

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

12 March 2020 Index number: EUR 68/1984/2020

SLOVENIA: WELCOME COMMITMENTS TOWARDS IMPROVING ROMA INTEGRATION REQUIRE EXTENSIVE ACTION FOR GENUINE PROGRESS

UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ADOPTS UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OUTCOME ON SLOVENIA

Amnesty International would like to note Slovenia's acceptance of several important recommendations, including addressing discrimination against Roma in the area of housing.¹ Consideration of applications for social housing in the south-east of the country often favours employed and educated applicants through a points system instead of being based on actual need, effectively excluding Roma. We will be closely monitoring developments.

Similarly, we welcome the acceptance of recommendations² on reforming the National Programme of Measures for Roma to include specific and measurable goals, exact timeframes, clear financial frameworks and responsible bodies that would make this programme more strategic. So far, this has not been the case.

We particularly welcome Slovenia's acceptance of a recommendation³ concerning the right to drinking water. Since declaring access to water as a human right in its constitution in 2016, the country has failed to adopt the legislation to implement this right, especially for vulnerable communities, such as Roma. We urge Slovenia to take urgent action in this regard.

In December 2019 in the municipality of Ribnica, a two-month-old Roma baby died of untreated pneumonia.⁴ Roma families in Ribnica continue to live in inhuman living conditions without water, sanitation, electricity. According to the Institute of Public Health, Roma have dramatically lower life expectancy than that of average Slovenians – 55 compared to 77 years, respectively,⁵ no doubt a consequence of extremely poor living conditions in informal settlements. While welcoming Slovenia's acceptance of a recommendation on ending segregation in schools and reducing school dropout cases,⁶ we are concerned that the national-wide dropout rate for elementary school Roma pupils remains at least 60 per cent,⁷ demonstrating how much progress is still needed.

The UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness is a key element of the efforts of the international community to abolish statelessness. We urge Slovenia to reconsider its rejection of recommendations to accede to this treaty, to regularize the situation of any remaining stateless people who were erased from the Registry of permanent residents in the country.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Slovenia on 12 March 2020 during its 43rd session. The above text is Amnesty International's statement on the outcome prior to the adoption of the report of the review. The statement was not delivered in the session as the organization took the decision to protect its staff from the COVID 19 pandemic and to ensure it actively contributes to minimizing spread of the virus. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the UPR review through its submission on [Slovenia](#).

¹ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Slovenia, UN Doc. A/HRC/43/15, recommendation 122.130 (United States of America)

² A/HRC/43/15, Recommendations 122.134 (Canada) and 122.135 (the Netherlands)

³ A/HRC/43/15, Recommendation 122.140 (Germany)

⁴ Mladina, *En Rom manj V človeka nevrednih razmerah v romskem naselju Goriča vas pri Ribnici je umrl dvomesečni otrok. Kdo vse bi se ob tem moral počutiti kriv?*, 14 February, 2020, <https://www.mladina.si/195960/en-rom-manj/>

⁵ Slovenian National Institute for Public Health, *Public health approaches regarding Roma minority in Slovenia*, 2018, https://www.nijz.si/sites/www.nijz.si/files/publikacije-datoteke/javnozdravstveni_pristopi_romi.pdf .

⁶ A/HRC/43/15, recommendation 122.42 (Costa Rica)

⁷ Report of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights following his visit to Slovenia, CommDH (2017)21, 11 July 2017, para 78. This is also corroborated by Amnesty International's research and interviews with authorities.