

LIBERTIES

RULE OF LAW

REPORT

2026



The Peace Institute
Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies



#roi-report2026

SLOVENIA



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FOREWORD

The Liberties Rule of Law Report 2026 is the seventh annual report on the state of rule of law in the European Union (EU) published by the Civil Liberties Union for Europe (Liberties). Liberties is a non-governmental civil society organisation promoting the civil liberties of everyone in the EU, and it is built on a network of national civil liberties groups from across the EU. Currently, we have member organisations in Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden, as well as a contributing partner organisation in Greece.

Liberties, together with its members and partner organisations, carries out advocacy, campaigning and public education activities to explain what the rule of law is, what the EU and national governments are doing to protect or harm it, and gathers public support to press leaders at EU and national level to fully respect, promote and protect our basic rights and values.

Drafted by Liberties and its member and partner organisations, the 2026 report covers the situation during 2025 with the purpose of providing the European Commission with reliable information and analysis from the ground to feed its own rule of law reports, and to provide an independent analysis of the state of the rule of law in the EU in its own right. Liberties' report represents the most in-depth reporting exercise carried out to date by a civil society network to map developments in a wide range of areas connected to the rule of law in the EU.

The 2026 report includes EU-wide trend analysis in the justice system, anti-corruption framework, media freedom, checks and balances, based on 22 country reports that follow a common structure, mirroring and expanding on the priority areas and indicators identified by the European Commission for its annual rule of law monitoring cycle. Nearly 40 organisations contributed to the compilation of these country reports. The 2026 report places particular emphasis on the recommendations made by the European Commission and how, in the assessment of Liberties' members, they have been implemented. Specific gaps were identified alongside new issues that arose in 2025.

[Download the full Liberties Rule of Law Report 2026 here.](#)

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SLOVENIA

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTING ORGANISATIONS

The Peace Institute - Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies



The Peace Institute

Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies

The Peace Institute is an independent, non-profit research institution founded in 1991 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, by individuals who believed in peaceful conflict resolution, equality and respect for human rights standards.

The Peace Institute (PI) uses scientific research and activism aimed at creating and preserving a society capable of critical thought and based on the principles of equality, responsibility, solidarity, human rights and the rule of law.

The Institute develops interdisciplinary research, educational, advocacy and awareness-raising activities in four thematic fields: human rights and minorities, politics, media, and gender. Acting as a research and civil society organisation, it focuses mainly on Slovenia, but it is also participating in numerous cross-border collaborative actions and comparative research on EU level and in the region of Southeast Europe. The PI acts against discrimination, as an ally of vulnerable groups and in partnership with them. It has carried out projects in support and advancement of the rights of children, women, victims of crimes, defendants in criminal proceedings, Roma communities, 'erased people', refugees and migrants, stateless people, LGBTQIA+ communities, journalists and others.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT: STAGNATOR

During 2025, rule of law developments in Slovenia took place within a broadly stable institutional and legislative framework, shaped both by domestic reforms and the broader European regulatory context. While several legislative and strategic initiatives aimed at strengthening institutional safeguards were adopted, persistent structural challenges and implementation gaps continued to affect the effective functioning of key rule of law institutions.

Slovenia's justice system continued to operate within a stable institutional and legislative framework, including the adoption of new judicial legislation and the implementation of public sector pay reform aimed at strengthening institutional capacity and improving working conditions within the judiciary. However, structural challenges continue to affect its efficiency, transparency, and public perception. Court proceedings remain lengthy in certain areas, affecting timely access to justice. Long procedural timelines, including in cases requiring prompt judicial response, reflect capacity constraints and organisational pressures. The justice system also faces staffing shortages and reduced interest in certain judicial and prison administration positions, further affecting its operational capacity. Transparency and accessibility of judicial information remain uneven, as a significant share of case law is not publicly accessible and comprehensive judicial statistics remain limited. Certain concerns therefore relate not to systemic institutional instability, but to the risk that unresolved structural inefficiencies, limited transparency tools, and persistent staffing constraints become entrenched over time, weakening the system's ability to deliver timely and effective judicial protection. Additional concerns arise from the adoption of the Act on Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety (ZNUZJV) under an expedited procedure and without broader public debate, prompting constitutional review proceedings initiated by the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Legal Network for the Protection of Democracy, and raising questions regarding procedural safeguards and judicial oversight.

Developments in the anti-corruption framework reflected similar patterns of formal institutional strengthening combined with ongoing implementation challenges. During the reporting period, Slovenia took steps to strengthen its anti-corruption framework, particularly through the adoption of the new Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption and its accompanying Action Plan in 2025. These measures establish a more comprehensive and structured strategic framework, with increased emphasis on integrity management, internal oversight, and the systematic implementation of integrity plans across public institutions. Legislative developments also included the adoption of the new Public Office Holders Act and expanded training and awareness-raising activities by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption. At the same time, implementation challenges were reported, particularly regarding the practical impact of these measures. Integrity mechanisms are implemented unevenly in practice, and the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption has highlighted insufficient institutional follow-up to its findings and recommendations, noting the absence of mandatory response mechanisms and clear legal consequences in cases of non-compliance. Corruption proceedings

remain complex, with high evidentiary standards and capacity constraints, particularly in high-level cases. Slovenia's Corruption Perceptions Index score declined in 2025, reflecting continued concerns regarding enforcement effectiveness and institutional accountability. These developments illustrate ongoing efforts to strengthen corruption prevention and oversight, while highlighting the importance of effective implementation to ensure their practical impact.

The media environment during the reporting period was influenced both by national reforms and by broader European regulatory developments aimed at strengthening media freedom and independence. In particular, the European Media Freedom Act and the Anti-SLAPP Directive provided an important normative framework guiding domestic legislative reforms. At the national level, Slovenia adopted a series of legislative measures aligning media regulation more closely with European standards. The new Media Act, adopted in September 2025, introduced strengthened safeguards for journalistic sources, enhanced transparency of media ownership, and new mechanisms for ex ante media concentration control. In January 2026, Slovenia transposed the Anti-SLAPP Directive, introducing procedural safeguards against abusive litigation targeting journalists and other actors participating in public debate. Legislative reforms also addressed public service media financing through a new Act on the Slovenian Press Agency and amendments to the RTV Slovenia law. These developments represent important progress at the legislative level. However, structural challenges continue to affect the practical environment for media freedom. Regulatory oversight remains fragmented across several bodies with limited coordination, while key regulators operate with constrained human and financial resources and appointment procedures allowing continued governmental influence. Economic pressures affecting journalism, including newsroom downsizing and the financial fragility of print media, continue to pose risks to pluralism and editorial independence. Financial sustainability challenges also persist in the public service media sector, as the RTV Slovenia licence fee has not been structurally increased and remains without automatic indexation to inflation, leaving funding levels dependent on governmental decisions and limiting long-term financial predictability and institutional independence.

These institutional and regulatory developments also shaped the broader civic space environment. Civic space in Slovenia during the reporting period remained formally open and supported by a comparatively strong legal framework guaranteeing freedom of association and participation. Slovenia adopted the NGO Development Strategy to 2030 and the Volunteering Development Strategy to 2030, signalling recognition of civil society's democratic role and establishing a long-term framework for cooperation with public authorities. These processes included structured consultation with civil society organisations and represented positive institutional developments. However, these formal commitments coexist with persistent operational constraints. Public participation standards are inconsistently implemented despite clear legal requirements for consultation periods, with shortened deadlines and frequent use of expedited procedures limiting meaningful influence on policymaking. Civil society organisations continue to operate in an increasingly polarised political environment

characterised by delegitimising rhetoric, online harassment, and disinformation campaigns, particularly targeting organisations working on human rights, migration, and LGBTQIA+ issues.

Taken together, these developments reflect a rule of law environment characterised by institutional stability and continued legislative activity, but also by persistent structural weaknesses and implementation gaps. While important reforms and strategic initiatives have been adopted across several areas, their practical impact will depend on consistent implementation, institutional independence, and effective safeguards to ensure accountability, transparency, and the protection of fundamental rights.

Assessment of the trajectory

Slovenia is assessed overall as a ‘Stagnator’, as reforms across key rule of law areas have not yet translated into consistent and measurable improvements in institutional effectiveness, accountability, and structural resilience. This overall trajectory is reflected in developments affecting the justice system, anti-corruption framework, media environment, and civic space.

In the justice system, recent legislative reforms and structural measures have not yet resulted in consistent and measurable improvements in the efficiency, transparency, or overall functioning of the system. While the adoption of new judicial legislation and the implementation of public sector pay reform represent important steps toward strengthening institutional capacity, persistent structural challenges continue to affect procedural efficiency, access to justice, and public trust. Court proceedings remain lengthy in certain areas, and staffing shortages across judicial and prison administration positions continue to constrain institutional capacity. Transparency also remains uneven, as limitations in the accessibility of case law and the lack of comprehensive judicial statistics restrict effective monitoring, predictability, and accountability.

At the same time, developments in 2025 raised new rule of law concerns regarding the legislative process and safeguards for fundamental rights. The adoption of the Act on Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety under an expedited procedure raises concerns regarding legislative safeguards, judicial oversight, and legal certainty. Civil society organisations and legal experts have expressed concerns regarding the breadth of the measures, the adequacy of judicial oversight, and the risk of disproportionate or selective application, particularly in designated high-risk areas. The Act (ZNUZJV) has also been subject to constitutional challenge, reflecting ongoing legal uncertainty and raising questions regarding compliance with fundamental rights and rule of law standards.

While the justice system remains institutionally stable, persistent structural inefficiencies and implementation gaps represent early warning signs. The current trajectory therefore reflects limited practical progress and continuing structural vulnerabilities.

Similar dynamics are evident in the anti-corruption framework, where recent legislative and strategic reforms have not yet translated into consistent improvements in enforcement, accountability, or institutional effectiveness. The adoption of the new Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption and its accompanying Action Plan in 2025, together with the Public Office Holders Act and expanded integrity training, reflects continued institutional attention to strengthening integrity and corruption prevention.

However, significant structural challenges persist. Integrity mechanisms remain unevenly implemented in practice, and the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption has highlighted insufficient institutional follow-up to its findings and recommendations, noting the absence of mandatory response mechanisms. The absence of systematic follow-up to oversight findings risks reducing anti-corruption measures to formal compliance mechanisms rather than effective tools of institutional accountability. Persistent procedural complexity and limited enforcement outcomes continue to affect the effective investigation and prosecution of corruption cases, while Slovenia's recent decline in the Corruption Perceptions Index reflects ongoing concerns regarding institutional effectiveness and accountability. These developments indicate formal progress at the strategic level but limited measurable improvement in the practical effectiveness of anti-corruption measures.

Comparable patterns are also visible in the media sector. Legislative progress has strengthened the legal framework, but this has not yet translated into consolidated institutional safeguards or sustainable improvements in the media environment. Implementation remains at an early stage and enforcement capacity is insufficient to guarantee durable outcomes. Public service media financing continues to depend partly on political decision-making rather than fully automatic mechanisms, leaving space for potential future political influence. Several key reforms were adopted late in the parliamentary term, creating uncertainty regarding their long-term stability. The trajectory therefore reflects normative improvement combined with persistent structural vulnerabilities rather than systemic transformation.

Several early warning indicators emerge from the current trajectory. A persistent implementation gap remains between legislative reform and regulatory enforcement capacity, reinforced by fragmented and under-resourced media oversight institutions. Structural financial vulnerabilities in the journalism sector continue to pose risks to editorial independence and to the capacity of media to effectively fulfil their democratic roles, while funding arrangements across parts of the media ecosystem remain dependent on short-term or politically contingent decisions rather than on stable structural guarantees. In addition, the approaching parliamentary elections in March 2026 introduce uncertainty regarding the continuity and durability of recently adopted reforms. While no entrenched backsliding is currently observable, these vulnerabilities could quickly translate into deterioration under less favourable political conditions.

These broader structural vulnerabilities also extend to civic space. Civic space remains legally protected but structurally fragile, with limited progress in addressing long-standing systemic weaknesses. Institutional dialogue mechanisms exist, yet participation often remains procedural rather than substantive, and consultation practices do not consistently meet established democratic standards. Structural underfunding in key advocacy fields persists, while institutional mechanisms to prevent or respond to coordinated attacks against civil society remain insufficiently developed.

Several early warning signals indicate growing vulnerabilities, including the normalisation of hostile political rhetoric directed at civil society organisations, increasing online harassment and smear campaigns targeting Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), inconsistent application of participatory standards despite existing legal guarantees, and structural financial insecurity affecting advocacy organisations, alongside the absence of dedicated institutional protection mechanisms capable of responding to coordinated attacks. As Slovenia approaches parliamentary elections in March 2026, rising political polarisation further increases the risk that civic space conditions could deteriorate rapidly if institutional safeguards remain insufficiently strengthened.

