



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Concluding observations on the combined sixth to ninth periodic reports of Serbia*

1. The Committee considered the combined sixth to ninth periodic reports of Serbia,¹ submitted in one document, at its 3199th and 3200th meetings,² held on 14 and 15 April 2026. At its 3216th meeting, held on 27 April 2026, it adopted the present concluding observations.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined sixth to ninth periodic reports of the State Party. The Committee also welcomes the constructive dialogue with the high-level delegation and thanks the delegation for the information that it provided during the Committee's consideration of the reports and after the dialogue.

B. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

3. The Committee notes that the State Party declares that it is unable to monitor the application of the Covenant in Kosovo³ owing to the fact that, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), civil authority there is exercised by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

C. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the State Party's accession to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in September 2023.

5. The Committee also welcomes the following legislative, institutional and policy measures taken by the State Party:

(a) The adoption of the Programme for Combating Trafficking in Persons 2024–2029, and the related action plan, in March 2024, which ensures coordination among different entities with regard to combating human trafficking;

(b) The adoption, by the Minister of the Interior, of the rules on the form and content of travel documents for refugees, in November 2023, which make it possible for refugees to apply for travel documents;

* Adopted by the Committee at its 117th session (13 April–1 May 2026).

¹ CERD/C/SRB/6-9.

² See CERD/C/SR.3199 and CERD/C/SR.3200.

³ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).



(c) The adoption of the strategy for the prevention of, and protection from, discrimination for 2022–2030, in January 2022, and the subsequent amendments to the strategy, aimed at combating discrimination and enhancing prevention and protection mechanisms;

(d) The adoption of amendments to the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination in 2021, which prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, incitement to discrimination and segregation;

(e) The adoption of the updated Law on the Protector of Citizens, in November 2021, which establishes a transparent process for the appointment of the Protector;

(f) The adoption of the strategy for the social inclusion of Roma for 2022–2030, in February 2022, which combats the marginalization of and discrimination against Roma communities in the fields of education, housing, employment, health and social protection;

(g) The adoption of the National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes 2021–2026, in October 2021;

(h) The adoption of the National Strategy for Exercising the Rights of Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences 2020–2025, in July 2020;

(i) The establishment of the National Coalition to End Child Marriage, in 2019, which coordinates the eradication of the harmful practice of child marriage;

(j) The adoption of the Law on Free Legal Aid, in November 2018, to guarantee equal access to justice for disadvantaged groups.

D. Concerns and recommendations

Statistics

6. The Committee notes the statistics on the demographic composition of the population, disaggregated by ethnicity, provided by the State Party's delegation during the dialogue, which were derived from the population census conducted in 2022. It also notes that the census allowed for information to be gathered on the ethnic composition of the State Party based on the principle of self-identification. Nevertheless, the Committee regrets the lack of detailed and comprehensive information on the socioeconomic situation of ethnic minority groups and non-citizens, such as migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons, as the State Party does not collect and produce statistics on socioeconomic situation disaggregated by ethnicity. This lack of information limits the Committee's ability to properly assess the situation of ethnic minority groups and non-citizens, including their socioeconomic status and any progress achieved by implementing targeted policies and programmes (arts. 1, 2 and 5).

7. Recalling its general recommendation No. 8 (1990) concerning the interpretation and application of article 1 (1) and (4) of the Convention, and its guidelines for reporting under the Convention,⁴ the Committee recommends that the State Party collect and produce disaggregated statistics on the socioeconomic situation of ethnic minority groups, including Roma communities, and of non-citizens, such as refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants and stateless persons, and on their access to education, employment, healthcare and housing, with a view to creating an empirical basis for assessing the equal enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Convention.

Convention in the domestic legal order

8. The Committee notes that ratified international treaties are part of the domestic legal order pursuant to article 16 of the Constitution. It nevertheless regrets the lack of information on cases in which the provisions of the Convention were invoked before or applied by domestic courts (art. 2).

⁴ CERD/C/2007/1.

9. **The Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen its training programmes and awareness-raising campaigns, in particular for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and law enforcement officials, to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are invoked, when relevant, in domestic courts and applied by judicial personnel and court officials. It requests the State Party to include in its next periodic report specific examples of the application of the Convention by the domestic courts.**

Institutional framework

10. The Committee takes note of the highly developed institutional and policy framework in the State Party for the implementation of the Convention, in particular the capacity of the Protector of Citizens, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the National Assembly to examine, alongside judicial authorities, complaints and petitions regarding violations of the rights protected by the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination. It is nevertheless concerned about the lack of information regarding collaboration among these various institutions, the effectiveness of their actions in preventing and combating racial discrimination, and the procedures for victims to access the institutions.

