

The State of the World's Human Rights; Slovakia 2025

Constitutional amendments undermined international human rights obligations, entrenched discrimination against LGBTI people and stripped away rights to education and private and family life. Onerous new legal requirements were imposed on NGOs. Roma communities continued to face systemic discrimination, particularly in education and housing. Legal changes restricted access to social benefits. Authorities failed to ensure transparency in arms exports to Israel. Reliance on fossil fuels persisted, with limited progress on climate policy.

Background

In September, parliament adopted constitutional amendments that were incompatible with international human rights obligations, despite UN experts previously urging Slovakia to reconsider the reforms. These developments were part of a broader authoritarian shift that saw an intensified crackdown on civil society, including LGBTI groups and organizations supporting minorities and marginalized communities.

Freedom of association

In April, parliament adopted a new law regulating NGOs, which imposed intrusive administrative requirements and increased state oversight over their activities, thereby threatening their rights to association, information and privacy. In August, the ombudsperson challenged the law before the Constitutional Court.

NGOs, particularly those critical of the government, were subjected to smear campaigns, threats and intimidation.¹

Unlawful use of force

Systemic shortcomings persisted in the handling of complaints of police ill-treatment, including a lack of impartial and effective investigations into credible allegations of torture.²

In June, Amnesty International and the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) filed a legal complaint and called for an investigation into possible racially motivated police violence during a raid on the Roma community in the town of Veľká Ida.³

Discrimination

Constitutional amendments on “national identity” and “cultural and ethical issues”, adopted in September, were vaguely defined and risked being used to justify discrimination.

Roma

Roma communities continued to face structural discrimination, particularly in education and housing. In February, in the case of *Salay v. Slovakia*, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the authorities had discriminated against a Roma boy and violated his right to education by wrongfully placing him in a “special” class for children with mild intellectual disabilities.

In April, an Amnesty International and ERRC briefing highlighted the continued lack of progress in eliminating segregation.⁴

In August, the advocate general of the Court of Justice of the EU issued an opinion in the case of *European Commission v. Slovakia*, concluding that Slovakia had failed to effectively address widespread segregation of Roma children in education.⁵

Roma people continued to face systemic discrimination in access to municipal housing, including being offered substandard social housing and subjected to short-term rental contracts that reinforced segregation.

LGBTI people’s rights

Parliament adopted constitutional amendments to legally recognize only two genders (male and female) and prohibit adoption outside “male-female” marriage, effectively banning adoption by LGBTI and non-binary people.⁶ The amendments, which also restricted comprehensive sexuality education, severely undermined the rights of LGBTI people and gender equality.

Right to social security

In June, parliament adopted amendments to social security laws that made access to social assistance conditional on participation in state-organized work or the acceptance of a “suitable” job offer. Civil society organizations and labour unions warned that the changes risked arbitrarily excluding vulnerable groups from essential support.⁷

Irresponsible arms transfers

The authorities maintained secrecy around arms exports to Israel, in conflict with the principles of transparency and reporting in the International Arms Trade Treaty.

Right to a healthy environment

Subsidies for fossil fuels continued, particularly for so-called “natural” gas, and progress on renewable energy remained slow. Performance on waste management remained well below expectations, with the 2035 landfill target very unlikely to be met.