ACTIVATING OTHER PARTS OF THE EU RULE OF LAW TOOLBOX

While no systemic deterioration or deliberate dismantling of rule of law safeguards has been observed, several structural vulnerabilities and early warning signs warrant continued and enhanced attention by the European Commission. In particular, persistent implementation gaps, procedural inefficiencies, and limited institutional follow-up in the areas of justice and anti-corruption, as well as concerns regarding legislative safeguards, media independence, and civic space conditions, indicate the need for sustained monitoring and targeted follow-up.

State of play (versus 2025)

-  Justice system
-  Anti-corruption framework
-  Media Environment and Media Freedom
-  Checks and balances

Legend

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Regression</i> | <i>No progress</i> | <i>Progress</i> |
|  |  |  |

JUSTICE SYSTEM -

General assessment

The trajectory of Slovenia's justice system reflects very limited progress in certain areas alongside persistent structural challenges, particularly with regard to system capacity and evidence-based governance.¹ While recent reforms, including a package of justice-related legislation² and public sector pay reform affecting the judiciary, signal renewed reform activity, their impact on efficiency and backlog reduction remains limited. Procedural lengths continue to be excessively long, especially in civil and commercial cases at first instance and in administrative disputes, underscoring enduring challenges in the effective functioning of the justice system.³

A key warning sign is the absence of comprehensive, integrated justice statistics despite efforts being made in the field of digitalisation. Data on crime, prosecutions, court proceedings and outcomes remain fragmented across institutions, preventing a clear overview of case trajectories, duration and consistency of adjudication. This lack of organised and accessible data significantly limits the ability to identify bottlenecks, assess the proportionality of sanctions and monitor whether the justice system is functioning effectively. Without reliable data, structural problems, such as the steady increase in unresolved cases and the disproportionate burden of urgent detention and asylum-related proceedings, risk remaining insufficiently addressed.⁴

Additional concerns relate to governance and legal certainty, in particular, the limited transparency and reasoning of certain institutional decisions within the justice system. Stakeholders highlighted that some key decisions affecting the judiciary are not systematically explained or made accessible to

1 Orešek, J., The (in)efficiency of Slovenian courts (pt. 2) ((Ne)učinkovitost delovanja slovenskih sodišč (2. Del)), *Odvetnik: Revija Odvetniške zbornice Slovenije*, Vol. XXV, No. 3 (111), 2023, p.22, www.odv-zb.si/upload/revija/2023/ODVETNIK%20st-111_OZS.pdf.

2 Slovenia, Ministry of Justice (*Ministrstvo za pravosodje*), MPs approve legislative package on judicial and prosecutorial legislation (Poslanci potrdili zakonodajni sveženj sodniške in tožilske zakonodaje), *press release*, 21 November 2025, www.gov.si/novice/2025-11-21-poslanci-potrdili-zakonodajni-svezenj-sodniske-in-tozilske-zakonodaje/.

3 Slovenia, Ministry of Justice (*Ministrstvo za pravosodje*), Slovenia maintains stable indicators in the European Union's Justice Scoreboard (Slovenija ohranja stabilne kazalnike v poročilu Evropske unije o pregledu stanja pravosodja), *press release*, 1 July 2025, www.gov.si/novice/2025-07-01-slovenija-ohranja-stabilne-kazalnike-v-porocilu-evropske-unije-o-pregledu-stanja-pravosodja/.

4 Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia (*Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije*), Annual report on the efficiency and effectiveness of courts for 2024 (Letno poročilo o učinkovitosti in uspešnosti sodišč za leto 2024), *Ljubljana, Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije*, 2025, p.45, www.sodisce.si/mma_bin.php?static_id=2025051511521305.

the public, which restricts understanding of how judicial governance operates. In criminal justice, practitioners also pointed to procedural practices whereby complainants who are not formally recognised as injured parties may receive dismissal decisions without substantive reasoning, making it difficult to understand why cases are not pursued and limiting effective scrutiny.⁵

These pressures are further compounded by overcrowding in detention facilities and prisons,⁶ which is closely linked to the increased use of detention in cases under Article 308 of the Criminal Code (unlawful crossing of the state border). A significant share of detainees in these cases are foreign nationals,⁷ resulting in longer periods of detention and placing sustained pressure on prison capacity. This situation has also highlighted acute shortages of prison officers, who face demanding working conditions, daily contact with a high number of detainees, and increased security and organisational challenges.⁸

More broadly, analyses pointed to persistent staffing shortages across the justice system,⁹ driven in part by declining interest in justice-related professions. Legal and judicial careers are perceived as less attractive due to comparatively lower salaries and less favourable working conditions than those offered in the private sector.¹⁰ These shortages affect courts, prosecution services, prisons and support-

5 *Online consultation with a law expert from NGO sector, 21 January 2026.*

6 *Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia (Varuh človekovih pravic Republike Slovenije), Summary of the work of the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia for 2024 (Povzetek dela Varuha človekovih pravic Republike Slovenije za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Varuh človekovih pravic Republike Slovenije, www.varuh-rs.si/assets/uploads/publications/2565/2025/povzetek-dela-vcp-za-leto-2024.pdf.*

7 *Advocate of the Principle of Equality (Zagovornik načela enakosti), Foreigners in Slovenian prisons analysis and interpretation of collected data (Tujci v slovenskih zaporih: analiza in interpretacija zbranih podatkov), Ljubljana, Zagovornik načela enakosti, <https://zagovornik.si/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Tujci-v-slovenskih-zaporih-analiza.pdf>.*

8 *La. Da. and G. C., Prison workers: Prison conditions are unbearable, prisons are overcrowded, our work is not appreciated (Zaposleni v zaporih: Razmere v zaporih so nevzdržne, zapori prepolni, naše delo ni cenjeno), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 13 February 2025, www.rtvlo.si/slovenija/zaposleni-v-zaporih-razmere-v-zaporih-so-nevzdrzne-zapori-prepolni-nase-delo-ni-cenjeno/736423.*

9 *Al. Ma., Union of Judicial Workers: Classification of professional associates is inadequate and there are too few of them (Sindikata delavcev v pravosodju: Uvrstitev strokovnih sodelavcev neustrezna in premalo jih je), MMC RTV SLO, 16 October 2024, www.rtvlo.si/slovenija/sindikata-delavcev-v-pravosodju-uvrstitev-strokovnih-sodelavcev-neustrezna-in-premalo-jih-je/620307.*

10 *LP, Are judges' salaries still too low? The Judicial Council is going to the Constitutional Court (So sodniške plače še vedno prenizke? Sodni svet gre na ustavno sodišče), Dnevnik, 28 January 2026, www.dnevnik.si/novice/slovenija/sodni-svet-zaradi-sodniskih-plac-ponovno-na-ustavno-sodisce-2781277/.*

ing judicial staff alike, further exacerbating capacity constraints, delays in proceedings and the overall strain on the justice system.¹¹

While these issues warrant attention in their own right, stakeholders emphasised that the absence of coherent, cross-institutional data and systematic monitoring represents a more fundamental obstacle. Fragmented data collection prevents meaningful assessment of case outcomes, duration and consistency, thereby weakening evidence-based policymaking, accountability and the overall capacity to address structural deficiencies within the justice system.

At the same time, there are elements of progress that should be built upon, including formal recognition of capacity constraints, backlog-reduction programmes and increased awareness of systemic pressures. However, without prioritising data availability, monitoring and follow-up, there is a risk that existing shortcomings become normalised rather than resolved, calling for more targeted and evidence-based action in the coming period.

Implementation of 2025 Commission recommendations

There were no recommendations in this area in the Commission's 2025 report.

Gaps in the Commission's Report

Increasing number of unresolved cases

The Commission's report does not underline a trend of the increasing number of unresolved cases in the past few years. In the 2024 report of the Judicial Council, it stated that the total number of pending cases increased from just under 121,000 in 2022 to 123,383 in 2023 and 126,531 in 2024.¹² According to the Supreme Court report for 2024, the high number of detention cases under Article 308 of the Criminal Code (unlawful crossing of the state border or territory) continues to place a disproportionate burden on criminal courts, resulting in delays in other proceedings.¹³

11 *Online consultation with a criminal law expert, 26 January 2026.*

12 *Judicial Council of the Republic of Slovenia (Sodni svet Republike Slovenije), Annual Report of the Judicial Council of the Republic of Slovenia for 2024 (Letno poročilo Sodnega sveta Republike Slovenije za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Sodni svet Republike Slovenije, p.89, http://www.sodni-svet.si/doc/Letno_porocilo_2024_Sodni_svet_RS.pdf.*

13 *Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia (Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije), Annual report on the efficiency and effectiveness of courts for 2024 (Letno poročilo o učinkovitosti in uspešnosti sodišč za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije, p.35, www.sodisce.si/mma_bin.php?static_id=2025051511521305.*

The Commission's report does not sufficiently address the structural drivers behind the growing number of unresolved cases, in particular the systemic impact of detention practices under Article 308 of the Criminal Code (KZ-1)¹⁴ and the resulting displacement effects across the justice system.

Legal experts caution that this problem is not temporary but structural. The sharply increased use of detention in cases under Article 308 absorbs significant judicial, prosecutorial, and law-enforcement resources that would otherwise be allocated to the prosecution of serious criminal offences, and it has significantly contributed to court backlogs, prolonged proceedings, prison overcrowding, and increased costs for the justice system. These dynamics pose a serious risk to the right to a trial within a reasonable time, affecting both defendants and victims in unrelated cases, and raise broader concerns regarding the proportionality and long-term sustainability of current criminal justice policies.¹⁵

Addressing these challenges requires a combination of measures. One of the most straightforward options would be to reintroduce lower statutory penalties by restoring them to the levels applicable under the Criminal Code (KZ-1) before the KZ-1G amendment. Lower statutory penalties for offences under Article 308 would likely lead to shorter prison sentences and increase the likelihood of plea agreements or early admissions of guilt, as public prosecutors would be able to propose proportionately lower penalties.¹⁶ This, in turn, could reduce the overall burden on courts and detention facilities.

A related concern is the shortage of prison officers, which is closely linked to declining interest in the profession. Prison officers face demanding working conditions, including daily contact with large numbers of detainees and prisoners, many of whom are foreign nationals.¹⁷ These circumstances place

14 *Slovenia, The Criminal code (Kazenski zakonik), 20 May 2008, and subsequent modifications, <https://pisrs.si/pregled-Predpisa?id=ZAKO5050>.*

15 *La. Da. and G. C., Prison workers: Prison conditions are unbearable, prisons are overcrowded, our work is not appreciated (Zaposleni v zaporih: Razmere v zaporih so nevzdržne, zapori prepolni, naše delo ni cenjeno), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 13 February 2025, www.rtv slo.si/slovenija/zaposleni-v-zaporih-razmere-v-zaporih-so-nevzdrzne-zapori-prepolni-nase-delo-ni-cenjeno/736423.*

16 *Kovačič Mlinar, B., Criminal offense under Article 308 of the Criminal Code-1 - Prohibited crossing of the border or territory of the state (Kaznivo dejanje po 308. členu KZ-1 - Prepovedano prehajanje meje ali ozemlja države), Odvetnik: Revija Odvetniške zbornice Slovenije, Vol. XXVII, No. 5 (123), www.odv-zb.si/upload/revija/ODVETNIK%20st-123%20PRELOM%20web-2-2.pdf.*

17 *G.C., More than a fifth more prisoners in Slovenian prisons last year than in 2023 (V slovenskih zaporih lani več kot petina več zapornikov kot leta 2023), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 8 October 2025, www.rtv slo.si/slovenija/v-slovenskih-zaporih-lani-vec-kot-petina-vec-zapornikov-kot-leta-2023/760161.*

additional strain on already limited human resources and further exacerbate systemic capacity issues within the criminal justice system.

In March 2024, the Judicial Council formally acknowledged that the increase in asylum cases under the International Protection Act has placed a significant burden on the Administrative Court. The Council noted that the temporary redistribution of asylum cases among judges handling other administrative matters may help resolve urgent proceedings. However, this approach results in disproportionate delays in other administrative disputes. The Council warned that such delays raise serious concerns regarding equality before the law and the right to a trial within a reasonable time, and it called for the creation of additional judicial posts within the relevant chamber as a structural solution.¹⁸

In response, the Administrative Court adopted a backlog-reduction programme for 2023–2025, introducing organisational measures and recruiting additional judicial assistants. Despite these efforts, challenges persist, and the Supreme Court has warned against legislative solutions that shift executive competencies onto the judiciary, as such arrangements undermine the separation of powers and further burden the administrative courts.¹⁹ Although the Supreme Court's 2025 report has not yet been published, available information suggests that asylum-related cases — due to their constitutional urgency and implications for the protection of fundamental rights — continue to be prioritised over other administrative disputes. This practice leads to the systematic displacement of non-urgent cases and raises concerns about equal access to justice and the right to timely adjudication for all parties.²⁰

Furthermore, the persistent shortage of specialised judicial staff remains a significant issue, contributing to delays and further undermining the overall efficiency of the justice system.²¹ A systemic lack of integrated and transparent justice data was also identified. Information on crime, prosecutions and

18 *Judicial Council of the Republic of Slovenia (Sodni svet Republike Slovenije)*, Annual Report of the Judicial Council of the Republic of Slovenia for 2024 (Letno poročilo Sodnega sveta Republike Slovenije za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Sodni svet Republike Slovenije, p.58, www.sodni-svet.si/doc/Letno_porocilo_2024_Sodni_svet_RS.pdf

19 *Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia (Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije)*, Annual report on the efficiency and effectiveness of courts for 2024 (Letno poročilo o učinkovitosti in uspešnosti sodišč za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije, p.45, www.sodisce.si/mma_bin.php?static_id=2025051511521305.