11. **The Committee recommends that the State Party specify in its next periodic report the system of cooperation among the various institutions involved in combating racial discrimination and the measures taken to inform the public about how to submit complaints before these institutions.**

Legislative framework

12. The Committee takes note of the information provided on provisions of the Criminal Code on the prohibition of incitement to racial hatred (art. 317 (1)), damaging an individual's reputation on racial grounds (art. 174), public expression of threats on racial grounds (art. 387 (4)), expressions of racial superiority (art. 387 (3)) and dissemination of materials that support or incite hatred, discrimination or violence (art. 387 (4)). It notes that a racist motive is considered an aggravating circumstance pursuant to article 54a of the Criminal Code. It also notes the information on the adoption of the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament by the National Assembly in December 2020. The Committee further notes the information provided by the delegation on the adoption by the National Assembly of the Law on Public Information and Media and the Law on Electronic Media, in October 2023, and subsequent amendments in 2025, which criminalize the dissemination of hate speech in media. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about the exemption from liability for hate speech offences for journalistic texts allegedly published without intent to incite racial discrimination, hatred or violence, or under the guise of criticism, pursuant to article 87 of the Law on Public Information and Media. It is also concerned about the exclusion of digital information-exchange platforms from media regulations and the underregulation of responsibility for user-generated content, such as hate speech in reader comments (art. 4).

13. **Reiterating its previous recommendations⁵ and recalling its general recommendations No. 7 (1985) relating to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, No. 15 (1993) on article 4 of the Convention and No. 35 (2013) on combating racist hate speech, the Committee recommends that the State Party review its legislative framework and align it with article 4 of the Convention, in particular to combat all forms of racist hate speech and the dissemination of negative stereotypes targeting ethnic minority groups, including Roma communities, and non-citizens, in the media, on the Internet and in social media.**

Complaints of racial discrimination, hate speech and hate crime

14. The Committee notes the adoption, in 2018, of the guidelines for the criminal prosecution of hate crimes and also notes the training provided by the Judicial Academy, targeting prosecutors, focused on racial discrimination and hate crime. It also notes the statistics provided by the delegation during the dialogue that indicate that between 2021 and 2025, 326 complaints relating to discrimination, hate crime and hate speech were registered

⁵ CERD/C/SRB/CO/2-5, para. 14.

pursuant to articles 128, 174, 317 and 387 of the Criminal Code, resulting in 88 investigations, 48 indictments and 40 convictions. However, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The underreporting of incidents related to racial discrimination, hate crime and hate speech, due to a lack of trust, among victims, in law enforcement agencies, gaps in the State Party's anti-racial discrimination structure, and the perception that racial discrimination and hate crime are normalized and widespread;

(b) Widespread racist hate speech and the dissemination of negative stereotypes of members of ethnic minority groups, particularly Roma communities and the Albanian ethnic minority, and of non-citizens in the media, on the Internet and on social media, and the reported failure of the Press Council and the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media to respond promptly to hate speech in the media, on the Internet and in social media;

(c) The use of racist hate speech by politicians against members of groups protected under the Convention, particularly members of ethnic minority groups and non-citizens, and the failure to adequately recognize, investigate, process and prosecute hate speech by politicians.

15. The Committee draws the State Party's attention to its general recommendation No. 31 (2005) on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system, and recalls that an absence of complaints and legal action relating to racial discrimination may reveal a lack of suitable legislation, poor awareness of the legal remedies available, a lack of trust in the judicial system, a fear of reprisals or a lack of will on the part of the authorities to prosecute the perpetrators of such acts. Recalling its general recommendations No. 7 (1985) and No. 15 (1993) relating to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention and No. 35 (2013) on combating racist hate speech, the Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen its efforts to combat racial discrimination, hate crime and hate speech, including by:

(a) Ensuring the effective implementation of its legislative framework on racial discrimination, hate crime and hate speech;

(b) Strengthening the mandate of the Press Council and the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media and allocating adequate resources to enable the two entities to carry out their mandates and activities effectively, in close cooperation with Internet service providers, social media platforms and members of groups protected under the Convention;

