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SLOVAKIA 2017/2018

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) rejected Slovakia's complaint against mandatory refugee relocation quotas. The discrimination of Roma remained widespread, and the European Commission continued an infringement procedure against Slovakia for discrimination against Roma pupils in schools.

Discrimination – Roma

Police and security forces

In January, a new crime prevention strategy was adopted aimed at strengthening policing in Roma settlements; it triggered concern by NGOs over ethnic profiling and discrimination. In September, the European Roma Rights Centre filed a civil complaint against the Ministry of Interior for the breach of anti-discrimination law for enhanced policing in Roma settlements.

In March, four Roma who had alleged the excessive use of force by police in April 2015 in the village of Vrbnica filed a complaint with the Constitutional Court with the support of the NGO Centre for Civil and Human Rights. The Department of Control and Inspection Service (SKIS) had pressed charges against the chief of the police operation in December 2016, but failed to hold the

individual police officers who had participated in the action to account. The complaint remained pending at the end of the year.

In May, the European Roma Rights Centre published a video of police officers beating Roma residents with batons during a police operation in the village of Zborov on 16 April. The residents did not appear to resist or engage in violence. In May, the police president stated that a number of the operation's aspects seemed inappropriate. In July, the Ministry of Interior opened an investigation into the case.

In May and August, the police opened investigations targeting six victims of alleged excessive use of force by the police in the Roma settlement in the village of Moldava nad Bodvou in June 2013. The police accused the victims of having committed the criminal offence of falsely accusing the police of wrongdoing.

In May, the District Court in Košice again acquitted the police officers accused of the ill-treatment of six Roma boys at a police station in 2009. The Court held that there was insufficient evidence. The Prosecutor appealed against the decision.

Right to education

The infringement proceeding launched in 2015 by the European Commission against Slovakia for the systemic discrimination and segregation of Roma children in education remained open. In March, the Minister of Education stated that complex reform plans were under way, but it was unclear what these consisted of. The 2016 amendments to the School Act had limited impact since entering into force.¹ They failed to address the systemic over-representation of Roma children in special schools and classes for children with mild disabilities. Mainstream primary schools lacked the human and financial resources to tackle the segregation of Roma pupils.

In February, the NGOs eduRoma and European Roma Rights Centre criticized the results of the Ministry of Education's 2016 funding reforms for schools educating students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The responsibility for classifying students as having a "social disadvantage" was given to psychologists rather than social services. There were cases of misclassifications of students and consequently insufficient resources were allocated to schools. The Ministry temporarily suspended the measure, and at the end of the year, pupils were assessed on the basis of their parents' situation.

In September, following the 2016 closure of the ethnically segregated Primary School Hollého Street in the town of Žilina, Roma pupils were transferred to a number of other schools. This potentially positive move was undermined by the authorities failing to provide sufficient support for Roma pupils, notably transport costs. In March, some non-Roma parents at one of the schools protested against the transfer of Roma children to the school.

Refugees and asylum-seekers

In September, the CJEU rejected the application submitted in 2015 by Slovakia and Hungary against the mandatory relocation scheme which aimed to relocate refugees from EU member states such as Greece and Italy. The CJEU held that the EU institutions can adopt the provisional measures necessary to respond effectively and swiftly to an emergency situation characterized by a sudden inflow of displaced persons. By the end of 2017, Slovakia had accepted only 16 asylum-seekers of the 902 that it was assigned.

1. Slovakia: A lesson in discrimination – segregation of Romani children in primary education ([EUR 72/5640/2017](#))

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