20 *Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia (Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije)*, Annual report on the efficiency and effectiveness of courts for 2024 (Letno poročilo o učinkovitosti in uspešnosti sodišč za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Vrhovno sodišče Republike Slovenije, p.44, www.sodisce.si/mma_bin.php?static_id=2025051511521305.

21 *Al. Ma.*, Union of Judicial Workers: Classification of professional associates is inadequate and there are too few of them (Sindikata delavcev v pravosodju: Uvrstitev strokovnih sodelavcev neustrezna in premalo jih je), MMC RTV SLO, 16 October 2024, www.rtvlo.si/slovenija/sindikata-delavcev-v-pravosodju-uvrstitev-strokovnih-sodelavcev-neustrezna-in-premalo-jih-je/620307.

court outcomes remains fragmented across police, prosecution services, courts and ministries, with no unified data chain enabling analysis of case trajectories, duration or consistency of sentencing.²² For example, in Slovenia, comprehensive statistics on the number of court cases relating to discrimination brought to justice are not available, and court decisions on discrimination are not registered as such by national courts.²³

Expert consultations also highlighted concerns regarding the transparency and accountability of decision-making within the judiciary, in particular, the limited reasoning and publication of key decisions.²⁴ Such practices restrict public understanding of how decisions affecting the justice system are taken and may undermine trust in judicial governance.²⁵ For example, empirical analysis of prosecutorial practice further indicates that this inconsistency is not incidental but structural: prosecutorial authorities apply an overly restrictive interpretation of hate speech offences, prioritising direct incitement to violence while systematically disregarding broader contextual elements, the cumulative harm to targeted groups, and relevant European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) standards, which in practice results in the under-enforcement of hate speech legislation.²⁶

The uneven distribution of workloads among individual courts indicates the need for systemic adjustments, as the current situation has become increasingly difficult to sustain in practice. This is confirmed and illustrated by the table included in the Judicial Statistics report for the first half of 2025. For example, the Ljubljana Local Court recorded 17,466 unresolved cases, compared to only 297 unresolved cases at the Slovenj Gradec Local Court. Similar disparities can also be observed among *District Courts*.²⁷

22 *Online consultation with a criminal law expert, 26 January 2026.*

23 Vučko, K., *Country report – Non-discrimination: Transposition and implementation at national level of Council Directives 2000/43 and 2000/78: Slovenia*, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2025, www.migpolgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2025-SI-Country-report-ND_final-for-web.pdf.

24 *Online consultation with a criminal law expert, 26 January 2026.*

25 Rakočević Bregant, V., It is not only necessary that justice be done, it must also be seen to be done (Ni nujno samo, da se pravica doseže, tudi videti mora biti tako), *Dnevnik*, 8 August 2025, www.dnevnik.si/objektiv/ni-nujno-samo-da-se-pravica-doseze-tudi-videti-mora-bit-tako-2748117/.

26 Kogovšek Šalamon, N. and Hrvatič S., *Prosecutorial Practice on Hate Speech in Slovenia: Context, Trends, and Issues*, *Annales: Series Historia et Sociologia*, pp. 487-502, <https://z.djp.si/ojs/index.php/ashs/article/view/270/149>.

27 *Ministry of Justice (Ministrstvo za pravosodje)*, Court statistics from January to June 2025 (Sodna statistika od januarja do junija 2025), Ljubljana, Ministrstvo za pravosodje, pp. 30-31, <https://podatki.gov.si/dataset/43606a24-b254-40ef-846d-2b7df3db22ed/resource/0a7d1a07-98be-4f0f-adf5-fc5925c22962/download/sodnastatistika162025.pdf>.

Developments during 2025

While several legislative reforms were adopted in 2025, they do not directly address the structural drivers of delays identified above.

In November 2025, the parliament adopted a package of four judicial laws (the new Judges Act²⁸ and the new Courts Act,²⁹ while also amending the Judicial Council Act³⁰ and the State Prosecution Service Act³¹). According to the Deputy Prime Minister, the reforms are aimed at making the court system more efficient, transparent and accountable, including by integrating district and local courts into a unified first-instance structure, strengthening the powers of court presidents to redistribute workloads, and introducing time standards to support case management.³² These legislative changes have yet to enter into force on 1 January 2027.

At a press conference on 14 October 2025,³³ the Judicial Council raised concerns regarding the reform, stating that it may limit safeguards for judicial independence and give rise to constitutional issues by removing and reducing its competencies and jeopardising independence and autonomy. The contested amendments include limits on the Judicial Council's discretion in judicial appointments and assignments, expanded Supreme Court review of its decisions, the transfer of certain administrative assignment powers to the President of the Supreme Court, additional justification requirements for non-selected candidates, obligations to explain deviations from the Minister of Justice's opinions, and changes to the composition of the disciplinary court.³⁴

28 *Slovenia, The Judges act (Zakon o sodnikih)*, 21 November 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO8886>.

29 *Slovenia, The Courts act (Zakon o sodiščih)*, 21 November 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO8887>.

30 *Slovenia, The Judicial Council act (Zakon o sodnem svetu)*, 25 April 2017, and subsequent modifications, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO8878>.

31 *Slovenia, The State Prosecutor's Office act (Zakon o državnem tožilstvu)*, 12 July 2011, and subsequent modifications, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9208>.

32 *K.S., The biggest judicial reform in the last three decades (Največja reforma sodstva v zadnjih treh desetletjih)*, Delo, 15 May 2025, www.delo.si/novice/slovenija/okrajno-okrožno-sodisce-sodni-svet-sodniki-zakonodaja.

33 *For more information, see press conference of the Judicial Council of the Republic of Slovenia on 14 October 2025*, www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqztkhbdTpM.

34 *G.C., The Judicial Council and the Judges' Association do not rule out a request for a constitutional review of the judicial reform (Sodni svet in sodniško društvo ne izključujeta zahteve za ustavno presojo pravosodne reforme)*, MMC RTV SLO, STA, 14 October 2025, www.rtv slo.si/slovenija/sodni-svet-in-sodnisko-drustvo-ne-izkljucuje-ta-zahteve-za-ustavno-presoj-pravosodne-reforme/760782.

The Act on the Common Foundations of the Public Sector Pay System³⁵ was adopted in 2024 and entered into force on 1 January 2025, introducing a new framework for the public sector remuneration system. The public sector pay system applies to the entire public sector, encompassing all budget users, including state authorities, municipalities, public institutions, public funds, public agencies and public economic institutions. It covers approximately 190,000 employees in the public sector.³⁶ The Act has introduced a revised salary scale, under which the difference between pay grades is reduced from the current four percent to three percent, and the ratio between the lowest and highest pay grades is set at one to seven. Under the new law, no employee in the public sector will have a salary below the minimum wage. The lowest basic gross salary will amount to €1,253.90 while the highest will reach €8,821.04 gross.³⁷ The Judicial Council and the Association of Judges expressed concerns that the adopted reforms do not sufficiently address the long-standing erosion of judicial salaries due to inflation and do not ensure full financial autonomy of the judiciary, as remuneration remains linked to the general public sector pay system.³⁸

In 2025, the National Assembly assessed the draft Act on the Criminal Treatment of Juveniles as suitable for further legislative consideration. The proposal aims to prioritise proceedings involving minors, strengthen judicial specialisation and introduce early individual assessments to support tailored decision-making. It also envisages enhanced multidisciplinary cooperation through a specialised unit for juvenile cases within the public institution The Children's House (*Hiša za otroke*).³⁹ In January 2026, Slovenia adopted the Act on the Criminal Treatment of Juveniles,⁴⁰ introducing a comprehen-

35 *Slovenia, The Act on the common foundations of the public sector pay system* (Zakon o skupnih temeljnih sistema plač v javnem sektorju), 24 October 2024, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO8826>.

36 *For more information on the reform of the public pay system, see the government webpage on www.gov.si/zbirke/projekti-in-programi/prenova-placnega-sistema-v-javnem-sektorju/.*

37 *T. K. B. and G. K., New public sector wage law passed with 45 votes in favor and three against* (Novi plačni zakon za javni sektor sprejet s 45 glasovi za in tremi proti), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 24 October 2024, www.rtv slo.si/slovenija/novi-placni-zakon-za-javni-sektor-sprejet-s-45-glasovi-za-in-tremi-proti/725294.

38 *IUS-INFO, The new ZSod is revamping the career system of judges* (Novi ZSod prenavlja karierni sistem sodnikov), IUS-INFO, 28 November 2025, www.iusinfo.si/medijsko-sredisce/dnevne-novice/novi-zsod-prenavlja-karierni-sistem-sodnikov-321344.

39 *Slovenia, Ministry of Justice (Ministrstvo za pravosodje), The draft Act on the Treatment of Minors for Criminal Offenses is in public debate* (Predlog Zakona o obravnavanju mladoletnikov zaradi kaznivih dejanj v javni razpravi), press release, 8 January 2025, www.gov.si/novice/2025-01-08-predlog-zakona-o-obravnavanju-mladoletnikov-zaradi-kaznivih-dejanj-v-javni-razpravi/.

40 *Slovenia, The Act on the criminal treatment of juveniles* (Zakon o kazenski obravnavi mladoletnikov), 28 January 2026, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9164>.

sive and specialised legal framework governing the criminal responsibility, procedural safeguards and sanctions applicable to juvenile offenders, which will enter into force on 1 January 2027.⁴¹

The failure to address the structural drivers of court backlogs and capacity constraints has direct implications for the effective protection of individual rights. Prolonged proceedings undermine the right to a trial within a reasonable time, affecting not only defendants but also victims and other parties seeking judicial protection. In the administrative justice system, the systematic prioritisation of asylum-related cases resulted in the displacement of other disputes, leading to lengthy delays and raising concerns about equality before the law.

Beyond delays, these omissions also undermine transparency, traceability and accountability within the justice system. The absence of comprehensive, integrated and publicly accessible justice data limits the ability to track cases across institutions, assess consistency of outcomes and identify systemic weaknesses. This constrains informed policymaking and prevents meaningful public scrutiny of how justice is administered in practice.

As a result, public trust in the justice system and the rule of law is weakened. When inefficiencies persist without clear data, justification or follow-up, judicial remedies may be perceived as ineffective or inaccessible. If left unaddressed, such dynamics risk becoming normalised, eroding confidence in the justice system's capacity to deliver timely and fair outcomes and diminishing the credibility of institutional commitments to uphold the rule of law.

It was also observed that proceedings before the Administrative Court take significantly longer compared to other courts, except the Labour and Social Court, averaging six and a half months according to 2024 data.⁴² In addition, the Commission's report pays limited attention to the cumulative impact of staffing shortages across the justice system, including courts, prosecution services and prisons, which increasingly constrain institutional capacity and the effective implementation of reforms.

41 *Maček, P.*, The Juvenile Justice Act (JJPA) was adopted (Sprejet Zakon o kazenski obravnavi mladoletnikov (ZKOM), IUS-INFO, 3 February 2026, www.iusinfo.si/medijsko-sredisce/v-srediscu/sprejet-zakon-o-kazenski-obravnavi-mladoletnikov-zkom-322045).

42 *For more information on the average duration of proceedings, see the webpage of Slovenian judiciary on <https://poslovanje-sodstva.sodisce.si/trajanje-postopkov/>.*

New Issues that Emerged in 2025

Act on Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety

On 18 November 2025, the National Assembly adopted the Act on Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety,⁴³ publicly referred to as the Šutar Act. The legislation was justified by the authorities with reference to a rise in violent criminal offences and the need for a more effective state response to serious security threats, and was adopted in the immediate aftermath of the tragic death of Aleš Šutar. Drafted and enacted within less than one month (entered into force on 27 November 2025), the Act introduced an exceptionally broad set of measures aimed at ensuring public safety.

While formally applicable to the general population, the legislative initiative was widely framed in political and public discourse as a response to security concerns associated with specific marginalised communities, in particular the Roma population.⁴⁴ This context raises concerns that the Act may contribute to indirect ethnic targeting and discriminatory effects in its implementation, notwithstanding its formally neutral wording.

The Act is a so-called omnibus law, amending several different laws (the Financing of Municipalities Act, the Free Legal Aid Act, and the Criminal Procedure Act) and derogating from certain provisions of the Tax Procedure Act, the Criminal Code, the Social Assistance Payments Act, and the Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act.⁴⁵ The Act significantly expands police powers in designated high-risk areas⁴⁶ by permitting the use of technical surveillance measures, including audio-visual recording and automated licence plate recognition. It further authorises law enforcement authorities to enter dwellings, other premises, or vehicles without prior judicial authorisation where such entry is deemed necessary for the immediate seizure of weapons or other dangerous objects.