(c) Publicly condemning racist hate speech and distancing itself from racist hate speech by politicians, and ensuring that such acts are investigated and appropriately sanctioned;

(d) Improving the training programmes for officials engaged in the administration of justice, including police officers and other law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges, on racial discrimination, hate crime and hate speech, including on the identification and registration of such crimes;

(e) Encouraging the reporting of racial discrimination, hate crime and hate speech and ensuring the availability and accessibility of safe reporting channels to those who are vulnerable to racial discrimination, including by assessing the systems for reporting and registering complaints of racial discrimination and hate crime;

(f) Undertaking public education campaigns on the rights enshrined in the Convention and on how to file complaints of racial discrimination.

Racial profiling and racially motivated police violence

16. The Committee notes the information provided by the delegation during the dialogue on the adoption in 2023 of the code of ethics for police officers and regarding training provided to law enforcement officials on human rights and non-discrimination principles. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned that the legislative framework on law enforcement lacks a clear prohibition of racial profiling and racially motivated police violence. It is also concerned about the lack of detailed information on measures taken to combat racial profiling

and racially motivated police violence, given reports of racial profiling and racially motivated excessive use of force by the police, particularly against non-citizens (art. 4).

17. Recalling its general recommendation No. 36 (2020) on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Review its legislative framework to explicitly prohibit racial profiling by law enforcement officials during police stops, identity checks and other police operations, and racially motivated violence and excessive use of force;

(b) Establish an independent monitoring body with the competence to receive complaints of racial profiling and racially motivated police violence, with safe and accessible reporting channels for victims, and to conduct thorough and impartial investigations into all allegations of racial profiling and racially motivated police violence;

(c) Collect data on complaints of racial profiling and racially motivated police violence, on investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sanctions in such cases and on reparations provided to victims, and include them in its next periodic report.

Accountability for serious violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law

18. The Committee notes the information provided by the State Party's delegation on the implementation of the National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes 2021–2026. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about the delay in the prosecution by domestic courts of persons accused of serious violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law, particularly high-ranking officials. The Committee is also concerned about:

(a) Reports of an overall decrease in the number of investigations and prosecutions, delays in trials due to limited resources, and insufficient witness protection;

(b) Slow progress in investigating the fate of missing persons;

(c) Cases of glorification of convicted war criminals and denial of judicially established facts, including by State officials and politicians, and the inadequate and limited scope of the prohibition of public denials or attempts to justify crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity in the legislative framework, particularly the Criminal Code (arts. 2, 6 and 7).

19. The Committee recommends that the State Party:⁶

(a) Accelerate the prosecution of the remaining cases involving persons accused of serious violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law;

(b) Review its legislative framework, particularly the Criminal Code, to explicitly criminalize the glorification of convicted war criminals and public denials or attempts to justify crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity as defined by international law;

(c) Investigate without delay the situation of missing persons;

(d) Adopt measures to monitor and combat hate speech and incitement to and the promotion of racial hatred and discrimination, including on the Internet and social media and including by officials and politicians, and ensure that such incidents are investigated effectively, thoroughly and impartially and, where appropriate, prosecuted and punished with penalties commensurate to the offences.

⁶ See also related recommendations adopted by the Committee on Enforced Disappearances in March 2025 (CED/C/SRB/OAI/1), and the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence in the report on his 2022 visit to the State Party (A/HRC/54/24/Add.2).

Situation of ethnic minority groups

20. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the delegation on recruitment campaigns targeting members of ethnic minority groups in order to increase their representation in law enforcement agencies and on the adoption of amendments to the Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts to expand the use of languages of national minorities in the National Assembly. It also takes note of the information on the elections of members of the 24 national councils of national minorities in 2022. However, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The inadequate level of representation of members of ethnic minority groups, including Roma communities, in the judiciary, as only 582 of 2,500 judges and 63 of 780 prosecutors are members of ethnic minority groups;

(b) Reports of lack of cooperation by municipal administrations with the national councils of national minorities and challenges faced by national councils in carrying out activities, including due to inadequate allocation of resources;

(c) Reports of the low representation of ethnic minority groups in the public sector, in law enforcement agencies, in elected bodies and in decision-making and high-ranking positions, particularly in the regions inhabited mainly by members of those groups;

(d) Reports of the refusal to use the languages of ethnic minority groups in administrative procedures and the refusal of municipal authorities to register the names of newborns in ethnic minority scripts, notwithstanding the guarantees and safeguards pursuant to the Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts (arts. 2 and 5).

21. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Adopt measures to ensure cooperation between municipalities and national councils of national minorities and allocate adequate human, technical and financial resources to national councils of national minorities to enable them to carry out their mandate effectively;**

(b) **Adopt measures to ensure fair and equitable representation of ethnic minority groups in the public sector, in the judiciary, in law enforcement agencies, in elected bodies and in decision-making and high-ranking positions, particularly in regions inhabited mainly by members of those groups;**

(c) **Ensure the effective implementation of its legislative framework, in particular the Law on the Official Use of Languages and Scripts, to guarantee the use of ethnic minority languages in administrative procedures and the registration of names of newborns in ethnic minority scripts.**

Suspension of permanent addresses

22. The Committee notes the information, provided by the delegation during the dialogue, on the application of the law on residence of citizens. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about reports of discriminatory application of that law resulting in the suspension of the permanent addresses of members of ethnic minority groups, particularly Albanian ethnic minorities in the south of the country, and their delisting from the population register, which restricts the enjoyment of their rights protected under the Convention, in particular their civil and political rights, and prevents them from renewing their identity documents and passports. The Committee is also concerned about reports of written notification not being provided to deregistered individuals, which prevents them from accessing effective remedies.

23. The Committee recommends that the State Party investigate reports of discriminatory application of the law on residence of citizens against members of ethnic minorities and ensure that all decisions of suspension of permanent addresses are provided in writing to allow those who are impacted to access effective remedies.

Situation of Roma communities

24. The Committee welcomes the information on the adoption of the strategy for the social inclusion of Roma for 2022–2030, aimed at combating discrimination against Roma

communities in the fields of education, housing, employment, health and social protection. It also notes the information provided by the delegation on the work and activities of the Roma coordinators, pedagogical assistants and health mediators. However, the Committee is concerned about reports of:

(a) Structural discrimination against, and marginalization and social exclusion of, Roma communities and the continued widespread existence of negative stereotypes, prejudices and intolerance against them;

(b) Substandard living conditions faced by members of Roma communities in informal settlements with no proper infrastructure and limited access to basic services, such as access to safe drinking water, sanitation and electricity, and the continued subjection of Roma communities to forced eviction, without alternative housing or compensation being offered, notwithstanding the information provided by the State Party's delegation on a ruling adopted by the High Court in Belgrade in 2023, against the city of Belgrade, that protected the Roma communities from eviction;

(c) High rates of unemployment among members of Roma communities and their overrepresentation in the informal economy, with poor working conditions and without social protection;

(d) Overrepresentation of Roma children in residential and foster care and in the juvenile justice system;

(e) Challenges faced by members of Roma communities in accessing social protection due to the lack of identity documents and permanent addresses, and about their exclusion from access to social protection due to errors resulting from the use and application of algorithmic and automated decision-making tools to determine eligibility for social assistance, pursuant to the Law on the Social Card.

25. Recalling its general recommendation No. 27 (2000) on discrimination against Roma, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Adopt measures to combat structural discrimination in all spheres of life, to discourage the stigmatization and stereotyping of Roma communities, to ensure that Roma who are victims of discrimination have access to effective remedies, to provide training on Roma issues for law enforcement and judicial officers and journalists and to conduct awareness-raising campaigns to promote Roma identity and culture;

(b) Adopt effective measures to ensure access in Roma settlements to basic social services and halt the forced eviction of Roma communities, including by regularizing informal settlements, and when house demolition or forced eviction cannot be avoided, ensure that the families and individuals affected are provided with alternative adequate housing and compensation and that the 2023 ruling of the High Court in Belgrade against forced eviction is implemented effectively;

(c) Take measures to increase the employment rate among members of Roma communities, including measures aimed at improving the vocational qualifications of members of Roma communities and combating discrimination in the field of employment, and to address the overrepresentation of Roma communities in the informal economy, including by revising the legislative framework in order to fully regulate the informal economy with a view to ensuring the full enjoyment of labour-related rights by all persons;

(d) Adopt measures to address the overrepresentation of Roma children in residential and foster care and in the juvenile justice system, including by conducting a human rights-based review of its legislative framework to repeal ethnically biased laws, to prevent any discriminatory impacts on Roma children and to guarantee the full conformity of the laws with international human rights principles;

(e) Adopt measures to address barriers faced by members of Roma communities in accessing social protection, including by strengthening its efforts in issuing identity documents, ensuring that access to social protection is possible without a permanent address and refraining from using algorithmic and automated decision-making tools to determine eligibility for social assistance.

