



Human Rights Ombudsman
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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Follow-up to the Concluding Observations on Slovenia's Seventh Periodic Report – input by the Slovenian National Human Rights Institution

22 September 2025

The Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia (hereafter: the Ombudsman), acting in its capacity as the National Human Rights Institution accredited with A-status, welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in the context of its follow-up procedure to the concluding observations on Slovenia's seventh periodic report. This submission focuses on the two recommendations selected by the Committee for follow-up in March 2023, namely the collection and analysis of data on gender-based violence (paragraph 26(f)), and the elimination of all exceptions to the minimum age of marriage (paragraph 52).

Follow-up information relating to paragraph 26(f) of the CEDAW Concluding Observations

Ensure the collection and analysis of data on all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls, including psychological, economic and domestic violence, as well as cyberviolence and femicide, disaggregated by age, nationality, disability and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, and include economic and psychological forms of gender-based violence against women in administrative legislation.

The Ombudsman has repeatedly pointed out that Slovenia lacks national, representative surveys on all forms of violence against women, which would reveal the full picture of violence, not only cases reported to law enforcement authorities. The Ombudsman considers that greater attention should be devoted to effective research and documentation of the scope, causes, consequences, and indicators of violence, and to obtaining reliable and comparable data that would inform effective prevention policies, address the consequences of violence, and allow for the evaluation of measures. In the context of violence against women and domestic violence, it is necessary to examine the extent of violence against children and the elderly, while also giving due attention to persons with disabilities, those with a migrant background, individuals living in Roma communities, and other particularly vulnerable groups.

From the information submitted by Slovenia to CEDAW¹ it follows that, since March 2023 when the Committee issued its recommendations to ensure systematic data collection and analysis, no new national survey on the prevalence of violence has been carried out, and no integrated database has been established.

The Ombudsman welcomes the adoption of the Resolution on the National Programme for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2024–2029, which sets out as one of its strategic goals the provision of quality data on domestic violence and violence against women. In this Resolution, authorities acknowledge that there are no quality data on domestic violence and violence in residential communities against persons with disabilities or against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and non-binary persons, and that further research is needed on early and forced marriages of minors. It also recognizes that existing data collections are unsynchronized and often methodologically weak, being filled in inconsistently or lacking essential indicators such as the sex of the victim and perpetrator and the relationship between them. The Resolution therefore foresees upgrading social databases, standardizing data entry, improving the recording of cases, harmonizing criteria for statistics across sectors, creating an interoperable database, conducting representative surveys, and researching public attitudes, sexism and early and forced marriages. It also envisages strengthening data collection on sexual harassment and sexual crime.

However, in the Action Plan for 2024–2025, the only measure specifically listed is the reinforcement of data collection on sexual harassment and sexual crime by the State Prosecutor's Office.

Follow-up information relating to paragraph 52 of the CEDAW Concluding Observations

The Committee recommends that the State party amend the Marriage and Family Relations Act and all other related national legislation acts to eliminate all exceptions to the legal minimum age of marriage of 18 years for both women and men.

Following

- the CEDAW recommendation,
- the joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, and
- Slovenia's follow-up report to the concluding observations on its seventh periodic report, where the State party explained the court procedure allowing a child over the age of 15 to marry by way of exception — stating that “the essential characteristic of non-contentious procedure is that it is to a great extent based on the principles of officiality and investigation, enabling the court to protect ex officio the best interests of the child to the maximum extent possible, without being bound by the submissions of the parties to the procedure, as it may also establish facts which the parties to the procedure have not stated. Appropriate safeguards are thus built into the procedure to protect the rights and best interests of the child,” and further that “in our view, the legal arrangements in force are appropriate, since in certain, really exceptional

¹ See: Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Information received from Slovenia on follow-up to the concluding observations on its seventh periodic report*, 5 March 2025, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2FC%2F31%2F00%2F7&Lang=en

situations, and with appropriate safeguards, it is reasonable to retain the exemption from impediment to marriage due to the person being underage” —

the Ombudsman decided to analyse court practice in order to review how such exceptions are justified and whether these proceedings indeed ensure the protection of the best interests of the child to the maximum extent possible and the prevention of forced marriages. For this purpose, the Ombudsman requested all competent courts to provide the case files in which they had decided on the request for marriage of a child over the age of 15 (Article 24 of the Family Code – majority and exemption from minority). The Ombudsman obtained all files. From 15 April 2019 (when competence was transferred from social work centres to the courts through the amendment of the Family Code) until 10 September 2025, Slovenian courts ruled on five such cases, with one case still pending. In all concluded cases, the court issued a decision allowing the marriage. At the time of preparing this submission, the Ombudsman’s analysis has not yet been finalized, but once completed it will be shared with the competent ministries and the courts. Although the analysis is still ongoing and the small number of cases allows only limited conclusions, it can already be noted that the courts engaged only to a limited extent with the reasoning for granting authorization to marry.

The Ombudsman appreciates the efforts undertaken by the State, including the adoption of the new Resolution on the National Programme for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women 2024–2029 and the Action Plan for its implementation. However, it notes the need for continuing steps towards the effective implementation of the Committee’s recommendations. The Ombudsman stands ready to continue constructive dialogue and cooperation with the Committee, the State and civil society to support the full implementation of the Convention and the Committee’s recommendations in Slovenia.