43 *Slovenia, The Act on emergency measures to ensure public safety* (Zakon o nujnih ukrepih za zagotavljanje javne varnosti), 18 November 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9360>.

44 *Boffey, D., New Slovenian law treats entire Romany minority “as a security threat”, The Guardian, 18 November 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/nov/18/slovenia-accused-of-turning-roma-neighbourhoods-into-security-zones?utm>.*

45 *Uradni list, ZNUZJV – a law that sets new rules for the police and citizens (ZNUZJV – zakon, ki postavlja nova pravila igre za policijo in državljane), Uradni list, 3 December 2025, www.uradni-list.si/novice/pogled/znuzjv---zakon-ki-postavlja-nova-pravila-igre-za-policijo-in-drzavljane.*

46 *STA, Police declare two security risk areas: in the center of Ljubljana and near Novo mesto (Policija razglasila dve varnostno tvegani območji: v centru Ljubljane in pri Novem mestu), Dnevnik, 23 January 2026, www.dnevnik.si/novice/slovenija/policija-doslej-razglasila-dve-varnostno-tvegani-obmocji-2780311/.*

In addition, the Act provides for stricter sanctions for violent criminal offences, streamlines procedures for the temporary seizure of property, and introduces additional measures affecting the enforcement of social assistance benefits. While the Act was supported by the authorities and segments of the public as a necessary response to public safety challenges, legal experts and civil society organisations have expressed concerns regarding its compatibility with constitutional safeguards and the adequacy of judicial oversight. In particular, concerns were raised that the broad discretion afforded to law enforcement authorities could result in uneven or selective application of the measures in practice, potentially disproportionately affecting certain groups and raising issues related to equality before the law.

Developments during 2025

The Act was drafted and adopted under an expedited procedure, with limited time for public consultation or parliamentary debate. Its implementation began immediately after entry into force, including the designation of high-risk security zones by the police. The scope and speed of the legislative process, combined with the breadth of the measures introduced, prompted public debate and legal scrutiny in late 2025, with constitutional and human-rights concerns remaining unresolved at the end of the year.

In response, a broad range of civil society organisations and initiatives publicly called on Members of Parliament to reject the Act, warning that its accelerated adoption, limited public consultation and far-reaching security measures risk undermining constitutional safeguards, fundamental rights and the rule of law.⁴⁷

Following the enactment of the Act, the police have designated two areas as high-risk security zones,⁴⁸ including part of Metelkova Street in Ljubljana and the Roma settlement Brezje-Žabjak near Novo Mesto.⁴⁹

47 *La. Da.*, Several NGOs and initiatives call on MPs to reject the Šutar Act (Več nevladnih organizacij in iniciativ poslance pozvalo k zavrnitvi Šutarjevega zakona), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 12 November 2025, www.rtv slo.si/slovenija/vec-nevladnih-organizacij-in-iniciativ-poslance-pozvalo-k-zavrnitvi-sutarjevega-zakona/763813.

48 *Dolenjskainfo*, Security risk area declared in Novo mesto, 115 people checked in three hours (Razglašeno varnostno tvegano območje v Novem mestu, v treh urah preverili 115 oseb), Dolenjskainfo, 27 January 2026, <https://dolenjskainfo.com/novica/lokalno/razglaseno-varnostno-tvegano-obmocje-v-novem-mestu-v-treh-urah-preverili-115-oseb/330784>.

49 *Bortoletto, F.*, Slovenian parliament backs security crackdown; activists call out anti-Roma move, Eunews, 18 November 2025, www.eunews.it/en/2025/11/18/slovenian-parliament-backs-security-crackdown-activists-call-out-anti-roma-move/.

The Roma Foundation for Europe has strongly criticised the Act on Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety, warning that it “sets a dangerous precedent for Europe” by treating a minority as a security threat and signalling that expansive security tools targeting marginalised groups are compatible with European standards. According to the Foundation, the law could normalise discriminatory policing practices and lower the political cost of targeting already excluded communities — with potential repercussions beyond Slovenia’s borders.⁵⁰

As a further consequence of the Act, practitioners have also identified gaps in the enforcement of hate-related offences. In particular, the Legal Network for the Protection of Democracy stressed that the introduced legal provisions under the Act have resulted in the inability to effectively prosecute offences motivated by hatred or bias where the underlying conduct is classified as a minor offence, due to the removal of the relevant aggravating factor in the minor offences regime. Legal commentators have raised concerns that this change may weaken legal protection against hate-motivated conduct and diminish the ability of law enforcement and prosecutorial authorities to address bias-related wrongdoing when it does not meet the threshold for a criminal offence.⁵¹

The first practical shortcomings of the Act became apparent in its enforcement, most notably through the execution of seizures affecting social transfers, where the consequences were borne primarily by the most vulnerable individuals. Following the entry into force of the Act, the Financial Administration seized social assistance benefits from more than a thousand recipients with outstanding minor offence-related debts, leading to expectations that an increased number of families will require humanitarian assistance, as enforcement measures directly affected basic subsistence support.⁵² In this context, the Legal Network for the Protection of Democracy submitted a constitutional challenge to the Constitutional Court, contesting the provisions of the Act on Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety that allow for the seizure of social assistance benefits. The initiative supports nine individual applicants who claim that the enforcement of these measures resulted in violations of their fundamental rights.⁵³ In a press release published on 30 January 2026, the Peace Institute criticised

50 *Roma Foundation for Europe*, Slovenia’s “Šutar Law” Sets a Dangerous Precedent for Europe, press release, 18 November 2025, <https://romaforeurope.org/work/articles/sutar-law-set-dangerous-precedent>.

51 *Pravna mreža za varstvo demokracije*, Inability to prosecute hostile motive in new offenses (Nemožnost pregona sovražnega motiva pri novih prekrških), opinion, 15 December 2025, <https://pravna-mreza.si/objave/nemoznost-pregona-sovraznega-motiva-pri-novih-prekrskih/>.

52 *Neubauer, S.*, After the first seizure of social assistance, cracks in the Šutar Law are showing (Po prvem rubežu socialne pomoči se kažejo razpoke Šutarjevega zakona), N1, 29 January 2026, <https://n1info.si/novice/slovenija/po-prvem-rubezu-socialne-pomoci-se-kazejo-razpoke-sutarjevega-zakona/>.

53 *La. Da. and T. L. Š.*, Legal network with initiative to assess the constitutionality of the part of the law that allows for the seizure of social assistance (Pravna mreža s pobudo za oceno ustavnosti dela zakona, ki omogoča rubež socialne pomoči), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 11 February 2026, www.rtvsllo.si/slovenija/pravna-mreza-s-pobudo-za-oceno-ustavnosti-dela-zakona-ki-omogoca-rubez-socialne-pomoci/773085.

the designation of Metelkova Street and the Roma settlement Brezje-Žabjak as security-risk areas, warning that the Act stigmatises socially marginalised groups and reframes long-standing social issues as security threats rather than addressing their structural causes.⁵⁴

Implications and Recommendations for 2026

Further attention in 2026 could be given to structural aspects of case-flow management and resource allocation, with a view to supporting timely adjudication and compliance with European standards on reasonable time. In particular, the cumulative impact of urgent proceedings on the functioning of courts merits closer monitoring.

In this context, the Commission could highlight the potential value of organisational measures within the Administrative Court, including a more specialised allocation of asylum-related cases. Such an approach could improve the handling of urgent proceedings while mitigating displacement effects on other administrative disputes.

Further consideration could also be given to clarifying responsibilities for justice data collection, transparency and monitoring. More coherent and accessible data could support a better understanding of case trajectories, consistency of outcomes and systemic pressures, thereby strengthening evidence-based assessment of the justice system.

In light of the adoption of emergency public security legislation in 2025, the Commission should recommend that Slovenia repeal or fundamentally revise emergency measures that unduly restrict fundamental rights and were adopted through accelerated legislative procedures without adequate democratic scrutiny. In particular, the Commission should call on the authorities to reassess whether the continued application of such measures meets the requirements of necessity, proportionality and legal certainty, and to suspend provisions that enable disproportionate or selective enforcement in practice.

Suggested recommendation: Address the uneven distribution of workloads among courts, as significant disparities in unresolved cases indicate structural inefficiencies in case allocation and resource management. Further attention could be given to strengthening mechanisms for balanced workload distribution and evidence-based allocation of judicial resources, in order to reduce backlogs and ensure equal access to justice and compliance with the right to a trial within a reasonable time.

54 *Mirovni inštitut*, There is no security without social justice (Varnost brez socialne pravičnosti ne obstaja), press release, 30 January 2026, www.mirovni-institut.si/varnost-brez-socialne-pravicnosti-ne-obstaja/.

Suggested recommendation: Further develop judicial training frameworks, including more structured and systematic approaches to continuous professional development.

Suggested recommendation: Ensure that any future public security legislation with far-reaching implications for fundamental rights be subject to full parliamentary procedure, meaningful public consultation and inclusive public debate. The systematic use of expedited procedures for structurally significant security measures risks undermining democratic legitimacy, transparency and compliance with rule-of-law standards.

Implementation of Judgments

Slovenia continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to the implementation of international judicial standards and judgments, including those of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). Both the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court, as well as lower courts, have sought to align domestic jurisprudence with evolving European standards, particularly in sensitive areas such as judicial impartiality, the presumption of innocence, and the exclusion of judges. However, practitioners note that interpretation of European case law is not always straightforward, as the jurisprudence of international courts may at times contain lines of reasoning or judgments that are difficult to reconcile or appear to point in different directions. This can generate uncertainty at the national level and complicate the consistent application of European standards.

From a comparative perspective, Slovenia ranks among the more diligent states in executing ECtHR judgments and demonstrates a consistently high execution rate of the ECtHR judgments, as reflected in the persistently narrow gap between condemnatory judgments and those executed over time.⁵⁵

Slovenian courts have generally sought to align domestic jurisprudence with evolving European standards, and Slovenia is often regarded as diligent in the formal execution of the ECtHR judgments. However, human rights defenders note that implementation challenges do not stem solely from the complexity of European case law, but also from formalistic or minimalistic national approaches, whereby judgments are considered executed despite substantively inadequate measures. This is illustrated by the implementation of the ECtHR judgments concerning the ‘erased’, where some affected individuals still lack a regularised status. For more than two decades, the Peace Institute has been engaged in legal representation and advocacy for the erased persons, emphasising that the specific legislation governing the regularisation of their status is no longer in force, while many affected

⁵⁵ For more information, see the government webpage related to the national obligation to execute judgments of the European Court of Human Rights on www.gov.si/teme/obveznost-izvrsevanja-sodb-evropskega-sodisca-za-clovekove-pravice/.

individuals continue to live in Slovenia without any legal status, underscoring the inadequacy of past remedial measures and the ongoing need for comprehensive legislative solutions to ensure access to permanent residence and full redress.⁵⁶ These shortcomings are further reflected in the communicated case of *Stojan Ristić and Others v. Slovenia*, which concerns the ongoing consequences of the erasure, the restrictive interpretation of the amended Act Regulating the Legal Status of Citizens of Other Successor States of the Former Social Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the Republic of Slovenia,⁵⁷ and the resulting lack of effective remedies and access to compensation for erased persons who were forced to leave Slovenia, raising serious questions regarding Slovenia's compliance with its obligations under the Convention.⁵⁸

More broadly, experts highlight that divergent or evolving lines of European jurisprudence can create uncertainty for national courts, particularly in criminal proceedings. Divergent or even contradictory judgments of the ECtHR in comparable cases,⁵⁹ illustrated by differing outcomes in cases concerning judicial impartiality, create significant uncertainty for national courts. Slovenian courts are thus required to navigate fluctuating standards, often without clear guidance as to which interpretative line should prevail, particularly in criminal proceedings, which are most exposed to these tensions. These difficulties are further compounded by the expanding involvement of the CJEU in areas traditionally governed by national criminal law. The combined effect of overlapping jurisdictions and inconsistent standards increases legal uncertainty and places additional interpretative burdens on national courts tasked with ensuring compliance with multiple, and sometimes misaligned, supranational requirements.

At the same time, concerns have been raised about emerging political pressures on the ECtHR, particularly in the field of migration. A joint letter signed by several European heads of government

56 For more information, see the webpage on the erased residents on <https://www.mirovni-institut.si/nepozabljeni/#:~:text=26.%20februarja%202025%20je%20minilo,je%20izvedla%20oblast%20Republike%20Slovenije>.

57 *Slovenia, The Act regulating the legal status of citizens of other successor states of the former SFRY in the Republic of Slovenia* (Zakon o urejanju statusa državljanov drugih držav naslednic nekdanje SFRJ v Republiki Sloveniji), 8 July 1999, and subsequent modifications, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO1586>.

58 *European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)*, *Stojan Ristić and Others against Slovenia*, lodged on 4 June 2024, communicated on 24 June 2025, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22appno%22:%5B%2216807/24%22%5D,%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-244237%22%5D%7D>.