Right to education

26. The Committee welcomes the adoption, in May 2021, of the amendment to the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination that prohibits segregation. It notes the information on the provision of scholarships and other measures to ensure the enrolment of Roma children in education. However, the Committee is concerned that other laws do not prohibit segregation, namely, the law on the foundations of the education system, which limits the impacts of measures to combat segregation in education. It is also concerned about the reported low attendance and high dropout rates at all levels of education among Roma children, in particular in secondary and higher education, and the persistence of de facto segregation of Roma children in education.

27. Reiterating its previous recommendations,⁷ the Committee recommends that the State Party review its legislative framework, in particular the law on the foundations of the education system, in order to prohibit segregation in education and ensure the effective implementation of the prohibition. It also recommends that the State Party strengthen its efforts to end de facto segregation in schools and intensify efforts to ensure access by Roma children to quality and inclusive education, with a view to increasing school enrolment rates and combating school dropout, including by strengthening the support system for Roma children and families and by conducting awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of education, targeting Roma children and young persons and their families.

Right to health

28. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the delegation about the legislative framework on the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and on access to medical care and health services for members of Roma communities. It also takes note of the information on the activities undertaken by Roma coordinators, pedagogical assistants and health mediators to facilitate access by members of Roma communities to healthcare. However, the Committee is concerned about reports of:

- (a) Unequal treatment and discrimination in access to healthcare and widespread negative stereotypes about members of Roma communities perpetuated in medical professions;
- (b) Structural racial discrimination and stigmatizing treatment of Roma women in obstetric and maternal care;
- (c) The lower life expectancy for members of Roma communities compared with that of the general population;
- (d) Interruption in the services of Roma health mediators for nine months in 2025 due to institutional challenges (arts. 2 and 5).

29. Recalling its general recommendation No. 37 (2024) on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health, the Committee recommends that the State Party take comprehensive measures to guarantee the enjoyment of the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health for all persons, including members of Roma communities, without discrimination, including by:

- (a) **Effectively implementing its legislative framework, particularly the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, and adopting clear protocols to prevent discriminatory treatment and negative stereotyping of Roma communities;**
- (b) **Combating discriminatory practices in obstetric and maternal care and conducting awareness-raising campaigns targeting healthcare professionals on racial discrimination and human rights standards;**

⁷ CERD/C/SRB/CO/2-5, para. 21.

(c) **Adopting measures to close the life expectancy gap for Roma communities, including measures to improve access to preventive and primary healthcare;**

(d) **Adopting measures to strengthen the Roma health mediator service, including by allocating sufficient financial and human resources to the service.**

Child marriage

30. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the National Coalition to End Child Marriage and the guidance issued to centres for social work on preventing child marriages. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about the prevalence of child marriage in Roma communities and that the legislative framework still permits marriage at the age of 16 with court approval, notwithstanding the information provided on the draft amendments to the Family Law aimed at eliminating child marriage (arts. 2 and 5).

31. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 25 (2000) on gender-related dimensions of racial discrimination, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Expedite the adoption of the amendments to the Family Law to eliminate and criminalize child marriage;**

(b) **Develop awareness-raising campaigns on the harmful effects of child marriage on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls, targeting Roma communities, religious leaders, judges and prosecutors.**

Migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees

32. The Committee welcomes the various amendments made to the State's legislative framework to facilitate the employment of asylum-seekers and the procedure for recognized asylum-seekers to apply for a permanent residency. It also welcomes the adoption of the rules on the form and content of travel documents for refugees by the Minister of the Interior, which make it possible for refugees to apply for travel documents. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) Reports of the denial of access to the asylum procedure for migrants and asylum-seekers in need of international protection at border crossings and airports, due to the requirement, stipulated in the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, that applicants must be in the State Party to lodge an application, and resulting from reported pushbacks at border crossings, carried out by members of law enforcement agencies in violation of the principle of non-refoulement and without individualized assessment, and often entailing excessive use of force and ill-treatment;

(b) Reports of racially motivated excessive use of force in law enforcement operations targeting migrants and asylum-seekers in need of international protection at border crossings;

