



Country report 2024 on anti-discrimination: highlights



Slovakia



Population and Minorities:

Slovakia has a population of 5.4 million, with significant minorities including Hungarians (7.75%) and Roma. Officially, 67,000 Roma were recorded in the 2021 census, but estimates suggest around 450,000 Roma live in the country.



Discrimination Against Roma:

Roma face widespread discrimination and social exclusion, with many living in segregated settlements and facing risks of forced eviction. A 2023 court ruling awarded damages to Roma evicted in 2012, recognising it as discrimination.



Educational Segregation of Roma Children:

Many Roma children are educated in segregated schools or classes and often misdiagnosed with intellectual disabilities. Recent legal cases have upheld Roma children's rights against segregation.



Institutional Responses to Roma Discrimination:

The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights and the Office of the Public Defender of Rights continuously highlight the issue of Roma segregation in education. A 2023 amendment to the Schools Act defined 'school segregation' and provided guidelines for desegregation.



LGBTQ+ Rights:

Same-sex marriage and civil partnerships are not recognised in Slovakia. Homophobic attitudes are prevalent, and significant portions of LGBTQ+ people feeling unsafe in public spaces. The government has not adopted comprehensive measures to combat homophobia.



Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities:

Persons with disabilities face numerous barriers. The educational system lacks inclusivity, and children with disabilities are frequently placed in special classes



Main Legislation:

The Anti-Discrimination Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination on a wide range of grounds and mandates measures to prevent it. The ADA covers all fields mentioned in EU directives and beyond.



Enforcement Challenges:

Despite progressive legislation, enforcement is weak, with discrimination cases rarely reaching courts. In 2023, only two out of six discrimination cases were ruled partially in favor of the claimants. Court proceedings are often lengthy, hindering access to justice.



Equality Bodies and Their Effectiveness:

The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights is the designated equality body, handling complaints and issuing non-binding opinions. However, it has been criticised for inefficiency. In 2023, the centre only found discrimination in 23 cases out of 177 complaints examined.



Key issues:

Despite satisfactory transposition of EU directives, implementation lags due to various systemic issues, including racial prejudice, lack of awareness, ineffective equality bodies, and insufficient government support and resources for anti-discrimination policies.