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Republic of Slovenia

Head of state: **Borut Pahor**

Head of government: **Miro Cerar**

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REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS

Before the closure of the Western Balkans route in March, 99,187 refugees and migrants entered Slovenia; the vast majority of them passed through on their way to Austria. 1,308 people – most of them Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi nationals – applied for asylum. After the closure of the Western Balkans route, those who entered Slovenia and did not apply for asylum, including minors, were detained in the Centre for Foreigners in Postojna. In July, the authorities offered alternative accommodation for unaccompanied minors.

The asylum procedures were slow, partly as a result of the authorities' limited capacity to process applications. Throughout the year, more than 100 asylum-seekers, including unaccompanied minors, waited for first instance decisions for more than six months.

In March, the National Assembly amended the International Protection Act, introducing expedited asylum procedures for those who expressed the intention to apply for asylum at Slovenia's border or in transit areas at airports or ports. The law also removed the right to financial assistance of €288 in the first month after international protection has been granted.

Slovenia received 124 asylum-seekers relocated from Greece and Italy under the EU relocation scheme by the end of the year, out of a total of 567 asylum-seekers it had committed to accept by the end of 2017.

DISCRIMINATION

In April, the National Assembly passed the Protection against Discrimination Act, harmonizing legislation with EU anti-discrimination law. The law represented a milestone in combating discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression, social status or health, among other things. The law strengthened the mandate and autonomy of the Advocate of the Principle of Equality – a special post designed to prevent and eliminate discrimination including by hearing cases and offering assistance to victims of discrimination – as an independent anti-discrimination body.

The "erased"

Long-standing human rights violations against the "erased" – former permanent residents of Slovenia originating from other former Yugoslav republics – persisted. No new options were offered to the remaining "erased" to restore their legal status and related rights since the expiry of the Legal Status Act in 2013.

In November, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) dismissed the complaint against Slovenia of some of the "erased" whose legal status had already been regulated. However, additional human rights issues of the "erased" remained pending before the ECtHR at the end of the year.

Roma

Discrimination against and social exclusion of the majority of Roma continued. Many were living in segregated settlements in inadequate housing, lacking security of tenure and access to water, electricity, sanitation and public transport. After the expiry of the National Action Programme for Roma inclusion in 2015, the government started a process of adopting a new set of measures. The government had yet to adopt a comprehensive national Roma Strategy as recommended by the parliamentary commission for human rights.

RIGHTS OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX PEOPLE

In April, Parliament adopted the Law on Partnerships. The new law offers same-sex couples the same rights as those originating from marriage, but fails to guarantee the right to adopt and to access assisted reproductive services procedures.

LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL OR INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

In November, the Constitution was amended to include the right to drinking water. According to the amendment, water resources are to be used primarily to supply the population with drinking water and households with water. The Constitution stated that those water resources could not be transformed from a public good into a tradeable commodity.

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