(c) Reports of substandard conditions and inadequate medical care in reception centres and migration detention facilities for migrants and asylum-seekers and reports of human rights violations perpetrated by law enforcement officials against asylum-seekers and arbitrarily detained migrants, including excessive use of force, torture and ill-treatment;

(d) Reports of the application of the removal procedure without the comprehensive individualized assessments required under the principle of non-refoulement and without adequate due process guarantees;

(e) Reports of arbitrary detention of migrants, following the issuance of removal orders, in informal locations and in inhuman conditions, including without access to food and drinking water;

(f) The lack of investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sanctions in relation to alleged human rights violations and abuses perpetrated against migrants and asylum-seekers by law enforcement officials, including racial discrimination, use of racial profiling and racially motivated excessive use of force during law enforcement operations, arbitrary detention and torture and ill-treatment (arts. 2, 5 and 6).

33. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 30 (2004) on discrimination against non-citizens, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Refrain from engaging in pushbacks and collective expulsion;**
- (b) **Adopt measures to ensure the availability of the asylum procedure for migrants and asylum-seekers in need of international protection at border crossings and airports in accordance with internationally recognized standards, including the principle of non-refoulement, and, to that end, review the legislative framework and align it with international human rights law and the objectives and purposes of the Convention;**
- (c) **Adopt measures to improve the living conditions in reception centres and migration detention facilities in accordance with international standards, and ensure that all persons detained in those facilities have access to medical care, interpreters, adequate food and social support;**
- (d) **Ensure that immigration detention is applied only as a measure of last resort, for the shortest possible period and after an assessment of its legality, necessity and proportionality on a case-by-case basis, and ensure due process for all those held in migration detention facilities;**
- (e) **Ensure that all removal procedures are conducted in full compliance with international law obligations, including respect for the principle of non-refoulement, due process guarantees and comprehensive individualized assessments of protection needs under international human rights law and international refugee law, in all cases of deportation, removal and expulsion;**
- (f) **Ensure accountability and end impunity, including by conducting effective, thorough and impartial investigations into all reports of human rights abuses and violations against asylum-seekers and migrants perpetrated by law enforcement officials, including racial discrimination, use of racial profiling and racially motivated excessive use of force during law enforcement operations, arbitrary detention and torture and ill-treatment.**

Trafficking in persons

34. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Programme for Combating Trafficking in Persons 2024–2029 and the relevant action plan, in March 2024, aimed at ensuring a comprehensive approach and coordination in combating trafficking in persons. It notes the information provided on the drafting of legislation to regulate the prevention of trafficking and protection of victims pursuant to the Programme for Combating Trafficking in Persons 2024–2029. However, the Committee is concerned about:

- (a) The absence of a policy framework for the protection of victims and witnesses to replace the National Strategy for the Realization of the Rights of Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences for 2020–2025;
- (b) Reports of the persistence of trafficking in persons, including for sexual and labour exploitation, in particular of Roma women and children and of migrants;
- (c) Reports of low rates of prosecution and conviction in cases of trafficking in persons;
- (d) Reports of inconsistent application of victim protection measures.

35. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Develop and adopt a policy framework on the protection of victims and witnesses;**
- (b) **Take measures to ensure that all cases of trafficking in persons are investigated thoroughly, that perpetrators, if convicted, receive adequate and deterrent punishment and that victims have access to justice, shelter and rehabilitation services;**

(c) **Adopt measures to ensure the use of trafficking victim identification indicators by law enforcement agencies to actively identify victims of trafficking in persons and ensure protection for victims.**

Legal aid

36. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Law on Free Legal Aid, aimed at guaranteeing equal access to justice for disadvantaged groups, including victims of trafficking, asylum-seekers and migrants. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about reports of shortcomings in the provision and availability of legal aid at the municipal level and barriers faced by members of ethnic minority groups, non-citizens and trafficking victims in accessing legal aid (arts. 5 and 6).