59 See *European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)*, *Mucha v. Slovakia*, No. 63703/19, 25 November 2021, where the Court held that detailed factual findings in plea-bargain judgments may violate the presumption of innocence if they effectively prejudge the guilt of a separately prosecuted person, contrasted with *Bouša v. Czech Republic*, No. 34067/23, 26 June 2025, in which the Court confirmed that more limited and carefully worded references, accompanied by clear procedural distancing and an independent subsequent assessment of evidence, do not in themselves reach that threshold.

has openly criticised the Court for allegedly overstepping its mandate in cases involving the expulsion of migrants on national security grounds.⁶⁰ These interventions, which call for greater discretion for states and a recalibration of the Court's human-rights balancing, risk undermining the authority and independence of the ECtHR. Legal experts warn that any shift in the Court's jurisprudence resulting from such pressures would further complicate implementation efforts at the national level and exacerbate existing inconsistencies.

Overall, although Slovenia continues to demonstrate a strong record in implementing international judgments, the effectiveness and legal certainty of this process are increasingly shaped by structural factors, which lie largely outside the national framework. These include inconsistencies in European case law, the progressive expansion and overlap of judicial mandates, and the growing politicisation of human rights adjudication. Addressing these challenges requires greater coherence and legal clarity at the European level, alongside sustained safeguards to protect judicial independence from political interference.

In the 2022 Annual Report, Slovenia ranked a high fourth among the 46 Council of Europe Member States in terms of the proportion of executed judgments.⁶¹

By the end of 2024, Slovenia had four unexecuted judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, indicating remaining obligations to align domestic practice with international standards.⁶²

60 Wallis, E., UK and Danish leaders call for reinterpretation of ECHR, InfoMigrants, 11 December 2025, www.infomigrants.net/en/post/68647/uk-and-danish-leaders-call-for-reinterpretation-of-echr.

61 Slovenia, Ministry of Justice (*Ministrstvo za pravosodje*), Council of Europe: Slovenia once again among the most successful in the field of implementing ECHR judgments (Svet Evrope: Slovenija ponovno med najuspešnejšimi na področju izvrševanja sodb ESČP), press release, 7 April 2023, www.gov.si/novice/2023-04-07-svet-evrope-slovenija-ponovno-med-najuspesnejsimi-na-podrocju-izvrsevanja-sodb-escp/.

62 Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers, Supervision of the Execution of Judgments and Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights – 2024: 18th Annual Report of the Committee of Ministers, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, p.120, <https://rm.coe.int/gbr-2001-18e-rapport-annuel-2024/1680b4d77d>.

ANTI-CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK

General assessment

Slovenia has made progress in strengthening its anti-corruption framework, particularly through the adoption of the new Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption,⁶³ the main strategic document in the field, and accompanying Action Plan in 2025.⁶⁴ These reforms establish a more comprehensive and structured framework for preventing corruption, with a stronger emphasis on integrity management, internal oversight, and institutional accountability. A key development is the increased emphasis on implementing and monitoring integrity plans⁶⁵ in public institutions as internal compliance mechanisms, aimed at systematically identifying corruption risks, strengthening preventive controls, and integrating integrity management into daily institutional governance. These developments represent an important step in strengthening the preventive dimension of the anti-corruption system and provide a foundation that should be further built upon. Nevertheless, these reforms should not mark the endpoint of anti-corruption efforts, and their implementation and effectiveness must continue to be closely monitored, including by the European Commission, to ensure that the strengthened framework translates into tangible and lasting improvements.

At the same time, early warning signs indicate that the effectiveness of these reforms will depend on their consistent and effective implementation in practice. Integrity plans have historically often been treated as formal reporting obligations rather than as operational compliance tools embedded in institutional decision-making. Ensuring that these mechanisms function as practical instruments for risk management, monitoring, and corrective action remains an ongoing challenge. Without sustained implementation and oversight, there is a risk that integrity compliance mechanisms will not achieve their intended preventive impact.⁶⁶

63 *Slovenia, The Resolution on the prevention of corruption in the Republic of Slovenia* (Resolucija o preprečevanju korupcije v Republiki Sloveniji), 28 March 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=RESO157>.

64 *Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije)*, Action Plan for the Implementation of the Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption (Akcijski načrt za uresničevanje Resolucije o preprečevanju korupcije), Ljubljana, Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije, www.kpk-rs.si/storage/uploads/f52db7b7-56fa-4d72-bbba-c214579a27da/Akcijski-na%C4%8Drt-2025.pdf.

65 *For more information, see the webpage of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption on www.kpk-rs.si/sl/instituti/nacrt-integritete.*

66 *Online consultation with an expert in corruption prevention, 26 January 2026.*

Despite certain improvements in this area, integrity rules continue to be applied unevenly across different categories of public officials, with elected officials not being subject to the same integrity and eligibility requirements as other public office holders.⁶⁷

The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption warned that Slovenia still lacks adequate accountability and sanctions for misconduct by the highest public officials, which negatively affects integrity and the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts.⁶⁸

In recent years, the concept of integrity has gained greater prominence in public and political discourse. It is now more frequently communicated and invoked, including by political actors, sometimes as part of political contestation.⁶⁹ Consequently, integrity has become an established subject of public debate, and there are ongoing efforts to strengthen and formalise integrity standards within the legal framework.

This increased emphasis on integrity in public discourse has also been reflected in preventive efforts, with the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption expanding its training activities and introducing a new online training system in 2024 to strengthen awareness, build institutional capacity, and support the consistent application of integrity and anti-corruption standards across the public and private sectors.⁷⁰

The adoption of the new Public Office Holders Act in 2025 represents an important step towards strengthening the legal framework governing public functions and clarifying the rights and obligations of public office holders;⁷¹ however, its effectiveness in improving integrity and accountability will

67 *STA and R.M.*, Impunity is a condition for the president and mayors, but not for deputies (Nekaznovanost pogojev za predsednika države in župane, ne pa za poslance), Svet 24, 28 January 2026, <https://svet24.si/novice/slovenija/predsednik-republike-nekaznovanost-politikov-1876753>.

68 *M. Z. and G. C.*, KPK: Slovenia lacks adequate accountability from the highest authorities (KPK: V Sloveniji manjka ustrezno prevzemanje odgovornosti najvišjih predstavnikov oblasti), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 10 February 2026, <https://www.rtvlo.si/slovenija/kpk-v-sloveniji-manjka-ustrezno-prevzemanje-odgovornosti-najvisjih-predstavnikov-oblasti/772947>.

69 *Na. R. and STA*, Golob: The highest integrity is to keep promises to voters (Golob: Najvišja integriteta je držati obljube volivcem), Siol.net, 14 January 2026, <https://siol.net/novice/slovenija/golob-najvisja-integriteta-je-drzati-obljube-volivcem-681731>.

70 *For more information, see the webpage of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption on www.kpk-rs.si/sl/aktivnosti-komisije/izvedba-usposabljanj.*

71 *Slovenia, The Public office holders act (Zakon o funkcionarjih)*, 18 July 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9075>.

need to be assessed in practice, particularly in light of ongoing concerns highlighted by the European Commission regarding unequal integrity standards and accountability mechanisms among elected officials.⁷²

Although a legal framework for whistleblower protection is in place,⁷³ its practical use remains limited due to the absence of case law, reducing its effectiveness as a tool for detecting corruption. Whistleblowers have reported facing retaliation, legal uncertainty, and insufficient institutional protection, which may discourage reporting and further limit the effectiveness of whistleblower mechanisms.⁷⁴

A significant concern is the lack of responsiveness by the government to recommendations issued by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, particularly in areas involving large public infrastructure projects and systemic corruption risks. Failure to act on such recommendations weakens the effectiveness of preventive anti-corruption mechanisms and raises concerns regarding political accountability and institutional cooperation.⁷⁵

According to its most recent annual report, the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption received 844 reports of suspected corruption in 2024, representing a three percent increase compared to the previous year, indicating sustained public engagement and ongoing concerns regarding integrity and corruption risks.⁷⁶

72 *Slovenia, Ministry of Public Administration (Ministrstvo za javno upravo)*, The National Assembly adopted the new Officials Act (Državni zbor je sprejel nov Zakon o funkcionarjih), press release, 18 July 2025, www.gov.si/novice/2025-07-18-drzavni-zbor-je-sprejel-nov-zakon-o-funkcionarjih/.

73 *Slovenia, The Whistleblower protection act (Zakon o zaščiti prijaviteljev)*, 27 January 2023, <https://pisrs.si/pregled-Predpisa?id=ZAKO8518>.

74 *Burger, B.*, Ivan Gale speaks out after several years of revelation: Leave it alone, you won't change anything (Ivan Gale po več letih od razkritja spregovoril: Pusti, saj ne boš nič spremenil), Delo, 4 November 2025, www.delo.si/novice/slovenija/ivan-gale-zvizgaci-erik-brecelj-korupcija.

75 *STA, KPK*: The government does not understand our mission. Government: We act transparently by sharing our thoughts (KPK: Vlada ne razume našega poslanstva. Vlada: Z deljenjem razmislekov delujemo transparentno), 24ur.com, 29 August 2025, <https://www.24ur.com/novice/slovenija/kpk-odziv-vlade-v-primeru-crncec-ka-ze-na-nerazumevanje-poslanstva-komisije.html>.

76 *Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije)*, Annual Report of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption for 2024 (Letno poročilo Komisije za preprečevanju korupcije za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije, www.kpk-rs.si/storage/uploads/5a0a2713-69c1-4d8b-b251-c2acb2eee4d9/Letno-poro%C4%8Dilo-2024_WEB.pdf.

Implementation of 2025 Commission recommendations

Recommendation: Take further measures to ensure a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences, including in high-level cases (first made in 2022; reworded in 2023 and 2024)

In 2025, Slovenia took initial steps towards implementing the recommendation through the adoption of a new Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption, the principal strategic document in the field, and accompanying Action Plan, which introduced concrete measures aimed at strengthening prevention, integrity, and institutional coordination. These developments represent important progress at the strategic level and demonstrate formal commitment to improving the anti-corruption framework.

However, implementation remains at an early stage, and these measures have not yet translated into a demonstrable track record of investigations, prosecutions, and final judgments in corruption cases, particularly at high levels.

No clear systemic backsliding was observed; however, certain developments raise concerns regarding institutional accountability. The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption has highlighted insufficient responsiveness by competent authorities to its findings and recommendations, as well as continued misunderstanding or lack of recognition of its oversight role. In addition, Slovenia's decline in the Corruption Perceptions Index indicates persistent weaknesses in the practical effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts and underscores the need to strengthen implementation and institutional follow-up.

While the Commission's recommendation appropriately highlights the need to strengthen the track record of corruption investigations, prosecutions, and final judgments, it remains relatively broad and does not sufficiently specify the structural, preventive, and legislative measures required to address the underlying weaknesses in the anti-corruption framework. More targeted and operational guidance would support more effective and sustainable implementation. Furthermore, integrity and suitability criteria, including integrity as a core professional and ethical standard, should be clearly defined and consistently applied to all public office holders, including elected officials, as part of appointment and eligibility frameworks. Consideration should also be given to comprehensive legislative reform to strengthen the coherence, enforceability, and practical effectiveness of the integrity framework, ensuring that preventive measures, oversight mechanisms, and accountability standards are effectively embedded across the public sector.

