2023, November 21), [Ministerstvo zdravotníctva zruší platnosť usmernenia k zmene pohlavia](#). See also Euractiv (2023, November 22), [Slovakia revokes gender reassignment guidelines](#).

civil registry or requiring a proof of gender-affirming surgery or of treatment that resulted in an irreversible “sex change”.¹⁴¹

84. ECRI underlines that the possibility to obtain legal gender recognition is crucial for securing the right of transgender persons to the protection of their private life, as well as to preventing discrimination against them. It considers that any legal gender recognition process should not be based on any form of pathologisation of transgender persons and should be de-medicalised.¹⁴² At the same time, ECRI is concerned by discussions in parliament and in public debates about adopting legislation that would make legal gender recognition impossible.¹⁴³ It is also of concern that a constitutional amendment, adopted on 26 September 2025, seems to point in the direction of making legal gender recognition more challenging rather than facilitating it.¹⁴⁴
85. ECRI recommends, as a matter of priority, that the authorities ensure that the process of legal gender recognition is quick, transparent and accessible and that it is not contingent on abusive requirements, such as involuntary sterilisation, medical procedures and/or mental health diagnoses. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons.

¹⁴¹ In this respect, see in particular ECtHR judgment of 6 April 2017, [A.P., Garçon and Nicot v. France](#), nos. 79885/12, 52471/13 and 52596/13, §135. See also Public Defender of Rights (2025), [Správa o činnosti verejného ochrancu práv za obdobie kalendárneho roka 2024](#): 72-75.

¹⁴² CoE CDADI (2022), [Thematic report on gender legal recognition in Europe. First thematic implementation review report on Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)5](#): 15-16. In this connection, trans identities were depathologised by the World Health Organisation in 2019.

¹⁴³ A legislative proposal in this respect was initiated in 2023 and failed to be adopted (see, for instance, SNCHR 2024c: 20; CoE Commissioner for Human Rights (2023, April 19), [Letter to the National Council of the Slovak Republic](#); and Amnesty International (2023, May 17), [Slovakia: Parliament should reject bill making legal gender recognition impossible](#)).

¹⁴⁴ See CoE Venice Commission (2025), [Slovak Republic. Urgent Opinion on the Draft Amendments to the Constitution](#): §§ 59-65 and CoE Commissioner for Human Rights (2025, June 13), [Slovak Republic: Parliament should not adopt Constitutional amendments that undermine human rights](#). The amendment, which stipulates that “the Slovak Republic recognises only the biologically determined sexes of male and female”, entered into force on 1 November 2025.

INTERIM FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

The two specific recommendations for which ECRI requests priority implementation from the authorities of the Slovak Republic are the following:

- (§ 25) ECRI recommends that the authorities significantly increase the capacities of all specialised structures within the police that are tasked with detecting and investigating cases of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech, especially online, including by ensuring sufficient human resources, digital and other technical tools and trainings for police officers working in those structures.
- (§ 85) ECRI recommends that the authorities ensure that the process of legal gender recognition is quick, transparent and accessible and that it is not contingent on abusive requirements, such as involuntary sterilisation, medical procedures and/or mental health diagnoses. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons.

These recommendations should be implemented within 18 months after the publication of the report. A process of interim follow-up will subsequently be conducted by ECRI to review action taken to implement them.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The position of the recommendations in the text of the report is shown in parentheses.