37. **The Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen its efforts to implement the Law on Free Legal Aid and enhance the availability and provision of legal aid for those vulnerable to racial discrimination, in particular members of ethnic minority groups, including Roma communities, refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants and victims of trafficking in persons, including by allocating adequate resources at the municipal level and other levels. It also recommends that the State Party take measures to inform those involved in the judicial process about, and raise their awareness of, the Law on Free Legal Aid, the eligibility requirements, the scope of the programme and the mechanism for reviewing applications for providing legal aid.**

Training, education and other measures to combat prejudice and intolerance

38. The Committee notes the information provided by the delegation that civic education was introduced in 2002 as an elective subject, offered alongside religious education, at all levels of pre-university education and that it includes topics on human rights and equality. It also notes that human rights are included in teacher training programmes. However, the Committee is concerned about the lack of programmes to promote human rights education, including with regard to racial discrimination, at the university level. It regrets that students must choose between civic education and religious education and that the percentage of students choosing religious education is higher. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of information on awareness-raising campaigns targeting the general public, law enforcement officials and judicial authorities on the importance of non-discrimination, cultural diversity and tolerance (art. 7).

39. **The Committee recommends that the State Party expand the civic education classes and include human rights as an obligatory topic at all levels of education. It also recommends that the State Party conduct public awareness-raising campaigns, with measurable outcomes, targeting the general public, civil servants, law enforcement officials and judicial authorities, on the importance of ethnic and cultural diversity and on combating racial discrimination and promoting tolerance.**

E. Other recommendations

Ratification of other treaties

40. **Bearing in mind the indivisibility of all human rights, the Committee encourages the State Party to consider ratifying those international human rights treaties that it has not yet ratified, in particular treaties with provisions that have direct relevance to communities that may be subjected to racial discrimination, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.**

Amendment to article 8 of the Convention

41. **The Committee recommends that the State Party accept the amendment to article 8 (6) of the Convention adopted on 15 January 1992 at the fourteenth meeting of States Parties to the Convention and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/111.**

Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

42. In the light of its general recommendation No. 33 (2009) on follow-up to the Durban Review Conference, the Committee recommends that, when implementing the Convention in its domestic legal order, the State Party give effect to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted in September 2001 by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, taking into account the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference, held in Geneva in April 2009. The Committee requests that the State Party include in its next periodic report specific information on action plans and other measures taken to implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action at the national level.

International Decade for People of African Descent

43. In its resolution 79/193, the General Assembly proclaimed 2025–2034 the Second International Decade for People of African Descent. Also in that resolution, the Assembly decided to extend the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent adopted in its resolution 69/16, with a view to ensuring continuing efforts in promoting the respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of people of African descent. In the light of this development, the Committee recommends that the State Party implement the programme of activities in collaboration with people of African descent and include in its next periodic report information on the measures adopted in that framework, taking into account the Committee's general recommendation No. 34 (2011) on racial discrimination against people of African descent.

Consultations with civil society

44. The Committee recommends that the State Party continue consulting and increasing its dialogue with civil society organizations working in the area of human rights protection, in particular those working to combat racial discrimination, in connection with the preparation of the next periodic report and in follow-up to the present concluding observations.

Dissemination of information

45. The Committee recommends that the State Party's reports be made readily available and accessible to the public at the time of their submission and that the concluding observations of the Committee with respect to those reports be similarly made available in the official and other national minority languages, as appropriate.

Common core document

46. The Committee encourages the State Party to update its common core document, which dates to June 2022, in accordance with the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, in particular those on the common core document, as adopted at the fifth inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies, held in June 2006.⁸ In the light of General Assembly resolution 68/268, the Committee urges the State Party to observe the limit of 42,400 words for such documents.

Paragraphs of particular importance

47. The Committee wishes to draw the attention of the State Party to the particular importance of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 15 (complaints of racial discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes), 19 (accountability for serious violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law) and 33 (migrants,

⁸ [HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#), chap. I.

asylum-seekers and refugees) above and requests the State Party to provide detailed information in its next periodic report on the concrete measures taken to implement those recommendations.

Follow-up to the present concluding observations

48. In accordance with article 9 (1) of the Convention and rule 74 of its rules of procedure, the Committee requests the State Party to provide, within one year of the adoption of the present concluding observations, information on its implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 23 (suspension of permanent addresses), 25 (b) and (e) (situation of Roma communities) and 31 (b) (child marriage) above.

Preparation of the next periodic report

49. The Committee recommends that the State Party submit its combined tenth to fourteenth periodic reports, as a single document, by 27 April 2030, taking into account the reporting guidelines adopted by the Committee during its seventy-first session⁹ and addressing all the points raised in the present concluding observations. In the light of General Assembly resolution 68/268, the Committee urges the State Party to observe the limit of 21,200 words for periodic reports.

⁹ CERD/C/2007/1.