Commission's 2025 assessment: Some further progress **Peace Institute's current assessment: In progress**

Gaps in the Commission's Report

Effective and timely handling of corruption cases

While progress has been made, certain structural and procedural challenges remain in ensuring the effective and timely handling of corruption cases, as persistent procedural weaknesses may allow cases to be delayed or fragmented. Legal practitioners are able to exploit procedural loopholes, resulting in slow and inefficient proceedings. Additionally, there is a notable gap between how corruption offences are assessed by oversight bodies (such as the anti-corruption authority) and how courts evaluate evidentiary standards, often leading to cases failing at the trial stage.⁷⁷ The prosecution of corruption offences remains particularly complex and challenging due to the length and procedural structure of criminal proceedings. Individual stages of corruption cases may last several months or even years, reflecting both the complexity of the cases and procedural requirements. The criminal procedure framework requires that evidence and witness testimony be presented multiple times during different stages of the proceedings, which contributes to delays. In addition, parties to the proceedings have extensive procedural rights to file legal remedies at various stages, including preliminary phases, and such appeals are often used by defence counsel. The review of these legal remedies, typically conducted at two judicial levels, further prolongs proceedings. Frequent changes in judicial and constitutional case law also contribute to legal uncertainty and procedural complexity. Finally, both courts and prosecution services face high caseloads involving complex matters, which limits the overall efficiency and effectiveness of corruption proceedings.⁷⁸

High evidentiary standards continue to pose significant challenges for the effective investigation and prosecution of corruption offences, contributing to lengthy and complex proceedings. This is particularly relevant in corruption cases, which often involve systemic corruption and require extensive evidentiary documentation.⁷⁹ In 2024, corruption-related offences most frequently concerned public procurement, public tenders, and unlawful conduct by public officials. Convictions were also recorded

77 *Online consultation with an expert in corruption prevention, 26 January 2026.*

78 *Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia (Vrhovno državno tožilstvo Republike Slovenije), Joint report on the work of state prosecutors' offices for 2024 (Skupno poročilo o delu državnih tožilstev za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Vrhovno državno tožilstvo Republike Slovenije, www.dt-rs.si/files/documents/Skupno%20letno%20poro%C4%8Dilo%20za%202024.pdf.*

79 *Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia (Vrhovno državno tožilstvo Republike Slovenije), Summary of the report on the work of state prosecutors' offices for 2024 (Povzetek poročila o delu državnih tožilstev za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Vrhovno državno tožilstvo Republike Slovenije, www.dt-rs.si/files/documents/data/Letno%20poroc%CC%8Cilo%202024%20-%20Predlog%202.6.pdf.*

in corruption cases within the healthcare sector, particularly in relation to the procurement of medical materials and protective equipment.⁸⁰

Financial limitations have been reported as affecting the ability of law enforcement authorities to pursue complex and proactive corruption investigations, particularly those requiring costly forensic IT expertise.⁸¹

Prolonged administrative and judicial procedures continue to affect access to public information in Slovenia, as appeals and court proceedings can take several years, reducing the effectiveness of transparency mechanisms and limiting timely public oversight.⁸²

While the new strategic framework is now in place, its implementation is still at an early stage. The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption emphasised that the key challenge now lies in moving from planning to the effective implementation of measures in practice, which will require coordinated action by different institutions and consistent monitoring. The success of the strategic document will largely depend on the effective implementation of the planned measures and the institutional commitment to preventing corruption.⁸³

Despite these persistent challenges, the Commission's report does not include a specific recommendation addressing the procedural inefficiencies and structural factors affecting the timely and effective investigation and prosecution of corruption cases. Considering the continued impact of these issues, a targeted recommendation aimed at enhancing procedural efficiency, strengthening institutional capacity, and supporting the effective handling of complex corruption cases would be justified.

80 *Supreme State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia (Vrhovno državno tožilstvo Republike Slovenije)*, Summary of the report on the work of state prosecutors' offices for 2024 (Povzetek poročila o delu državnih tožilstev za leto 2024), Ljubljana, Vrhovno državno tožilstvo Republike Slovenije, www.dt-rs.si/files/documents/data/Letno%20poroc%CC%8Cilo%202024%20-%20Predlog%202.6.pdf.

81 *Büchner, I.*, Chasing Grand Corruption: Hurdles to Detection, Investigation and Prosecution of Complex Cases across the EU, Berlin, Transparency International, www.transparency.si/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/report-chasing-grand-corruption-english-2025-oct.pdf.

82 *STA*, Lengthy procedures impair access to public information (Dolgotrajni postopki slabijo dostop do informacij javnega značaja), N1, 26 September 2025, <https://n1info.si/novice/slovenija/dolgotrajni-postopki-slabijo-dostop-do-informacij-javnega-znacaja/>.

83 *M. Z.*, KPK Prepares a Set of Measures to Prevent Corruption: "Now It's Time to Implement It in Practice" (KPK pripravil nabor ukrepov za preprečevanje korupcije: "Zdaj je na vrsti izvajanje v praksi"), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 1 July 2025, www.rtv slo.si/slovenija/kpk-pripravil-nabor-ukrepov-za-preprecevanje-korupcije-zdaj-je-na-vrsti-izvajanje-v-praksi/750625.

Another concern relates to the limited institutional follow-up to the findings and recommendations of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, which has emphasised that insufficient responsiveness by competent authorities weakens accountability and undermines the effectiveness of corruption prevention and oversight mechanisms.⁸⁴

Developments during 2025

In 2025, Slovenia adopted a new strategic framework for the fight against corruption⁸⁵ and an accompanying action plan,⁸⁶ representing a formal step forward in addressing long-standing deficiencies in the anti-corruption framework. This strategic document introduces a more comprehensive approach to prevention and integrity, and its adoption responds directly to repeated Commission recommendations.

The Resolution and Action Plan strengthened the role of integrity plans by reinforcing them as operational governance and compliance mechanisms. Public institutions are required to systematically implement integrity-related measures, monitor corruption risks, and report annually on implementation.⁸⁷ This represents a shift from a largely formal requirement towards a structured and monitored integrity management framework across the public sector.

84 *Slovenia, Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije)*, Response to the Government's position: The Commission is implementing its mission and legal powers (Odziv na stališče Vlade: Komisija izvaja svoje poslanstvo in zakonske pristojnosti), press release, 29 August 2025, www.kpk-rs.si/sl/novice/vse-novice/odziv-na-stalisce-vlade-komisija-izvaja-svoje-poslanstvo-in-zakonske-pristojnosti.

85 *Slovenia, The Resolution on the prevention of corruption in the Republic of Slovenia* (Resolucija o preprečevanju korupcije v Republiki Sloveniji), 28 March 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=RESO157>.

86 *Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije)*, Action Plan for the Implementation of the Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption (Akcijski načrt za uresničevanje Resolucije o preprečevanju korupcije), Ljubljana, Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije, www.kpk-rs.si/storage/uploads/f52db7b7-56fa-4d72-bbba-c214579a27da/Akcijski-na%C4%8Drt-2025.pdf.

87 *Slovenia, Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije)* (2026), Reporting on Action Plan activities by the end of February: answers to frequently asked questions (Poročanje o aktivnostih iz Akcijskega načrta do konca februarja: odgovori na najpogostejša vprašanja), public release, 12 February 2026, www.kpk-rs.si/sl/novice/vse-novice/porocanje-o-aktivnostih-iz-akcijskega-nacrta-odgovori-na-najpogostejsa-vprasanja.

However, as the document has only recently been adopted, its practical impact remains to be demonstrated, and its effectiveness will largely depend on the timely and consistent implementation of the planned measures and the sustained engagement of all competent authorities.⁸⁸

The concept of integrity has become more prominent in public discourse and is increasingly communicated as an important governance standard. Integrity is now more frequently referenced in political and institutional debates, including by political actors.⁸⁹ At the same time, integrity has become a subject of broader public and political discussion, with ongoing efforts to further formalise integrity standards through legislative measures.⁹⁰ This reflects a growing recognition of integrity as a core principle of public office, although its consistent and impartial application in practice remains essential for strengthening institutional accountability and public trust.

The new Public Office Holders Act,⁹¹ adopted in 2025, further develops the legal framework governing public office by introducing clearer rules on the status, rights, and obligations of public office holders.⁹² Its implementation is expected to contribute to improved transparency and accountability, as it introduces mandatory training for public office holders, requiring newly appointed officials to complete introductory and specialised e-training on ethics, integrity, and transparency within six months of taking office.

It is also important to highlight increased efforts in the area of education and awareness-raising on integrity. In 2025, the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption launched a public call to support projects aimed at raising awareness among young people (aged 15–29) about the importance of integrity, ethical conduct, and responsible decision-making. The initiative aims to promote integrity,

88 M. Z., KPK Prepares a Set of Measures to Prevent Corruption: “Now It’s Time to Implement It in Practice” (KPK pripravil nabor ukrepov za preprečevanje korupcije: “Zdaj je na vrsti izvajanje v praksi”), MMC RTV SLO, STA, 1 July 2025, www.rtvlo.si/slovenija/kpk-pripravil-nabor-ukrepov-za-preprecevanje-korupcije-zdaj-je-na-vrsti-izvajanje-v-praksi/750625.

89 St. M. and STA, Golob: Coalition partners satisfied with explanations regarding KPK findings (Golob: Koalicijski partnerji zadovoljni s pojasnili glede ugotovitev KPK), Siol.net, 15 January 2026, <https://siol.net/novice/slovenija/golob-koalicijski-partnerji-zadovoljni-s-pojasnili-glede-ugotovitev-kpk-681868>.

90 Kečanovič, B., Fourth letter on integrity (Četrto pismo o integriteti), Delo, 24 January 2026, <https://www.delo.si/mnenja/gostujoce-pero/cetrto-pismo-o-integriteti>.

91 Slovenia, *The Public office holders act* (Zakon o funkcionarjih), 18 July 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9075>.

92 Slovenia, *Ministry of Public Administration (Ministrstvo za javno upravo)* (2025), ‘Državni zbor je sprejel nov Zakon o funkcionarjih’, press release, 18 July 2025, www.gov.si/novice/2025-07-18-drzavni-zbor-je-sprejel-nov-zakon-o-funkcionarjih/.

accountability, and critical thinking among young people and strengthen long-term corruption prevention through education and civic engagement. Such measures contribute to strengthening the preventive dimension of the anti-corruption framework by promoting integrity standards beyond formal institutional settings.⁹³ Preventive efforts have also been strengthened through expanded training and awareness-raising activities, with the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption introducing a new online training system to enhance institutional capacity and support the effective implementation of integrity and anti-corruption standards across the public and private sectors.⁹⁴

Besides these positive developments, significant challenges remain in ensuring the effective implementation and practical impact of anti-corruption measures. While the legal and strategic framework has been strengthened, its translation into consistent enforcement, accountability, and measurable improvements in corruption investigations and sanctions remains limited. In particular, concerns persist regarding insufficient follow-up to the findings and recommendations of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, uneven application of integrity standards across different categories of public officials, and the continued lack of a strong and consistent track record in high-level corruption cases. These shortcomings indicate that further efforts are needed to ensure that newly adopted measures function effectively in practice and contribute to strengthening institutional accountability and public trust.

New Issues that Emerged in 2025

Implementation of strategic framework and action plan

A key issue emerging in 2025 concerns the monitoring, follow-up and practical implementation of the newly adopted strategic framework⁹⁵ and related action plan,⁹⁶ particularly with regard to integrity plans and internal compliance mechanisms.

93 For more information, see the webpage of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption on www.kpk-rs.si/sl/o-komisiji/javni-razpisi-in-javna-narocila/javni-razpis-ozavescanje-mladih-o-integriteti.

94 For more information, see the webpage of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption on www.kpk-rs.si/sl/aktivnosti-komisije/izvedba-usposabljanj.

95 Slovenia, *The Resolution on the prevention of corruption in the Republic of Slovenia* (Resolucija o preprečevanju korupcije v Republiki Sloveniji), 28 March 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=RESO157>.

96 *Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije)*, Action Plan for the Implementation of the Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption (Akcijski načrt za uresničevanje Resolucije o preprečevanju korupcije), Ljubljana, Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije, www.kpk-rs.si/storage/uploads/f52db7b7-56fa-4d72-bbba-c214579a27da/Akcijski-na%C4%8Drt-2025.pdf.

A persistent challenge remains in translating integrity frameworks from a formal, document-based approach into effective, day-to-day governance and management practices within public institutions. While integrity has been legally defined for over a decade, its application as a practical standard of conduct and decision-making remains uneven.

In addition, discussions and measures in this area have predominantly focused on judges and prosecutors, while other actors, including the role and position of journalists, have received comparatively limited attention, making it difficult to assess developments in this respect.⁹⁷

Slovenia's score in the Corruption Perceptions Index declined in 2025, with the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption warning that formal anti-corruption frameworks exist, but their implementation, accountability, and enforcement often remain insufficient in practice.⁹⁸ Transparency International Slovenia emphasised that the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) reflects not only individual corruption cases, but more broadly the functioning of institutions, the effectiveness of oversight mechanisms, and the level of political commitment to transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. According to the Transparency International Slovenia, particular concerns remain regarding political integrity, public procurement, appointment procedures, and the effectiveness of enforcement in economic crime cases.⁹⁹ With its score of 58 points, Slovenia remains below the average of Western Europe and the European Union, which stands at 64 points.¹⁰⁰

Developments during 2025

In 2025, an action plan,¹⁰¹ accompanying the new national strategic framework for the fight against corruption,¹⁰² entered into force, formally shifting the focus from adoption to implementation. A

97 *Online Consultation with an expert in corruption prevention, 26 January 2026.*

98 *M. B., 'Na indeksu korupcije Slovenija padla, uvršča se ob bok Bocvani in Ruandi', Delo, 10 February 2026, www.delo.si/novice/slovenija/na-indeksu-korupcije-slovenija-padla-uvrsca-se-ob-bok-bocvani-in-ruandi.*

99 *Transparency International Slovenia, 'CPI 2025: Slovenija poslabšala uvrstitev', press release, 10 February 2026, www.transparency.si/novica/cpi-2025-slovenija-padec/.*

100 *STA, 'Indeks zaznave korupcije 2025: Slovenija nekoliko nazaduje', Dnevnik, 10 February 2026, www.dnevnik.si/novice/slovenija/indeks-zaznave-korupcije-2025-slovenija-nekoliko-nazaduje-2783784/.*

101 *Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije), Action Plan for the Implementation of the Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption (Akcijski načrt za uresničevanje Resolucije o preprečevanju korupcije), Ljubljana, Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije, www.kpk-rs.si/storage/uploads/f52db7b7-56fa-4d72-bbba-c214579a27da/Akcijski-na%C4%8Drt-2025.pdf.*

102 *Slovenia, The Resolution on the prevention of corruption in the Republic of Slovenia (Resolucija o preprečevanju korupcije v Republiki Sloveniji), 28 March 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=RESO157>.*

central measure introduced by the action plan is the development of internal compliance mechanisms, intended to strengthen integrity and corruption prevention systems across public institutions.

