

Document #2048755

AI – Amnesty International

Slovenia 2020

Asylum-seekers were denied access to asylum; refugees and migrants were forcibly returned to Croatia. The COVID-19 pandemic severely affected care home residents who accounted for most deaths. Freedom of peaceful assembly was under threat.

Rights of refugees and asylum-seekers

Asylum-seekers irregularly entering the country continued to be denied access to asylum and were forcibly returned, frequently in groups, to neighbouring Croatia. Such collective expulsions were against the principle of *non-refoulement*, which prohibits states from returning individuals to a country where there is real risk of serious human rights violations. In November, the Ombudsman’s Office criticized the treatment of hundreds of asylum-seekers by the authorities. The asylum-seekers were detained under inhumane conditions in the Centre for Foreigners in Postojna, some before being deported to Croatia. There were reports of widespread violence and abuse by Croatian police.

The Administrative Court ruled in December that the authorities violated the right of a Cameroonian national to seek asylum when he was deported without procedure to Croatia and subsequently to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Court found the authorities ignored the man’s asylum request and failed to provide translation, legal assistance or to assess the risk of *refoulement*, in violation of domestic and EU law.

In August, the Supreme Court ruled that the accelerated returns of irregularly entering migrants and asylum-seekers to Croatia, based on a bilateral agreement between the two countries from 2006, were lawful. The case was referred to the Constitutional Court.

In December, the government proposed to Parliament changes to the Law on Foreigners and the Law on International Protection which would further restrict asylum-seekers’, refugees’ and migrants’ access to protection.

Violence against women and girls

The definition of rape in the Criminal Code remained based on the use of force, threat of force or coercion, rather than consent, contrary to international human rights law and standards. As part of a wider reform of the Criminal Code, the Ministry of Justice proposed to remove use of force as a condition for the commission of offence. However, the proposal does not fully rely on the absence of consent.

Right to health

The COVID-19 pandemic severely affected care home residents, accounting for almost 60% of all COVID-19 deaths. The Ministry of Health was criticized during the first wave over deciding not to hospitalize care home residents and instead rely on an advance medical assessment, allegedly conducted in the care home without patients’ knowledge or consent, and which may have deprived some people of hospital care. Instead, care homes had to set up their own isolation units which lacked space, technical equipment and trained staff. Consequently, they did not adequately protect patients while risking exposing other residents and staff to infection.

In August, the Ministry of Health announced new draft legislation on long-term care for older people to address the issue of insufficient accommodation and care capacities for the growing elderly population.

Discrimination

Roma continued to face widespread discrimination, high levels of unemployment and social exclusion. Many continued living in segregated settlements in inadequate housing, lacking security of tenure and access to adequate water, electricity, sanitation and public transport.

In March, the European Court of Human Rights, in a majority decision which largely ignored the practical obstacles faced by Roma living in informal settlements to access basic services, ruled that Slovenia did not violate the rights of two Roma families by failing to ensure access to water and sanitation.¹ The families claimed their communities were consistently denied access to a public water supply based on living in informal settlements. The ruling became final in September after a referral to the Court’s Grand Chamber was rejected.

Freedoms of assembly, association and expression

During anti-government demonstrations between May and December, police conducted random identity checks, detained and fined peaceful protesters simply for carrying anti-government placards and subjected them to legal proceedings. In November, the authorities considerably increased fines for organizing and participating in public gatherings in defiance of a blanket ban, which was in place intermittently throughout the year.

1. [Slovenia: ECHR judgment is a blow to Roma communities \(Press release, 10 March\)](#)

© Amnesty International

ecoi.net summary:

Report on the human rights
situation covering 2020

Country:

Slovenia

Source:

[AI – Amnesty International](#)

Original link:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/europe-and-central-asia/slovenia/report-slovenia/>

Document type:

Periodical Report

Language:

English

Published:

7 April 2021

Document ID:

2048755

Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum
Research and Documentation (ACCORD)

Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien
[T \(Telefon\)](#) +43 1 589 00 583
[F \(Fax\)](#) +43 1 589 00 589
info@ecoi.net

Contact
Imprint & Disclaimer
F.A.Q.
Data Protection Notice

ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