1. (§ 2) ECRI recommends that the authorities bring forward legislative amendments in parliament to expressly include gender identity and sex characteristics as prohibited grounds to the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code and to ensure that committing a criminal offence with a racist or LGBTI-phobic element constitutes an aggravating circumstance for any ordinary offence, in the light of ECRI's General Policy Recommendations No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination and No. 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons.
2. (§ 15) ECRI recommends that the authorities strongly encourage public figures, including high-level officials and politicians on all sides, to take a prompt, firm and public stance against the expression of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech and react to any such expression with counter-speech and alternative speech (positive narratives), as well as to promote understanding between communities, including by expressing solidarity with those targeted by hate speech. Elected bodies and political parties should adopt appropriate codes of conduct that prohibit the use of hate speech, call on their members and followers to abstain from engaging in, endorsing or disseminating it, and provide for sanctions. In this respect, ECRI refers to its General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating hate speech, Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech and the Charter of European political parties for a non racist and inclusive society as endorsed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in its Resolution 2443 (2022).
3. (§ 19) ECRI recommends that the authorities take action to promote a safe, inclusive, and enabling online and offline civic space in which civil society organisations working against racist and anti-LGBTI hate crime can operate, by ensuring adequate support and protection from threats, harassment or attacks. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on combating hate crime.
4. (§ 21) ECRI recommends that the authorities, with due regard for the independence of the media, take measures aimed at promoting equality and diversity, raising awareness of the adverse effects of hate speech, and preventing and combating misinformation and negative stereotyping in the media, including by encouraging and supporting training programmes for journalists, editors and online content moderators on inclusive reporting and on preventing and combating hate speech.
5. (§ 25) ECRI recommends, as a matter of priority, that the authorities significantly increase the capacities of all specialised structures within the police that are tasked with detecting and investigating cases of racist and LGBTI-phobic hate speech, especially online, including by ensuring sufficient human resources, digital and other technical tools and trainings for police officers working in those structures.
6. (§ 34) ECRI recommends that the authorities ensure that school curricula at all levels of education include LGBTI equality issues in a manner which is sensitive, age appropriate and easy to understand and that discussions organised in schools on LGBTI equality are evidence based and place particular emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion.
7. (§ 39) ECRI recommends that the authorities put in place a national system for the monitoring of bullying incidents in schools and that they gather disaggregated data on such incidents, which would include specific reasons for bullying behaviour and pay particular attention to incidents of a racist or LGBTI-phobic nature.

8. (§ 46) ECRI recommends that the authorities take the necessary measures to enable foreign children to obtain a sufficient level of language proficiency in Slovak for successful inclusion into the education system. In doing so, the authorities should in particular improve the system of language instruction by facilitating the organisation of an appropriate number of language classes, developing adequate learning materials and providing other forms of support for foreign children at all levels of education.
9. (§ 53) ECRI recommends that the authorities develop and implement a set of measures to facilitate the inclusion of Roma children in the area of education by: (i) developing stronger policies aimed at ending all forms of segregation in schools and ensure their effective and consistent implementation; (ii) providing tailored support to Roma pupils, their families and schools to decrease performance gaps and school drop-out rates, including by ensuring an adequate number of Roma mediators in schools and devising support measures focusing specifically on transition between primary and secondary education.
10. (§ 55) ECRI recommends that the authorities continue to enhance the capacities of kindergarten and preschool education in order to ensure the effective enrolment of Roma children in kindergarten and preschool education, paying particular attention to avoiding any form of segregation of Roma children in pre-school establishments.
11. (§ 64) ECRI recommends that the authorities take steps to ensure equal rights and dignity for intersex persons, in particular by (i) taking action towards the development and adoption of legislation that explicitly and specifically prohibits any medical intervention on a person's sex characteristics, including surgical, hormonal and/or mechanical procedures and other treatments, without their prior, free, informed, express and documented consent, and (ii) providing appropriate training to healthcare professionals, placing particular emphasis on intersex persons' right to bodily integrity and diversity. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons and Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)7 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on equal rights for intersex persons.
12. (§ 73) ECRI recommends that the authorities intensify their efforts aimed at ensuring equal access of Roma patients to quality healthcare, in particular by (i) enhancing training aimed at combating stereotypes among all medical and other professionals working in healthcare facilities, (ii) ensuring effective mechanisms of accountability for refusal of providing care and for other discriminatory treatment of patients based on their ethnicity, and (iii) completing, within a reasonable timeframe, their analysis of potential segregation practices of Roma patients in healthcare settings and taking action, as appropriate, to prohibit, eliminate and prevent any such practices.
13. (§ 75) ECRI recommends that the authorities pursue their efforts towards the establishment of an effective compensation scheme for Roma women who have been sterilised without free and informed consent. The scheme should be introduced after meaningful consultations with relevant civil society organisations and representatives of the women concerned.
14. (§ 80) ECRI recommends that the authorities take decisive action to ensure effective investigations into any cases involving allegations of racist abuse by law enforcement officials and that, where warranted, perpetrators are the subject of appropriate disciplinary sanctions and/or criminal proceedings, in the light of ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 11 on combating racism and racial discrimination in policing and the relevant case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

15. (§ 85) ECRI recommends, as a matter of priority, that the authorities ensure that the process of legal gender recognition is quick, transparent and accessible and that it is not contingent on abusive requirements, such as involuntary sterilisation, medical procedures and/or mental health diagnoses. In doing so, the authorities should draw inspiration from ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 17 on combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons.