The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption issued calls in January 2025 requiring institutions to report on implementation, following the adoption of the new Resolution and Action plan in the previous year.¹⁰³ The action plan explicitly requires institutions to treat integrity plans as compliance and governance tools, rather than as annual reporting obligations.

However, in practice, many institutions continue to approach integrity plans primarily as formal requirements. The Commission has limited enforcement powers, raising concerns that implementation may remain inconsistent without sustained oversight and external pressure. Consulted experts noted that similar integrity-related measures in the past were often adopted in response to international recommendations (e.g. GRECO) but not embedded in everyday institutional practice.¹⁰⁴

Developments in the judiciary and prosecution services illustrate this challenge. While ethical codes exist and corruption risk management policies have formally been adopted, their integration into operational decision-making remains limited. Integrity standards are still not consistently linked to public functions and accountability mechanisms.¹⁰⁵

At the same time, 2025 marked an important institutional development with the introduction of mandatory integrity and transparency training for public officials through the new legislation on public officials.¹⁰⁶ This reform strengthens the preventive dimension of the integrity framework, as public office holders are now required to receive formal training on conflicts of interest and integrity standards within a defined timeframe after appointment.

103 *Slovenia, Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (Komisija za preprečevanje korupcije), Action Plan - Notification of Reporting Obligation (Akcijski načrt - Obvestilo o obveznosti poročanja), public release, 23 January 2026, www.kpk-rs.si/sl/novice/vse-novice/akcijski-nacrt-obvestilo-o-obveznosti-porocanja.*

104 *Online consultation with an expert in corruption prevention, 26 January 2026.*

105 *Council of Europe, Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), 'Slovenia: insufficient progress in implementing anti-corruption recommendations, robust action needed to strengthen integrity in government and police', press release, 28 October 2024, www.coe.int/en/web/greco/home/-/asset_publisher/lxOP5Yph48Zi/content/slovenia-publication-of-the-5th-evaluation-round-addendum-to-the-second-compliance-report.*

106 *Slovenia, The Public office holders act (Zakon o funkcionarjih), 18 July 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9075>.*

Implications and Recommendations for 2026

The Commission's reporting gaps contribute to continued inefficiencies in corruption case handling, prolonged proceedings, and limited enforcement outcomes, which undermine the credibility and effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts. Insufficient institutional follow-up to the findings and recommendations of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption weakens accountability and allows integrity violations to occur without meaningful consequences. At the same time, procedural complexity, high evidentiary thresholds, and heavy caseloads contribute to delays and reduce transparency and public oversight. As a result, anti-corruption measures are often treated as formal compliance obligations rather than as effective governance tools, limiting their practical impact and weakening public confidence in institutional integrity.

Suggested recommendation: Take measures to improve the efficiency and timeliness of corruption investigations, prosecutions and adjudication, including by addressing procedural inefficiencies, strengthening institutional capacity, and improving analytical and monitoring systems, including comprehensive statistical tracking of corruption cases across all stages of proceedings. This should include a review of relevant criminal procedural legislation to address procedural loopholes and prevent undue delays and abuse of procedural rights that may hinder the effective handling of corruption cases.

Suggested recommendation: Ensure effective and timely follow-up to the findings and recommendations of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, including by strengthening coordination and information exchange between oversight bodies, law enforcement authorities, prosecution services and courts, and by ensuring accountability where integrity violations are established.

Suggested recommendation: Strengthen the practical implementation of integrity frameworks, including through enhanced training, education and awareness-raising for public officials, and ensure that anti-corruption strategies, action plans and integrity measures are effectively embedded in everyday institutional practice and supported by continuous monitoring and evaluation

Suggested recommendation: Ensure the effective implementation and follow-up of the national strategic framework through a related action plan, including prioritisation of key measures and regular monitoring, to ensure that repeated strategic commitments translate into tangible systemic progress.

MEDIA ENVIRONMENT AND MEDIA FREEDOM

General assessment

The overall trajectory in the field of media freedom and pluralism in Slovenia in 2025 and early 2026 can be characterised as normative progress accompanied by persistent structural vulnerabilities. The most significant developments occurred at the legislative level, where Slovenia adopted a series of reforms aligning the national framework more closely with European standards. However, implementation remains at an early stage, and key structural weaknesses, particularly regarding enforcement capacity, institutional independence and financial sustainability, continue to pose medium-term risks.

The adoption of the new Media Act¹⁰⁷ September 2025 represents the first comprehensive reform of media legislation in over two decades. The Act strengthens protection of journalistic sources, introduces clearer safeguards against intrusive surveillance, enhances ownership transparency through a new Media Register (including beneficial ownership data), and establishes ex ante control of media concentration based on public-interest criteria aligned with the European Media Freedom Act. It also introduces clearer rules on transparency of state advertising and establishes dedicated state aid schemes for both the digital transformation of print media and the production of digital-only media.

In January 2026, Slovenia adopted the Act on Protective Measures against Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation,¹⁰⁸ formally transposing the Anti-SLAPP Directive and extending safeguards to domestic cases. The law introduces early dismissal mechanisms and security-for-costs provisions, strengthening procedural protection for journalists and other public watchdogs.

In the field of public service media, the new Act on the Slovenian Press Agency (STA) clarifies the public service remit and introduces a more structured net-cost financing model. Amendments to the Act on RTV Slovenia address short-term funding gaps and specify budgetary support for selected public service tasks.

Taken together, these reforms demonstrate measurable legislative alignment with the EU standards and constitute clear progress at the normative level.

107 Slovenia, *The Media act (Zakon o medijih)*, 3 September 2025, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO8930>.

108 Slovenia, *The Act on protective measures against Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (Zakon o zaščitnih ukrepih zoper strateške tožbe za onemogočanje javnega udejstvovanja)*, 28 January 2026, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9106>.

Despite legislative improvements, the principal weaknesses lie in enforcement and institutional design. The regulatory framework remains fragmented. The Agency for Communication Networks and Services (AKOS) operates with limited human and financial resources, while appointment procedures continue to allow decisive governmental influence. Reassigning of media concentration oversight to the Competition Protection Agency (AVK), adopted in last stage of the parliamentary procedure without dedicated public consultation, raises concerns regarding regulatory coherence and specialised expertise in media pluralism, especially in light of AVK's limited history of taking action to enforce media-concentration rules.

The sustainability of public service media financing also remains incomplete. The licence fee for RTV Slovenia continues to depend on governmental decisions and is not automatically indexed to inflation, limiting financial predictability. Broader structural challenges persist in the media market, including economic fragility of print media, newsroom downsizing and the absence of a sector-wide collective agreement protecting journalists in private media. Protection mechanisms for journalists, although strengthened legislatively, remain underdeveloped institutionally. Reporting platforms and legal assistance largely depend on limited or project-based funding of the journalists' associations, while recorded attacks against journalists remain present.

There are no indications of entrenched backsliding at present. However, several early warning signs merit attention. First, there is a recurring implementation gap between adopted legislation and enforcement capacity. Second, several key reforms were adopted late in the parliamentary term, creating uncertainty regarding their durability. Third, the continued economic vulnerability of the media sector may gradually weaken pluralism and editorial independence if not addressed through more predictable and robust funding mechanisms. Finally, the upcoming parliamentary elections in March 2026 may re-introduce political actors whose previous periods in government involved heightened political pressure and attacks on journalists and episodes of interference affecting the independence and financial stability of public service media, which could increase future risks.

Implementation of 2025 Commission recommendations

Recommendation: Further advance with the process of adopting legislative and non-legislative safeguards to improve the protection of journalists, taking into account European standards on the protection of journalists (first made in 2022; reworded in 2023 and 2024)

In late 2025 and early 2026, Slovenia introduced several legislative and policy measures aimed at advancing safeguards for the protection of journalists.

At the legislative level, the Act on Protective Measures against Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation was adopted in January 2026, formally transposing the EU Anti-SLAPP Directive and introducing procedural safeguards in civil proceedings, including the possibility of requiring security for costs, providing support and assistance to defendants, and enabling the early dismissal of manifestly unfounded claims. In parallel, the new Media Act, adopted in September 2025, introduced into Slovenian law the safeguards required under the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), notably the enhanced protection of journalistic sources and stricter conditions for the use of surveillance measures against journalists and newsroom devices.

The New Media Act further provides a legal framework for providing public funding to NGOs with the public interest status in the media field, including professional associations. This new framework can be used in future for supporting public funds, journalists' professional associations working on journalists' protection and safety.

At the same time, non-legislative safeguards to improve the protection of journalists remain underdeveloped. In practice, protection mechanisms continue to rely largely on short-term, project-based funding from foreign donors and civil society initiatives, including the attack-reporting platform and legal counselling services operated by the Slovenian Association of Journalists.

Commission's 2025 assessment: Some further progress **Peace Institute's current assessment: In progress**

Recommendation: Complete reforms to ensure that the rules or mechanisms are in place to provide funding for public service media that is appropriate for the realisation of its public service remit while guaranteeing its independence (first made in 2024)

In late 2025 and early 2026, Slovenia introduced several legislative measures aimed at improving the financial sustainability and stability of public service media. Most notably, in February 2026, National Assembly adopted a new Act on Slovenian Press Agency, which clarifies the public service remit, introduces a more transparent and structured net-cost financing model, and incorporates recommendations stemming from both the European Commission's state aid requirements and the national Court of Audit review. Under the current Government, Slovenian Press Agency (STA) has been provided with rather stable annual financing of its public service remit from the state budget.

In parallel, amendments to the Act on RTV Slovenia sought to address structural funding challenges, including adjustments to budgetary allocations for specific public service tasks and steps towards improving financial predictability, such as linking the amount of licence fee to inflation. However, the adopted amendments do not introduce automatic indexation of the licence fee to inflation and instead leave its adjustment dependent on governmental decision, while simultaneously strengthening the competences of the Financial Committee, which includes government representatives. Taken together, these two measures increase the risk of politicisation and can undermine institutional independence.

Despite these legislative steps, structural challenges persist for both STA and RTV Slovenia. The overall funding framework for RTV Slovenia remains dependent on government decisions rather than fully automatic or depoliticised mechanisms, limiting long-term financial predictability. Budget transfers have at times been delayed, creating operational uncertainty. Similarly, although the new Act on STA introduces clearer safeguards, the effectiveness of the framework will depend on consistent implementation and stable future appropriations.

Commission's 2025 assessment: Some progress

Peace Institute's current assessment: In progress

Gaps in the Commission's Report

Framework for enforcing media regulation

An important structural issue not explicitly addressed in the Commission's recommendations concerns the institutional framework for enforcing media regulation, in particular the independence, resources and effectiveness of the regulatory bodies such as the Agency for Communication Networks and Services of the Republic of Slovenia (AKOS) and the Culture and Media Inspectorate. While the overarching media legislation was updated in late 2025, the reform did not substantively address the long-standing fragmentation and weaknesses of the regulatory institutional framework responsible for enforcement. Although AKOS is formally established as an independent regulatory authority, the government retains decisive influence over the appointment of its leadership, while the agency's human and financial resources remain insufficient relative to its expanding competencies.

At the same time, responsibilities relating to media pluralism and concentration control were reassigned at the final stage of the legislative process to the Competition Protection Agency of the Republic of Slovenia (AVK), a general competition authority without specialised media expertise, particularly in view of AVK's historically limited and largely passive enforcement in this area. The broader regulatory landscape thus remains fragmented, with oversight divided among multiple bodies (AKOS, AVK and the Inspectorate for Culture and Media within the Ministry of Culture), without

improved coordination. This institutional design creates persistent risks to effective and independent oversight of media regulation.

AKOS's mandate already broadened in 2024, covering telecommunications, audiovisual services, radio frequency spectrum, postal and railway communications, as well as responsibilities as Digital Services Coordinator. The department responsible for media supervision remains comparatively small and has limited capacities to carry out an active role. Across regulatory bodies, under-capacity remains a structural problem. In comparative perspective, Slovenia's media regulatory authority (AKOS) ranks among the smallest in the EU in terms of staffing and operational resources. Furthermore, while earlier drafts of the new Mass Media Act foresaw that AKOS would conduct media concentration assessments, this competence was removed at the final stage of the legislative process and reassigned to AVK. This last-minute amendment was adopted through an expedited procedure without dedicated public consultation. Key regulatory choices were therefore made with limited transparency and stakeholder participation. Both institutional arrangements raise concerns. Assigning concentration oversight to AKOS risked overburdening an already resource-strained regulator by concentrating an extensive range of regulatory powers within a single institution, whereas placing this competence at AVK, which has long held but scarcely exercised this mandate, situates media pluralism assessments within an authority guided by economic competition criteria rather than by EMFA-mandated considerations of editorial independence and media pluralism.

