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Slovak Republic

Head of state: **Andrej Kiska (replaced Ivan Gašparovič in June)**

Head of government: **Robert Fico**

Roma children continued to face discrimination in the education system. The authorities extradited an asylum-seeker to the Russian Federation despite the risk of torture and other ill-treatment upon return. A referendum on proposals, which would block further rights for same-sex partnerships, was declared constitutional. In November, two detainees from the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay were transferred to Slovakia for resettlement. Slovakia had not ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Discrimination – Roma

In June, during the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Slovakia restated its commitment to tackling the issue of large numbers of Roma children in schools for children with mental disabilities. However, in July the Slovak Public Defender of Rights noted that Slovakia continued to violate Roma children's right to education through discriminatory diagnostic procedures.

The Ministry of Education persisted with plans developed together with the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma communities to construct "modular schools" ostensibly with the aim of increasing access to education. The Ministry planned to construct 15 such schools over the course of the year, several of them in Roma settlements. In May, however, the Plenipotentiary acknowledged that the project could result in increased segregation in education.

As part of the UPR, Slovakia acknowledged the need for measures to legalize informal Roma settlements. The Ministry of Transport and Construction developed proposals for a new Construction Act to address the issue of "illegal constructions", including informal Roma settlements. In July, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights expressed concern that the proposals lacked safeguards to protect residents of unauthorized buildings from

forced evictions. It emphasized that eviction decisions should be subject to judicial review and that affected residents had to have access to remedies and compensation.

Police violence

In January, the Inspection of the Ministry of Interior initiated a criminal investigation into the excessive use of force during a police operation in the Roma settlement of Budulovská in the town of Moldava nad Bodvou on 19 June 2013. Earlier complaints by affected residents had been dismissed. The police operation was criticized by the Public Defender of Rights for having used excessive force, derogatory treatment and arbitrary searches.

At the end of the year, the trial of police officers, accused of the ill-treatment of six Roma boys at a police station in 2009 in the city of Košice, was still pending before the district court. In March, one of the police officers, who was dismissed following the allegations of ill-treatment, was reinstated.

Rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

On 4 June, the National Council (Parliament) adopted a constitutional amendment which defined marriage as "a unique union between a man and a woman". The amendment explicitly excluded same-sex couples from entering a marriage.^[1] It came into force on 1 September.

In August, the organization "Alliance for Family" delivered a petition signed by 400,000 people to the President demanding a referendum that would ban any other form of partnership than a union between a man and a woman from being defined as "marriage". They also demanded to ban adoptions by same-sex couples, to deny legal recognition to any kind of partnership other than a "marriage between one man and one woman" and to prevent schools from providing mandatory sexuality education or information on ethical issues such as euthanasia, if the pupil or parent did not consent to such classes. In September, the President requested the Constitutional Court to review the constitutionality of a referendum on the issues raised by the petition. The Court ruled in October, that, with the exception of the question on the legal recognition of different forms of "partnership", all the other questions were constitutional. In November, the President set the date for the referendum for February 2015.

Torture and other ill-treatment

Slovakia continued to return individuals to countries where they would risk torture and other ill-treatment.

In July, Slovakia extradited Anzor Chentiev, an ethnic Chechen, to the Russian Federation where he was wanted in connection with various terrorism-related offences. Anzor Chentiev had been fighting against extradition for nine years. The Ministry of Justice approved the extradition despite the risk that he would be subjected to torture or other ill-treatment on his return and the fact that Anzor Chentiev had reapplied for asylum in Slovakia on 3 June.^[2]

In August, the Supreme Court rejected Aslan Yandiev's appeal against the decision of the Regional Court in Trnava allowing his extradition to the Russian Federation, where he was accused of membership of an armed group. The Court was satisfied that the assurances provided by the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation in February 2011 were "specific and reliable". His extradition had previously been blocked by the European Court of Human Rights as well as the Slovak Constitutional Court on the grounds that it would expose Aslan Yandiev to the risk of torture and other ill-treatment and that his asylum application in Slovakia was pending.

[1. Slovakia: The constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union between a man and a woman is discriminatory \(EUR 72/001/2014\)](#)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR72/001/2014/en

[2. Slovakia: Further information: Anzor Chentiev extradited to Russia \(EUR 72/005/2014\)](#)
www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR72/005/2014/en

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- [Referendum](#)
- [Roma](#)
- [Torture](#)
- [Women's rights](#)