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APPENDIX: GOVERNMENT'S VIEWPOINT

The following appendix does not form part of ECRI's analysis and proposals concerning the situation in the Slovak Republic.

ECRI, in accordance with its country-by-country procedure, engaged into confidential dialogue with the authorities of the Slovak Republic on a first draft of the report. A number of the authorities' comments were taken on board and integrated into the report's final version (which, in line with ECRI's standard practice and unless otherwise indicated, could only take into account developments up until 4 December 2025, date of the examination of the first draft).

The authorities also requested that the following viewpoint be reproduced as an appendix to the report.

**Statement of the Slovak Republic
on the 7th Report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ECRI**

of the Council of Europe on the Slovak Republic

The Slovak Republic appreciates the constructive dialogue with ECRI. We are convinced that the progress noted by ECRI is the result of a mutually beneficial, interactive dialogue that has been achieved in many areas since the last monitoring cycle.

The ECRI Report and its recommendations will be subject to a careful assessment by the Government of the Slovak Republic in the next process and subsequently implemented by the relevant institutions of the Slovak Republic in order to eliminate the shortcomings arising from ECRI's recommendations.

At the same time, the Slovak Republic uses this opportunity to provide additional and explanatory information.

I. and II. Ad

Article 12 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic represents the basic constitutional guarantee of equal treatment and protection of human rights for all citizens without distinction.

Other specific articles of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic specify special constitutional protection for specific human rights values.

The constitutional framework of protection is applied in several legal norms, for example in Act No. 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas and on protection against discrimination (anti-discrimination law), which establishes the principles and mechanisms of prevention and protection against any form of discrimination. The Slovak Republic thus fully respects and fulfils European and international standards of protection of human rights and freedoms, in accordance with the principles of the rule of law and democratic values.

Constitutional guarantees of protection are also applied in the field of criminal law. The provision of Section 140 of Act No. 300/2005 of the Criminal Code in the definition of a special motive, a legal feature of qualified factual elements of a larger number of crimes, reflects the principle of equality before the law and the universality of protection of rights.

The current legal regulation ensures that all persons are protected in the same way and have guaranteed access to justice. The Slovak Republic promotes the generality of legal protection, while specific categories are not created, so as to avoid unwanted division of society or preference of some groups over others.

I. Ad Preventing and combating hate speech and hate crime

With regard to the steps taken by the State authorities in the field of prevention of hate speech, we would like to inform you that within the framework of the project "Technical Support for the Preparation of the Action Plan to the National Strategy of the Slovak Republic on the Management of Asylum and Migration", in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, we are preparing a comprehensive training package focused on effective and evidence based communication on migration issues. The target group of this training should be relevant government actors in the field of migration. The expected benefit of the training is capacity building in this area. We further note that the disparity in the statistical data regarding hate crimes is due to differences in reporting under the investigation process of the acts in question as opposed to the reporting by non-profit organizations. At the initial stage, the situation is the same (the victim is considered a victim of a hate crime), but if at a later stage it is found that the act is not a criminal offence, e.g. it is found to be a minor offence of extremism pursuant to Section 47a(1) (c) of Act No. 372/1990 Coll. on Minor Offences, as amended, the victim is automatically excluded from statistical reporting as a victim of a hate crime.

I. Ad points No. 1 - 3 Legislation and policy framework

Supplement to the provision of Section 140 of Act No. 300/2005 Coll., the Criminal Code, as amended:

Section 140 of Act No. 300/2005 Coll., the Criminal Code, as amended, specifying a specific motive as a special aggravating factor, in its current wording implements the relevant part of the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.

The provision also responds to the requirements set forth in Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, according to which it is necessary to prevent any form of crime committed by reason of the victim's actual or perceived affiliation with a minority, regardless of the nature of their "difference".

The applicable legislation is fully compliant with EU standards in this field. The targeting and detailed specification of particular characteristics within the statutory regulation of a specific motive could lead to a restrictive interpretation in the application of this provision, which would be counterproductive in terms of the objectives pursued and the values promoted by both ECRI and the Slovak Republic.

I. Ad point No. 27. Responses to hate speech and hate crime

The Slovak Republic, through the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic, provides annual support to entities providing professional assistance to victims of crime under the grant/subsidy scheme for accredited entities pursuant to Act No. 274/2017 Coll. on Victims of Crime and on amendments and supplements to certain acts (hereinafter referred to as the "Victims of Crime Act").

