



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General

27 July 2026

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 117th session

Summary record of the 3201st meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 15 April 2026, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Kut

Contents

Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States Parties under
article 9 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined twelfth to fourteenth periodic reports of Slovenia

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of the present record to the Documents Management Section (DMS-DCM@un.org).

Any corrected records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be reissued for technical reasons after the end of the session.



The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States Parties under article 9 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined twelfth to fourteenth periodic reports of Slovenia (CERD/C/SVN/12-14; CERD/C/SVN/Q/12-14)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Slovenia joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Slovenia**, introducing her country's combined twelfth to fourteenth periodic reports (CERD/C/SVN/12-14), said that, following the recent parliamentary elections, the Government was operating in a caretaker capacity and the delegation, consequently, lacked ministerial-level representation. That, however, did not affect the country's strong commitment to the Convention or to the constructive dialogue with the Committee. Since the submission of the report, which had been drafted following extensive interministerial and inter-institutional consultation, Slovenia had acted to further strengthen its institutional framework. The Advocate of the Principle of Equality had operated as an independent authority since 2016 and, in 2021, the Human Rights Ombudsman had been accredited with category A status under the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). Both institutions received stable funding.
3. The National Programme of Measures for Roma 2021–2030 comprehensively covered education, employment, health, housing, social inclusion and the fight against discrimination. An evaluation in 2024 had served as the basis for updating and strengthening the Programme. The dialogue and consultation platforms known as SIFOROMA served to strengthen engagement between State authorities, local communities and Roma representatives. The SIFOROMA 6 project had concluded in 2025 while SIFOROMA 7 was due to run until 2027 with a focus on training Roma councillors, raising awareness about anti-Roma discrimination and promoting intercultural dialogue.
4. A manual by a specialized working group on the prevention of early and forced marriages had been published in 2021, for use by law enforcement, schools and social workers, and updated in 2023. Institutional responses had been improved since 2022 thanks to training, while social inclusion had been reinforced through 19 "social activation" projects and a network of "multigenerational centres" that operated in Roma environments and focused particularly on Roma women.
5. Slovenia was attentive to the needs of migrants as well as to those of national and ethnic communities that did not have constitutionally recognized minority status. Strategies on the integration of foreigners and on migration, adopted in 2023 and 2024 respectively, provided a coherent framework that covered legal migration, language learning and integration. Slovenian language programmes had been expanded, with participation increasing from 1,599 persons in 2019 to over 6,000 in 2024. Recent amendments to the Foreigners Act had simplified procedures for residency and work, clarified language requirements and removed unconstitutional restrictions on movement.
6. Since 2023, asylum-seekers had been able to enter the labour market three months after making their applications, which significantly increased their capacity for self-reliance. At the same time, integration measures had been reinforced for beneficiaries of international protection. The framework for the care of unaccompanied minors had been consolidated and was applicable without discrimination to all migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons.
7. The Strategic Council for the Prevention of Hate Speech, which had been established in 2023, had made 57 recommendations that were in the process of being implemented. Amendments to the Criminal Code introduced hate-motivated intent as a mandatory aggravating factor, while the Audiovisual Media Services Act extended the prohibition on hate speech to online platforms. A monograph on the use of compassionate language among young persons had been published in 2025. A law passed in 2024 served to regulate the cultural rights – including mother-tongue education and cultural projects – of communities originating from the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

8. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Convention was directly applicable as part of the national legal order. Slovenia remained firmly committed to building an inclusive society free of racial discrimination, and the Committee played an invaluable role in achieving that goal. In fact, previous recommendations of the Committee had had a significant impact on safeguarding human rights, protecting ethnic communities and combating racial discrimination in Slovenia.

9. **Mr. Balcerzak** (Country Rapporteur) said that he commended Slovenia for having taken action to strengthen the offices of Advocate of the Principle of Equality and Human Rights Ombudsman, both of which were unquestionably independent institutions. He had also been pleased to see that the Protection against Discrimination Act had passed into law shortly after the previous dialogue with the Committee, held in December 2015. He wondered, however, whether the country was able – as a result of those developments and given the current status of domestic law – to comply fully with its obligations under the Convention, particularly with regard to indirect and structural discrimination. In the 10 years since the Protection against Discrimination Act had been enacted, had there been any reports that it might require amendments?

