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Protesters received fines for violating the ban on protests. Political interference further eroded media freedom. The president apologized for the unconstitutional erasure of over 25,000 people from the citizens' registry 30 years ago. Parliament legalized same-sex marriage and adoption. Ukrainian refugees faced numerous problems in accessing services.

Background

After several years of anti-government protests, the Freedom Movement party led by Robert Golob won the parliamentary elections in April. The new government promised to reverse some of the "harmful" laws and policies passed by its predecessors and tackle the effects of rising energy and food prices.

Freedom of expression, association and assembly

The authorities imposed severe fines on protesters who defied the blanket ban on peaceful protests imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Activist and theatre director Jaša Jenull was ordered to pay €40,000 to reimburse the authorities for the cost of policing protests he attended in 2020 and 2021.¹ The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights called on the authorities to immediately stop "the financial and administrative harassment of civil society activists." In October, the new government dropped all charges against Jaša Jenull and committed to resolving other outstanding fines imposed on protesters by its predecessor.

In March, the Coalition against Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPPs) in Europe stated that Slovenia was one of the worst

offenders in the EU for using lawsuits to silence journalists and activists.

Radio-Television Slovenia (RTV SLO) suffered persistent political interference, affecting its ability to deliver impartial programming. In July, the new government amended the law on RTV SLO in an attempt to protect its independence, but in December, the outlet's outgoing leadership challenged the law before the Constitutional Court, delaying a quick resolution of the crisis.

Economic, social and cultural rights

The authorities passed a series of measures to alleviate the effects of the soaring cost of living caused by rising energy prices, introducing special allowances for economically vulnerable people, additional temporary child benefits, one-off energy supplements and increased aid for local food producers to prevent further price hikes.

In July, the new government postponed until January 2024 the implementation of the Act on Long-Term Care for older people, which was adopted in 2021. The law, which was meant to address insufficient care services for the growing elderly population, had been due to enter into force in January 2023.

Discrimination

The "erased"

President Pahor issued a formal apology to over 25,000 people who were unconstitutionally removed from the official registry of permanent residents 30 years ago, effectively leaving them without Slovenian citizenship. Despite this apology, more than half of the so-called "erased" did not have their status restored or receive compensation from the state.

LGBTI people's rights

In October, parliament amended legislation to legalize same-sex marriage and adoption, following the Constitutional Court's July ruling that declared as unconstitutional the law allowing only heterosexual partners to marry and adopt children.

Refugees' and migrants' rights

The number of refugees and migrants entering Slovenia via the so-called Balkans route increased significantly compared to 2021. The authorities recorded over 27,000 irregular entries.

In June, the new government announced that it would remove a 155km fence on its border with Croatia, which was built in 2015 to deter irregular crossings, saying it had "not fulfilled its declared purpose." It also issued

binding guidelines to ensure that border police fully respected people's right to access asylum.

According to the authorities, tens of thousands of people fleeing conflict in Ukraine had entered Slovenia since February, the majority travelling onwards to other EU countries. Around 7,500 out of over 8,200 who applied for temporary protection were granted this status, guaranteeing them access to education, urgent healthcare and the labour market. However, local organizations reported many integration problems, including restricted access to healthcare; lack of integration activities such as language services; and difficulties for Ukrainian children attending lessons in Slovenian.

1. ["Slovenia: Stop making people pay for policing of protests", 17 March](#)

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