The provision of subsidies is governed by Act No. 302/2016 Coll. and Decree of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic No. 322/2016 Coll.

The mandatory provisions of these legal regulations specify the particular statutory conditions and prerequisites that must be met by both the entities and their formal subsidy applications. Furthermore, they establish a strictly formal and fully transparent procedure for the assessment of and decision-making on individual applications.

In 2024, an amount of €250,000 was allocated for the provision of professional assistance to victims of crime, supporting 9 entities; for the provision of specialized professional assistance to victims of domestic violence, €1,600,000 was allocated, supporting 10 entities.

In 2025, an amount of €450,000 was allocated for the provision of professional assistance to victims of crime, supporting 11 entities; for the provision of specialized professional assistance to victims of domestic violence, €1,600,000 was allocated, supporting 10 entities.

In 2026, an amount of €500,000 was allocated for the provision of professional assistance to victims of crime, supporting 9 entities; for the provision of specialized professional assistance to victims of domestic violence, €1,650,000 was allocated, supporting 10 entities.

The support and assistance to victims of crime are continuous, with the volume of allocated funds increasing year-on-year, alongside an expanding number of accredited entities. Any non-granting of a subsidy is based on objective grounds arising from the legislation and is tied to a specific period of one year.

All relevant information, including the above, is published on the website of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic.

I. and II. Ad recommendations concerning Roma

The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (hereinafter referred to as the "Office") takes note of the report's conclusions concerning the situation of Roma in the Slovak Republic and considers them a relevant basis for further shaping public policies in the areas of inclusion, equal opportunities, and the fight against discrimination. At the same time, it emphasises that some of the assessments presented in the report do not fully reflect the scope of the measures adopted and their gradual implementation in practice, as well as the broader context of the public policies being carried out.

The Office considers ECRI's recommendations in the field of education, particularly with regard to reducing the segregation of Roma children, to be fundamental and generally agrees with them. However, it stresses that their implementation requires a long-term, systematic, and coordinated approach that considers regional differences, school capacities, and cooperation with local authorities. Without stable and predictable funding, as well as strengthening support professions, it is not possible to achieve sustainable progress in this area.

In the field of healthcare, the Office considers ECRI's recommendations to be justified, particularly with regard to improving access to services and strengthening trust between Roma communities and healthcare personnel. At the same time, it points to the need for the systematic development of outreach and community-based programmes, which have proven in practice to be effective tools for reducing inequalities, as well as the need to strengthen the collection of relevant data for an objective assessment of the situation.

With regard to hate speech and hate crime, the Office supports ECRI's emphasis on strengthening the capacities of public authorities and the protection of victims. At the same time, it stresses that the assessment of the scale of these phenomena should also be viewed in the context of data availability, reporting rates, and methodological limitations of surveys, which may influence the interpretation of the situation.

The Office also takes note of the findings concerning the conduct of law enforcement officers and emphasises the importance of thorough, independent, and transparent investigations of all allegations of violations of fundamental rights. At the same time, it considers it important to strengthen preventive measures, professional training, and oversight mechanisms that contribute to building trust between the police and Roma communities.

In the area of support for victims of hate crime, the Office emphasises the need to ensure stable and long-term funding for services provided by civil society organisations, as well as to strengthen access to legal and psychosocial assistance for victims.

The Office also considers it necessary to underline that improving the situation of Roma requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach across multiple public policy areas, including education, healthcare, housing, and employment. Isolated measures without mutual coordination and without systematic monitoring of their impacts cannot bring about long-term and sustainable change.

II. Ad point No. 75. Situation of Roma in the area of healthcare

The Draft Act on Financial Compensation for Persons Sterilised in Violation of the Law has been included in the Government's Legislative Task Plan, with a final completion deadline set for 31 December 2026.

The public, including civil society organisations, may participate in the legislative process in a relevant manner through the public consultation (review) procedure.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is a unique human rights body that monitors Council of Europe member states' action against racism, intolerance and discrimination on grounds of "race", colour, language, religion, citizenship, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics.

ECRI was set up by the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of the member states of the Council of Europe in 1993 and became operational in 1994.

ECRI is composed of 46 members appointed on the basis of their independence, impartiality, moral authority and expertise in dealing with issues of racism, intolerance and related discrimination. Each Council of Europe member state appoints one person to serve as a member of ECRI.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.