10. The State Party appeared to have no national anti-discrimination strategy in place, and he wished to know if any consideration was being given to formulating one. It would be interesting to hear about any mechanisms to review sectoral policies for compliance with the anti-discrimination standards enshrined in the Convention as well as mechanisms to ensure proper coordination between the Office for National Minorities and the Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants. He would welcome assurances that the country's human rights institutions in general were provided with sufficient financial and human resources.

11. He hoped that the delegation could provide specific examples of cases in which the Convention had been invoked or applied by the courts. He would also be interested to hear about any mandatory training programmes on the Convention and anti-discrimination standards more generally for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and other officials. He had noted with interest that the Constitution and the law included provision for “special measures” – as envisaged in the Convention – for, inter alia, the Roma, Italian and Hungarian communities. He was concerned, however, that such an arrangement might lead to unequal levels of protection by excluding ethnic groups that were not formally recognized as minorities.

12. The collection of demographic data disaggregated by ethnicity remained a problematic issue. The most recent census, in 2021, had apparently been conducted exclusively on the basis of administrative registers, while the last census that had entailed direct contact with the population had been in 2002. In its previous concluding observations ([CERD/C/SVN/CO/8-11](#)), the Committee had recommended that the State Party should diversify its data collection activities, using various indicators of ethnic diversity and on the basis of self-identification. He would appreciate it if the delegation could explain why it was proving so difficult to gather such data. He hoped to hear more about the findings of the interministerial working group tasked with monitoring inequalities and structural discrimination.

13. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the direct applicability of the Convention, as a treaty ratified by Slovenia, was provided for in article 8 of the Constitution. Moreover, the Constitution itself prohibited discrimination and incitement to racial inequality. The Protection against Discrimination Act, for its part, made explicit mention of the Convention.

14. Despite the fact that no recent population census had been conducted, ministries and other institutions collected data and statistics in their own sectors, which they then used to develop policies in areas such as training, employment and migration. Separate interministerial working groups had been set up for human rights and for the Roma community. Part of the mandate of the working groups entailed action to eliminate racial discrimination, in which regard the groups also worked hand in hand with civil society organizations.

15. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the 2023 amendments to the Criminal Code introducing hate-motivated intent as a mandatory aggravating factor covered grounds such as victims' nationality, race, religion, ethnicity, gender or colour. An amendment in 2024 allowed for covert surveillance against persons suspected of preparing or organizing any act

of public incitement to hatred, violence or intolerance. At the end of 2023, the Government had adopted a comprehensive national strategy to combat antisemitism in all its forms and to protect and preserve Jewish culture.

16. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Office for National Minorities was an independent entity that worked with government institutions, civil society organizations and academia to monitor the implementation of laws affecting the rights of the constitutionally recognized Italian, Hungarian and Roma minorities. The Office was also the national contact point between the Roma community and the European Commission, and it was currently developing SIFOROMA 8, which would build on previous iterations of that initiative

17. **Mr. Balcerzak** said that he wished to know how the Office for National Minorities identified which groups constituted minorities and how it collected data in that regard.

18. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the interlocutors of the Office for National Minorities, besides the Roma community, were the constitutionally recognized national minorities such as the Italian and Hungarian communities. Membership of those communities was recognized on the basis of self-identification. The Personal Data Protection Act did allow for the collection of data about constitutionally recognized national minorities, whose status was recorded on electoral registers. The Office for National Minorities worked with the Ministry of the Interior to gather data, but the information it collected was only for internal use and was not made public.

19. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants was also an independent entity that worked with government institutions and civil society. It currently had more than 100 staff and an annual budget in excess of €57 million. Both full-time Office personnel and any external contractors were bound by a code of ethics. The Office organized training courses for its own staff, including intercultural mediators, on how to recognize different forms of discrimination, and it ran asylum centres and other facilities, which currently accommodated around 1,800 persons.

20. In addition, the Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants provided input on the drafting of new legislation, it had been involved in the formulation of a recent strategy for the integration of foreign nationals in Slovenia and it was involved in Slovenian language teaching. It also sought to empower people to speak out against any discrimination they might have experienced. The Office had earmarked €5 million for civil society organizations that worked to support and integrate migrants.

21. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Office for Youth worked to implement youth policy while also combating discrimination against young persons and encouraging equality and respect for diversity. It co-financed youth programmes aimed, inter alia, at advancing intercultural dialogue, preventing discrimination, combating hate speech, particularly in digital environments, and promoting young persons from vulnerable groups such as migrants and the Roma community. Informal education, mentorships, voluntary work and participatory projects all served to build the individual, civic and democratic skills of young persons. The Office had recently published an academic treatise in which hundreds of experts had contributed views on how to encourage the use of compassionate language among the young.

22. **Mr. Balcerzak** said that he wished to know whether the promotion of human rights and the prohibition of racial discrimination were part of the training offered to prospective police officers at the Police Academy. Did serving officers receive similar training?

23. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** (Country Task Force) said that, in view of the different treatment accorded to the Hungarian and Italian communities on the basis of their status as national minorities, she wished to know exactly what was meant by “national minority”. How did national minorities differ from other minority groups in the country?

24. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to echo the Country Rapporteur’s concern about the State Party’s persistent failure to supply disaggregated population statistics. He hoped that the delegation would remedy that shortcoming and provide the data being requested by the Committee. He would like to know why, despite having been accredited with category A status some years earlier, the Human Rights Ombudsman did not avail itself of the rights to which that status gave rise, notably to participate in the work of United Nations human rights

mechanisms, and why it was not part of the delegation. Lastly, following the rejection by the Government of a 2024 bill that sought to reintegrate persons whose names had been “erased” from the Register of Permanent Residents, he would like to know if any action had been set in train to protect the interests of “erased” persons.

25. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Italian and Hungarian minorities, which traditionally lived in certain areas of the country, were classed as autochthonous national communities. They formed part of Slovenian identity. Under the relevant legislation, the Roma minority was recognized as an autochthonous ethnic community. There were certain other minority communities living in Slovenian territory who were treated in accordance with articles 61 and 62 of the Constitution.

26. **A representative of Slovenia** said that Slovenia was a small country with just one Police Academy, which was responsible for training all police officials. The main training programme lasted two years and included various components, each of which began with a human rights module. Lectures on human rights, ethics and integrity all had a practical focus in order to impart to police officers the knowledge they needed to react promptly to the situations they would be faced with on the ground. Serving police officers also underwent regular training in areas such as identification of stereotypes, prohibition of discrimination and acceptance of diversity. Civil society organizations, journalists, the Human Rights Ombudsman and others had all been involved in the training programmes. With a view to ensuring a consistent approach to human rights protection across different areas, joint training courses were held for police, prosecutors, investigating judges and social workers.

27. **A representative of Slovenia** said that officials at the Migration Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior also participated in human rights training, notably via two programmes, one on anti-discrimination and equal treatment and the other on gender mainstreaming in the policies and operation of the Directorate.

28. Data disaggregated by age, gender and nationality was collected in certain areas with a view to implementing specific policies. That information could be shared with the Committee if members so wished. Statistics showed that 139,000 foreign nationals had entered Slovenia since 2020, including 3,600 in 2026. The peak had been reached in 2023. Around 30,000 applications for international protection had been submitted during the same period. Arrivals included citizens of Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria, Bangladesh, Morocco, Pakistan, Algeria and India.

29. As at 31 March 2026, there were around 240,000 foreign residents in the country holding either permanent or temporary residence permits. Most were in the country to work or study, others had come to reunite with their families. They included, notably, citizens of North Macedonia, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, India, Nepal, China and the Philippines.

30. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Human Rights Ombudsman was an independent entity with its own budget, which was decided by the National Assembly. The Ombudsman had not raised any complaints with regard to its budget allocation, which had been increasing steadily over recent years and currently stood at around €5 million. Staff numbers had also risen and stood at 59 as at the end of 2024.

31. By 2025, 134 law enforcement officials had received training in intercultural dialogue, while probation officers had followed training courses on how to identify stereotyping and racial discrimination. The Judicial Training Centre offered training for judges, prosecutors and other officials on topics such as hate crime, incitement to hatred and domestic violence.

32. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Protection against Discrimination Act, enacted in 2016 as a direct response to one of the Committee’s 2015 recommendations, systematically prohibited discrimination in all areas of public life. It included provision for supervision, inspection, compensation and enforcement mechanisms, and it envisaged the creation of a special institution to advocate for equality and prevent systemic discrimination. Since that institution had come into being, no serious cases of discrimination had been reported. As the Act was already consistent with the European Convention on Human Rights, no major amendments had been introduced; however, a number of changes had been made with a view to improving procedures and strengthening mandates.

33. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport worked to ensure equality, prevent discrimination and provide a safe learning environment. The educational authorities treated all children equally and provided them with the best possible education, while also respecting their cultural and social diversity. The Ministry recognized that certain vulnerable groups required additional support. In that connection, the Basic School Act had been amended in 2025 to allow for the collection of data that identified pupils, with the consent of their parents, as members of the Roma community. The purpose of the exercise was to facilitate the provision of additional support to Roma pupils.

The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 4.30 p.m.

34. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that she hoped to hear more about the implementation of the National Programme of Measures for Roma 2021–2030 and about its concrete impact in areas such as education, employment, housing and healthcare. She wondered if any evaluation mechanism was in place to assess how much the Programme had benefited Roma communities, including those in the most marginalized situations.

35. According to reports, the standards of living, life expectancy and infant mortality rates in Roma communities were all significantly worse than national and regional averages, while some communities continued to lack access to safe drinking water, electricity and sanitation and to services like healthcare, housing and education. She wished to know what measures the State Party was taking to rectify those disparities and what resources were allocated to that end. In addition, she would appreciate statistical data about the proportion of Roma who lacked adequate housing.

36. The Committee remained concerned about an issue it had raised in its previous concluding observations concerning disparity of treatment between “autochthonous” and “non-autochthonous” Roma, to the disadvantage of the latter. It would be interesting to hear exactly how the two groups were treated differently. The delegation should also clarify how the State Party was formulating its policies and programmes to ensure that no discrimination persisted. She also wished to know what safeguards were in place to prevent indirect discrimination against Roma who did not fall within officially recognized minority categories.

37. Other reports indicated that the land on which Roma settlements were located had been sold to private owners, making it challenging for residents to regularize their housing. The Committee therefore wished to know what measures were afoot to improve legal security of tenure, what legal safeguards were in place to prevent forced evictions and how such safeguards were applied in practice. The delegation should provide data on the number and scale of evictions affecting Roma communities and the measures taken to ensure adequate consultation and alternative housing. It would be interesting to know how the 2017 decision of the Constitutional Court prohibiting the demolition of residential property without prior judicial review had affected informal Roma settlements. She welcomed efforts to prevent evictions, such as plans in certain municipalities to build protective walls around industrial zones bordering Roma settlements; however, she would appreciate assurances that such measures would not lead to further stigmatization and exclusion of Roma communities.

38. While the measures taken to support schools with large numbers of Roma pupils were commendable, she was concerned that Roma children appeared to be disproportionately placed in special needs classes. School completion rates among Roma children – reportedly just 21% nationally and as low as 13% in some regions – were also a cause for concern. The Committee would welcome statistical data, disaggregated by age and gender, on how Roma children compared with other children in terms of enrolment rates in pre-primary, primary and secondary education and dropout, repetition and completion rates. It would be interesting, too, to know how many Roma youth went on to university or post-secondary education. She wished to learn more about the implementation of the National Programme for Language Policy, particularly in the light of reports that many Roma children faced difficulties at school due to their limited knowledge of Slovenian. Could the delegation explain how access to mother-tongue education was ensured for ethnic groups?

39. The delegation should provide information on the impact of measures taken to address early and forced marriage within Roma communities, including data on the prevalence of that phenomenon, investigations, prosecutions and support services available to victims.

According to information available to the Committee, the only form of political participation available to Roma persons was via 20 designated local councillor positions. Their participation at the parliamentary level appeared to be very limited and was hindered by anti-Roma stereotypes among political actors and voters. There also appeared to be a lack of information for Roma persons themselves about how political processes worked and how they could become involved. Lastly, she wished to know what action or strategy was in place to reduce unemployment among Roma persons, which currently stood at 87.3%.

