



# Slovakia

## BIAS-MOTIVATED SPEECH

In October, Prime Minister Robert Fico declared that "the left cannot be about homosexuals" in response to the European Socialists' decision to expel his party, Direction-SD (Smer-SD), from the Party of European Socialists (PES). The expulsion, confirmed at the PES congress in Amsterdam in October 2025, marks the culmination of years of estrangement between Fico's party and mainstream European social democracy. Fico used the occasion to denounce Brussels and frame his movement as an "authentic Slovak left" that rejects what he described as imposed "European values." He accused EU institutions of failing to understand Slovakia's needs and reaffirmed his party's opposition to progressive social policies, including supporting LGBTI rights.

## BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In March, a 13-year-old boy from Ťahanovce near Košice died by suicide. According to the Human Rights Institute, the tragedy was linked to homophobic bullying and police confirmed they were investigating the case following reports that bullying may have contributed to the suicide. However, the city of Košice denied the claims, stating after an internal review that there was no evidence of bullying at the boy's school.

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In January, Prime Minister Robert Fico announced plans to amend the constitution to recognise only two genders. Speaking at a press conference in Bratislava, he argued that Slovakia must have the final say on such matters, even if it contradicts EU law. Fico said the amendments were needed to curb what he called "progressive ideologies", claiming that people today "change their gender identity on a daily basis" and that Slovakia must safeguard its heritage. Under his proposal, transitioning would be permitted only in "exceptional, justified cases", and adoption rights would be restricted to couples recognised as parents in the constitutional sense – excluding same-sex couples, since marriage in Slovakia is defined solely as the union of a man and a woman. In April, the amendments were discussed in first reading by the Slovak Parliament. In light of the second reading, in June, the Office of the

Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe issued a warning to Slovak lawmakers against proposed constitutional amendments that could undermine human rights protections. Also in June, the European Commission echoed similar concerns, underscoring that the proposed changes would breach European Union law by attempting to deny the supremacy of EU rules over national legislation. After the vote had been suspended in June due to a lack of sufficient support, in late September Slovakia's parliament ultimately approved the constitutional amendment. The adopted changes formally recognise only two genders, restrict comprehensive sexuality education in schools, and limit adoption rights exclusively to married heterosexual couples and undermine supremacy of EU law.

On 21 November the European Commission launched an infringement procedure against Slovakia for its Constitutional amendment package adopted in September. This package includes a number of amendments that discriminate against LGBTI persons, as well as amendments that stipulate that Slovakia retains sovereignty over what are described as "national identity" matters, with the stated aim of ensuring that Slovak domestic legislation may take primacy over all international law, including EU law and the ECHR in these areas. The Commission has launched infringement in relation to the primacy of EU law. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, the Venice Commission, the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union, and multiple UN Special Rapporteurs in the fields of education, health and privacy expressed their concern regarding the amendments, and prior to their approval in Parliament, called for withdrawal or rejection of the proposed changes. These concerns are also shared by the European Parliament, as expressed following the LIBE mission to Slovakia of 2-3 June 2025, the plenary debate of 10 September on "the Rule of law and EU funds management in Slovakia", and the open letter which over 50 MEPs sent to the Slovak National Council on 16 September.

In October, the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) issued a statement condemning Slovakia's newly adopted constitutional reform on LGBTI

rights. The FRA warned that the amendment (See more above) "undermines the principles of equality, human dignity, and respect" guaranteed by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. It denounced the legal definition of sex as "male or female, biologically determined," arguing that it erases the "lived experiences" of trans, non-binary, and intersex people. The agency also criticised the new requirement for parental consent for minors to attend sex education classes, describing it as an undue "restriction on access to objective and reliable information."

In October, the Human Rights Coalition warned that the situation of LGBTI people in Slovakia continues to worsen. The coalition stated that hatred has "shifted into political speeches, legislation, and public discourse." The coalition criticised both the government and parliament for failing in their duty to protect all individuals regardless of identity, orientation, or faith, calling the recent constitutional amendment (see more above) "a frontal attack on human rights, particularly those of queer people." In response, the Justice Ministry maintained that Slovakia's Constitution already prohibits discrimination based on sex, gender, or sexual orientation and asserted that the state "provides protection to all citizens without distinction." It said the constitutional amendment affirming two genders "is not a legal novelty but merely a confirmation of the current state," adding that "the rights and status of trans persons remain unchanged."

## FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

In April, Slovakia's parliament passed a law on nongovernmental organisations, promoted by Prime Minister Robert Fico from the Smer – sociálna demokracia Party. Following pressure from both domestic actors and international observers, the version of the law ultimately passed removed the original classification of NGOs as 'lobbyists' but still imposed significant new obligations on NGOs, particularly in the areas of financial reporting and compliance with freedom of information requirements.

Nonetheless, in mid-December, the Constitutional Court ruled that the law violated the constitutional

right to privacy and therefore repealed it. The Court held that mandatory public disclosure was not necessary to achieve the law's stated objectives of promoting transparency and preventing criminal activity, noting that these aims could be pursued through less intrusive means. Judges further concluded that the legislation was internally inconsistent and ill-suited to its declared purpose, while also posing risks to the reputation and personal dignity of both donors and the organisations concerned.

## FAMILY

In October, Justice Minister Boris Susko (Smer) presented a draft reform to Slovakia's Civil Code, which included a provision stating that a marriage would end - without the consent of either partner - upon the change of gender marker by one of the spouses. The legal consequences, including division of property and child custody arrangements, would be handled as in divorce proceedings. The proposal is currently in public consultation, where institutions and citizens can file objections. Parliament is expected to debate it next year, with the goal of introducing the new code in 2027.

## FOREIGN POLICY

In early November, news outlets reported that the Netherlands was willing to invoke the procedure under Article 7 of the EU Treaty against Slovakia, which could potentially suspend a member state's voting rights in the Council if serious violations of fundamental EU values are found. The Netherlands is contesting Slovakia's recent law, which enshrines only two genders in the constitution, restricts adoption to married heterosexual couples, and bans surrogacy.

## POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

In March, a joint police operation in Austria and Slovakia led to the arrest of 15 people suspected of luring and assaulting queer men. Around 400 law enforcement officers carried out 23 house searches detaining 12 men and three women aged 14 to 26. According to investigators, the suspects created fake online profiles to arrange meetings under the pretence of sex. Instead, the men were ambushed by groups of four to eight masked

attackers, who robbed, beat, and humiliated them. Videos of the assaults were then shared in closed online groups and forums. Police confirmed at least 17 victims, noting cases of serious bodily harm and even an attempted murder.