New Issues that Emerged in 2025

Financial sustainability of media

Although this is not a new issue, its scale and intensity have further increased in recent years. Persistent concerns relate to the deteriorating financial sustainability of professional journalism and quality news media production essential for democratic media functions, which is especially evident in quality print media, where continued newsroom downsizing and recurring layoffs illustrate deepening structural economic vulnerability. While the current government announced reforms and established additional support schemes at the end of its mandate, no substantial and structural increase in public funding has materialised yet.

The newly adopted Media Act was introduced only at the very end of the mandate, and the proposed support schemes are not yet operational and remain exposed to potential political revision or reversal following the March 2026 elections. In comparative terms, public funding for media in Slovenia remains low compared to many EU Member States with more robust and stable funding models. There is therefore an urgent need for predictable and substantially increased public funding,

distributed with no political influence, to ensure that journalists and media retain the institutional, economic and professional capacity necessary to fulfil their democratic roles.¹⁰⁹

Lack of protections for journalists' labour rights and autonomy

A significant and persistent structural issue that constrains the media's democratic functions is the lack of comprehensive, sector-specific protections for journalists' labour rights and professional autonomy across the media sector, which continues to undermine the sustainability, independence, and professional standards of journalism in Slovenia. A sector-wide collective agreement, supported by public policy incentives, would be essential to address this gap.

While journalists employed by the public service broadcaster RTV Slovenia benefit from a collective agreement and comparatively stronger labour safeguards, no equivalent sector-wide framework applies to journalists working in private media. Moreover, earlier legislative proposals reportedly envisaged stronger incentives for media publishers for establishing collective protection mechanisms within the media law framework, but these provisions were ultimately removed during the legislative process, leaving the issue unaddressed at the systemic level.

During 2025, the absence of a sectoral collective agreement remained a persistent challenge. Journalists and media workers continued to report widespread precarious employment, including short-term contracts and other unstable forms of work, particularly in private, local and smaller media outlets.

109 After the closure of the report, on 16 February 2026, the Ministry of Culture launched a new public call establishing operational public funding for new full-time journalistic positions in national, regional, and digital general-interest media for 2026–2027. The scheme enables co-funding of up to three new positions per print publisher and two per digital publisher, with a maximum of €3,000 per month per position, subject to the €300,000 de minimis ceiling per publisher over three years. Following an official correction, the Ministry confirmed that the available budget is €2 million for 2026 and €2 million for 2027, and that the call remains open until 16 February 2027 or until funds are exhausted. While this development does not resolve the broader issue of long-term underfunding of public-interest media, it does represent the first operationalisation of the new funding schemes under the Media Act. Call for co-financing of new jobs in the media published, (*Objavljen poziv za sofinanciranje novih zaposlitev v medijih*), 18 February 2026, <https://novinar.com/dns/izdajateljji-medijev-lahko-kandidirajo-za-drzavno-sofinanciranje-novih-zaposlitev/>; A public call for co-financing the conclusion of annual digital subscriptions with publishers of national and regional general-interest print media for the year 2026–2027 with the reference number JP-SDN-2026-2027 (*Javni poziv za sofinanciranje sklenitve letnih digitalnih naročin pri izdajateljnih nacionalnih in regionalnih splošoinformativnih tiskanih medijev za leto 2026–2027 z oznako JP-SDN-2026-2027*), February 2026, https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MK/Javne-objave/Javni-pozivi/2026/JP-SDN-2026-2027/1_BESEDILO-javnega-poziva-za-sofinanciranje-sklenitve-letnih-digitalnih-narocnin.docx.

Newsrooms continued to contract, with layoffs and reduced staffing levels increasing workloads and negatively affecting working conditions and the quality of editorial output. The shrinking newsrooms, lack of predictable income, social security and employment stability were identified as factors increasing journalists' vulnerability to economic and external pressures, with implications for editorial independence, professional autonomy and ability to play a democratic role.

Implications and Recommendations for 2026

The Commission's lack of reporting on the independence, resources and effectiveness of media regulatory bodies helps perpetuate weak and largely inefficient enforcement of media legislation and inadequate specialised expertise in assessing risks to media pluralism. At the same time, the current framework reduces regulatory coherence, while appointment procedures (e.g. AKOS) and budgetary dependence (e.g. Culture and Media Inspectorate) increase the vulnerability of regulatory authorities to potential political influence. These concerns are further exacerbated by using expedited legislative procedures for key institutional changes, which limit transparency and meaningful public participation. Taken together, these factors undermine the effective implementation of both national media law and relevant EU standards, including the European Media Freedom Act. In practice, the central gap remains not the normative framework, but the absence of a sufficiently independent, adequately resourced and institutionally coherent enforcement architecture capable of ensuring effective and consistent application of media regulation.

Suggested recommendation: Undertake a comprehensive reform of the institutional framework for media regulation enforcement, either by establishing an independent specialised media authority or by significantly strengthening the independence, safeguards, staffing and budgetary autonomy of existing regulatory bodies, while ensuring that core competences such as media concentration oversight are assigned to an independent regulatory body with adequate resources and specialised expertise in media pluralism.

Suggested recommendation: Adopt and implement public policy incentives to initiate the adoption of a sectoral collective agreement or equivalent binding framework establishing protection of labour rights and professional autonomy for journalists across both public and private media, in order to safeguard the sustainability, independence and quality of professional journalism.

CHECKS AND BALANCES -

General assessment

Slovenia's civic space remains formally open and supported by a comparatively well-developed legal framework. The current centre-left government does not adopt an openly hostile stance towards civil society organisations (CSOs) and maintains a declarative commitment to cooperation. Institutional channels for dialogue exist, and ministries have designated contact points for cooperation with NGOs.¹¹⁰

In December 2025, the government adopted the NGO Development Strategy to 2030 and the Volunteering Development Strategy to 2030,¹¹¹ signalling formal recognition of the sector's importance and establishing a long-term policy framework for strengthening organisational capacity, sustainability, and cooperation with public authorities. The preparation of these strategies included structured consultation with civil society actors, representing a positive example of early-stage engagement. However, these formal commitments coexist with persistent structural weaknesses. Engagement often remains procedural rather than substantive, with consultations and advisory bodies rarely translating into measurable policy influence. As documented in the national civic space report, participation in decision-making continues to be one of the most problematic dimensions of the enabling environment for CSOs. Despite clear legal standards requiring 30-60-day public consultations, implementation remains inconsistent, deadlines are frequently shortened, and 'urgent procedures' are applied expansively. Consultations often occur at late drafting stages, limiting the real capacity of CSOs to shape legislative outcomes.¹¹²

At the same time, civil society operates within an increasingly polarised political environment. Throughout the current mandate, right-wing opposition actors and aligned media outlets have systematically targeted CSOs with delegitimising narratives, particularly those active in the fields of human rights, migration, and LGBTQIA+ rights. Attacks against civil society, especially online harassment, smear campaigns, and disinformation, have increased steadily over the past decade. Human rights and LGBTQIA+ organisations are disproportionately affected. Neither the state nor civil society

110 *Turnšek, T.*, National Report on the State of Civic Space in Slovenia, PROSECO project (forthcoming).

111 *Slovenia, Ministry of Public Administration* (Ministrstvo za javno upravo), The government adopted a strategy for the development of volunteering and non-governmental organizations (Vlada sprejela strategiji razvoja prostovoljstva in nevladnih organizacij), press release, 5 December 2025, www.gov.si/novice/2025-12-05-vlada-sprejela-strategiji-razvoja-prostovoljstva-in-nevladnih-organizacij/.

112 *Turnšek, T.*, National Report on the State of Civic Space in Slovenia, PROSECO project (forthcoming).

currently has effective institutional mechanisms specifically designed to prevent or respond to coordinated attacks, and existing legal remedies for reputational harm or hate speech remain limited in practice.¹¹³

Taken together, these findings point to a civic space that is formally safeguarded but structurally fragile. While the adoption of the two strategies in 2025 represents a positive policy development, early warning signs remain visible: the normalisation of hostile political rhetoric towards CSOs, systemic non-compliance with participatory standards, and continued structural underfunding in key advocacy fields. As Slovenia approaches the March 2026 parliamentary elections, the political context further heightens this fragility. The combination of political polarisation, uneven enforcement of participatory guarantees, and insufficient institutional protection mechanisms creates conditions in which civic space could deteriorate rapidly under adverse political circumstances.

Implementation of 2025 Commission recommendations

There were no recommendations in this area in the Commission's 2025 report.

Gaps in the Commission's Report

Resolution on Legislative Regulation

The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted in 2009 a Resolution on Legislative Regulation.¹¹⁴ The resolution was aimed at improving standards for drafting laws and regulations. Among other things, the resolution in question provides for minimum standards as regards public consultations, with a minimum period of 30 to 60 days budgeted for consultation with the public. The Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia were later also amended to include the provision related to the minimum period for public consultations.¹¹⁵

The Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS) established a violation meter, a mechanism to monitor the frequency of violations of provisions related to public consultations. This mechanism captures regulations for which the resolution stipulates a minimum time for public consultations. It also captures other acts for which such consultations are provided in

113 *Turnšek, T.*, National Report on the State of Civic Space in Slovenia, PROSECO project (forthcoming).

114 *Slovenia, The Resolution on legislative regulation* (Resolucija o normativni dejavnosti), 19 November 2009, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO5516>.

115 *Slovenia, The Rules of procedure of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia* (Poslovnik Vlade Republike Slovenije), 10 May 2021, <https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=POSL32>.

the government rules of procedure. After taking office from 1 June 2022 until 17 February 2026, data gathered through this monitoring mechanism revealed that the current government did not respect provisions concerning public consultations in 65% of the cases.¹¹⁶

Throughout 2025, the practice of shortened or omitted consultation periods persisted, confirming a structural pattern of weak implementation of participatory standards. Although the Resolution on Legislative Regulation mandates 30-60-day public consultations, deadlines were frequently reduced, including during holiday periods, and “urgent procedures” continued to be used without sufficient justification. Consultations were often conducted at late stages of drafting, limiting their substantive impact. Feedback on submitted comments remained rare, and authorities seldom provided reasoned explanations on whether civil society input was incorporated. A significant share of legislation was adopted through extraordinary parliamentary procedures, further constraining debate and oversight.¹¹⁷

New Issues that Emerged in 2025

Increasing attacks against civil society

During 2025, attacks against civil society organisations became more frequent, more direct, and increasingly central to political messaging, particularly in the context of the approaching March 2026 parliamentary elections. The political discourse surrounding civil society has grown more confrontational and polarised.¹¹⁸

Two opposition parties, the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS) and New Slovenia – Christian Democrats (NSi), have played a particularly visible role in framing civil society organisations as politically biased or illegitimate actors, particularly those active in the fields of human rights, migration, and LGBTQIA+ rights. In September 2025, the newly elected leader of NSi publicly made misleading claims regarding the financing of civil society organisations. These statements prompted a coordinated response from CSOs, including a public letter by the director of CNVOS, refuting the allegations and clarifying the legal framework governing NGO funding.¹¹⁹ The episode illustrates the growing normalisation of disinformation targeting civil society.

116 For more information, see the CNVOS website on www.cnvos.si/stevec-krsitev/.

117 Turnšek, T., National Report on the State of Civic Space in Slovenia, PROSECO project (forthcoming).

118 Turnšek, T., National Report on the State of Civic Space in Slovenia, PROSECO project (forthcoming).

119 Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS), About 300 million from the government for left-wing NGOs: Public letter from the director of CNVOS to the president of the New Slovenia party, Jernej Vrtovec (O 300 vladnih milijonih za levičarske nevladne organizacije: Javno pismo direktorja CNVOS predsedniku stranke Nova Slovenija, Jerneju Vrtovcu), press release, 17 September 2025, www.cnvos.si/novice/3851/o-300-vladnih-milijonih-za-levicarske-nevladne-organizacije/.

Similarly, in January 2026, Janez Janša, leader of SDS party and former Prime Minister, publicly referred to NGOs as a “political paramilitary of the left” and announced that, if returned to power, he would “close the taps” of public funding for NGOs.¹²⁰ The normalisation of this discourse, particularly in an electoral context, contributes to a climate in which civil society is portrayed not as a component of democratic pluralism, but as a target of political confrontation.

Implications and Recommendations for 2026

The continued failure to comply with consultation requirements risks normalising a situation in which participatory guarantees exist formally but lack effective enforcement. Systematic circumvention of consultation standards weakens democratic accountability, reduces transparency in legislative drafting, and limits the capacity of civil society actors to contribute meaningfully to public policy. Over time, such practices may entrench executive dominance in law-making processes and contribute to democratic backsliding, particularly in a politically polarised environment. The erosion of participatory standards is especially concerning, given the increasing hostility towards civil society actors in the broader political discourse.

Suggested recommendation: The government ministries should respect national provisions related to public consultations in the process of adopting laws and regulations.

120 *Strazišar, G.*, “NGOs, this is the political paramilitary wing of the left”(“Nevladniki, to je politična paravojska levice”), *Dnevnik*, 13 January 2026, www.dnevnik.si/novice/slovenija/nevladniki-to-je-politicka-paravojska-levice-2777914/.

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