40. **Mr. Balcerzak** said that the Committee was concerned about the Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety Act (Šutar Act), which appeared to have a disproportionate impact on the Roma community. The Act, which had been introduced in great haste in November 2025 just a few weeks after an incident in which a person had died following an attack suspected to have been perpetrated by a member of the Roma community, raised concerns from both the perspective of the Convention and that of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Human Rights Ombudsman had already challenged the constitutionality of the Act, which, inter alia, granted the police powers to enter homes and conduct surveillance without prior judicial authorization. It also apparently envisioned the possibility of confiscating motor vehicles and of suspending payments to beneficiaries of social assistance if they incurred fines.

41. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that the Šutar Act, by sending the message that all Roma constituted a security risk, had had the unfortunate effect of creating a lot of fear among Roma communities.

42. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Roma Community Act was the only law in any European country to deal exclusively with matters affecting that community. The Act included provision for the National Programme of Measures for Roma, and the latest iteration of the Programme, covering the period 2021–2030, had been formulated with input from Roma communities. It consisted of 18 strategic goals and 31 specific targets focused on areas identified as priorities by Roma themselves, including healthcare, social welfare, employment, and cultural and political participation.

43. **A representative of Slovenia** said that a recently published report highlighting problems related to the inclusion of Roma children in school served as a guideline for the measures that the Government was taking in that regard. One of the main objectives was to enrol Roma children in preschool, thereby giving them the opportunity to learn Slovenian, which was the language of instruction, and thus keep them in the education system for as long as possible. To that end, kindergartens had been established in a number of Roma settlements. Some municipalities had organized shorter preschool programmes, which were offered free of charge to Roma and other vulnerable groups.

44. Schools with a certain number of Roma pupils were entitled to additional support in the form of “Roma assistants”. A pilot scheme of Roma assistants, which had been running for some time, had been rolled out on a systematic basis two years previously. A recent assessment had found that such assistants were having a significant impact as they acted as a bridge between the school and the parents, promoted inclusion and were very popular with the children themselves. Schools were free to apply for the services of Roma assistants if they so wished, and the number of assistants was rising steadily.

45. The Basic School Act included specific provisions on supplementary Slovenian language lessons for Roma children. As from 2021, Roma children had also been able to pursue Romani mother-tongue language lessons for several hours each week. In the light of evaluations showing that children who learned Romani at school missed fewer classes and were significantly more successful, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport had invited more schools to consider offering supplementary language lessons to Roma children. Such lessons were always conducted by teachers of Roma origin. School completion rates at the primary and secondary levels were not satisfactory, but the Ministry was actively pursuing the best possible solution while remaining cognizant that a shift in mindset was necessary, which would not happen overnight.

46. **A representative of Slovenia** said that members of the Roma community were among the most vulnerable groups on the labour market in Slovenia, where they faced obstacles such as low levels of education, language barriers, lack of work experience and remoteness from

job markets in addition to social and health circumstances. A total of 2,145 Roma persons were recorded as being unemployed in 2025, of whom 1,450 were long-term unemployed.

47. Beginning in 2024, the Government had rolled out 14 projects intended to increase social inclusion and motivation by encouraging participants to acquire additional competencies. Six of the projects were targeted at women, including one that focused exclusively on Roma women. Roma were also the principal target group of the active employment policy and the public works programme. She would be able to provide the Committee with relevant data disaggregated by territorial distribution, age and gender. The Advocate of the Principle of Equality had issued a manual to assist jobseekers who might encounter some form of discrimination.

48. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Ministry of Health brought workshops and training courses on best healthcare practices directly into Roma communities at the grass-roots level. An amount of €60,000 had been allocated and specialized teams had visited 12 Roma settlements across the country. The Ministry also ran awareness-raising courses for healthcare professionals that were intended to facilitate cooperation between the health sector and Roma communities, thus contributing to better health and lifestyles. In addition, the Ministry coordinated the efforts of other healthcare institutions and organized national conferences on Roma health. Lastly, the Ministry had been seeking co-financing for healthcare in Roma communities, including via the European cohesion policy.

49. **A representative of Slovenia** said that all persons in Slovenia were free to exercise their cultural rights, irrespective of the ethnic community to which they belonged. The exercise of cultural rights was not limited to expressions of folklore; it also entailed participation in programmes and projects to help members of all communities integrate into broader society. Cultural diversity was recognized as a human right and was exercised by both autochthonous and non-autochthonous Roma, without distinction.

50. Institutions such as libraries played an important role in promoting Roma culture, while the Media Act envisaged funding for programmes by and about Roma people, via the national broadcasting system. Under one recent project, six members of the Roma community had been trained to work in the media. In 2024, a law had been enacted to regulate the exercise of cultural rights on the part of ethnic communities originating from the former Yugoslavia, and the Government provided substantial financing for programmes that benefited those communities.

51. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, within the framework of the SIFOROMA dialogue and consultation platforms, a working group had been set up to look into ways to prevent early and forced marriages. The group included experts, ministerial officials and representatives of local and Roma communities. A manual on the detection and prevention of early and forced marriages had been published in 2021. However, efforts to prevent early and forced marriages were not always well received in Roma communities themselves.

52. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, in one recent case in Maribor, the court had found in favour of a defendant who had contracted a marriage with a teenage Roma girl, on the grounds that such practices were part of Roma custom. Commenting on that case, the Human Rights Ombudsman had expressed the view that customs that went against the legal order could not be used to justify a criminal offence. A higher court had subsequently overturned the original verdict. The Roma Academic Club brought together Roma youth with other intellectuals and students, and April of each year was celebrated as “Roma Month”.

53. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that she acknowledged the enormous efforts Slovenia had made to end discrimination against Roma persons, which had drawn praise from many quarters. However, the only way to measure the outcome of those efforts was by collecting data and statistics. How could the Government make plans to address the issues faced by Roma communities if it lacked accurate disaggregated data?

54. **Mr. Balcerzak** said that it was important for the Committee to know how many people had been affected in the four months since the enactment of the Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety Act (Šutar Act). How many persons had seen their social benefits revoked or their cars confiscated?

55. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she welcomed initiatives to train law enforcement officials in human rights, ethics and integrity. However, she was concerned that other initiatives, notably the Šutar Act, served only to undermine such efforts.

56. She hoped to hear about steps being taken at the national level to implement the Committee's general recommendation No. 37 on equality and freedom from racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health. She would be particularly interested to hear about measures to address the large discrepancies in health, life expectancy and maternal mortality indicators relating to Roma women. She agreed that a shift in mindset was necessary. However, it was important to remember that what needed to change was not the mindset of the Roma or other minority groups protected under the Convention, but that of the dominant group in relation to those minorities.

57. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wondered whether the Hungarian, Italian and Roma minorities had access to medical consultations in their own languages. It would also be interesting to know how many members of those communities were present in the judiciary, the police and other national institutions. The delegation should explain how minorities were represented in school textbooks. He wondered if any system of regulation or self-regulation was in place to identify and penalize instances of online discrimination.

58. He welcomed the information that the budget and staff of the Human Rights Ombudsman had been increased. He wondered how the Ombudsman interacted with the Government. Did it submit an annual report? It would be helpful to learn how many specific cases it had reported and what the outcomes had been.

59. The Committee wished to know if there was a law regulating the activity of civil society organizations, notably those representing the Hungarian, Italian and Roma minorities. It would be interesting, too, to hear about any consultations conducted between the authorities and those organizations.

60. **Mr. Vicente Vázquez** said that amendments to the Basic School Act in 2025 apparently allowed schools to suspend the regular assistance they provided if pupils behaved inappropriately, endangered themselves or others or disturbed the educational process. He was concerned that such an approach might disproportionately affect Roma children and worsen already high rates of exclusion.

61. He wished to know what was meant by the expression "local communities", used in the State Party's report. Were such communities distinct from the Roma and other ethnic minorities and, if so, in what way?

62. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the amendments to the Basic School Act, far from negatively affecting Roma pupils, were specifically intended to support them and to ensure that they could be enrolled in school at the earliest possible age. The term "local communities" referred to municipalities and municipal councils, which also had members from the Roma community. The municipalities often co-financed local-level projects.

63. **A representative of Slovenia** said that life expectancy for Roma men was 48 years and for Roma women 63 years, which was considerably lower than the average for the population as a whole. Fertility rates in the Roma community were twice the national average and mothers tended to be younger, while infant mortality rates were four times higher. The use of drugs was 9% per cent higher in the Roma community than among other groups, and Roma also had high rates of hospitalization for respiratory, gastrointestinal and renal diseases.

64. **A representative of Slovenia** said that a recent evaluation of success rates for Roma pupils in primary schools in Slovenia between 2016 and 2025 showed that girls were more successful than boys and stayed in the education system longer. Between 2020 and 2022, however, during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the success rate of Roma pupils had dropped significantly, a fact that underlined the importance of regular in-person school attendance. The detailed statistics that had emerged from the evaluation could be submitted in writing.

65. The 2025 amendments to the Basic School Act sought to decrease dropouts and absenteeism. They envisaged preventive measures whereby schools would cooperate with social workers and parents. For its part, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport was running training courses for teachers, carers and others, precisely with a view to changing the mindset of the population at large.

66. In cooperation with the Council of Europe, Slovenia had participated in a four-year project that sought to test multi-language approaches with a view to promoting the inclusion of children from Roma and other minority backgrounds. The project was carried out in primary schools with the participation of teachers, pupils and parents. Greater knowledge of the Roma community and familiarity with their language among the majority population helped to combat stereotypes and decrease prejudice.

67. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the representation of different ethnic groups on television programmes and in other media outlets was regulated by law, and there was specific programming for the country's Roma, Italian and Hungarian minorities as well as programmes aimed at the ethnic communities originating from the former Yugoslavia. In addition, programmes produced by neighbouring States in Croatian, Serbian, Hungarian and Italian were freely accessible in Slovenia. Under the presidency of Slovenia, the Council of Europe had adopted conclusions on "civil society-based media" or "community media".

68. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the tragic incident mentioned by the Country Rapporteur had not been the single cause behind the enactment of the Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety Act (Šutar Act). The Act had been drafted earlier in response to a nationwide security situation that was widely perceived as having deteriorated. It was an omnibus document that regulated a number of different areas with a view to improving public security. It was certainly not intended to increase repression. The provisions of the Act were non-discriminatory, they did not target any particular community and they were equally applicable to all persons in Slovenia. It was important to note, moreover, that the Act was a temporary measure, as stated in the text itself. The intention was that it should be reviewed and certain elements incorporated into other pieces of legislation before the enactment of a single umbrella law on public order, which was currently absent from the statute books in Slovenia. In the meantime, the impact of the Act was being evaluated by a council of experts.

69. All coercive measures in law were subject to constant oversight. The Act did envisage the possibility of designating "security-risk areas", but specific targeted measures could be used in such areas only when necessary to protect lives and property and in line with principles of legality and proportionality. Three "security-risk areas" had been identified including the centre of the capital city Ljubljana. All actions that law enforcement officials took under the Act had to be recorded and reported to the head of the relevant police unit. Special coercive measures could be applied only in the security-risk areas and, in most cases, the use of such measures required a time-limited judicial warrant.

70. When drafting the Act, legislators had been aware that it might be perceived as an anti-Roma measure, but assurances had been given at the highest level, including by the Prime Minister, that the Act was intended only to combat crime and increase public security and was not directed against any specific community. A community could never be held collectively responsible for individual criminal offences. At the same time, the constitutional protection accorded to a community did not mean that members of that community were immune from liability under criminal law. He would provide the Committee with statistical information in writing covering the enforcement of the Act over the previous four months.

71. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the police force was, quite correctly, the most closely monitored national institution. Police officers wore body cameras to record their interactions with the public and had to report all their actions to their superiors who, in turn,

were responsible to an investigating judge. Further oversight of the police was exercised by the Ministry of the Interior, the parliament and, most importantly, the public. Without public trust, in fact, the police could not operate effectively. In addition to the existing three security-risk areas, other areas could be temporarily designated as security-risk areas according to need. For example, the site of the forthcoming Ski Flying World Championships would be designated as a security-risk area for the three days that the event was due to last.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.