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## **COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

### **2025 Rule of Law Report Country Chapter on the rule of law situation in Slovenia**

#### *Accompanying the document*

**Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the  
European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions**

#### **2025 Rule of Law Report The rule of law situation in the European Union**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Slovenian justice system saw positive developments, with safeguards for judicial independence and autonomy of prosecutors as regards parliamentary inquiries having entered into force. The level of remuneration of judges and state prosecutors has increased, and work is ongoing to strengthen the rules related to their protection. Amendments to the judicial legislation introducing safeguards to the disciplinary framework and the appointment procedure for Supreme Court judges, as well as reforming the judicial map are in discussion before Parliament. Plans to amend the procedure of promotion and appointment of prosecutors are envisaged to address staffing challenges in State Prosecution Offices. Digitalisation efforts continue, and a full transition to electronic communication remains a priority. The efficiency gains in recent years have not prevented backlogs from further increasing and length of trials remain a challenge particularly in money laundering and corruption cases, but measures taken by the Supreme Court resulted in an increase of the number of resolved cases.

A new anti-corruption strategy and action plan were adopted. Efforts towards establishing a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences continued. The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption called for more transparency and integrity in the appointment of high-level officials such as the Police Director-General. The lobbying guidelines were updated to clarify the existing exemptions from the registration obligation. Transparency and clarity were improved in the updated rules on the submission of the annual reports of political parties. The technical capabilities of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption improved although concerns remain on staff recruitment. Efforts to improve transparency and competition in public procurement continued.

The media regulator generally remains independent, while concerns exist regarding its human and financial resources, including in relation to the envisaged responsibilities. The independence of public service media has further improved. Some steps were made to ensure the adequate funding for public service media, such as a proposed revision of the financing model, although challenges persist. The private media remain affected by financial difficulties and risks to media pluralism. The framework for accessing public information remains favourable. Some further steps were taken to improve the protection of journalists, yet the challenges remain.

To address the Constitutional Court's considerable caseload, the transfer of certain types of cases to administrative courts was achieved by interpretation of legislative changes. Legislative amendments would extend the competence of the Human Rights Ombudsperson and allow the Constitutional Court to establish the incompatibility of office of its members. The civic space in Slovenia continued to improve and has been upgraded to 'open'.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Overall, concerning the recommendations in the 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia has (made):

- Fully implemented the recommendation to finalise the legislative process to amend the rules on parliamentary inquiries with adequate safeguards for independence of judges and state prosecutors, taking into account European standards on judicial independence.
- Significant progress on taking further measures to ensure that the reform of judicial appointments contains adequate safeguards for judicial independence, taking into account European standards on judicial independence.
- Fully implemented the recommendation to finalise the measures to increase the remuneration of judges and state prosecutors, taking into account European standards on resources and remuneration for the justice system.
- Fully implemented the recommendation to complete the adoption of the new anti-corruption strategy and action plan and begin implementation, and some further progress on taking measures to ensure a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences, including in high-level cases.
- Some further progress on the recommendation to further advance with the process of adopting legislative and non-legislative safeguards to improve the protection of journalists, particularly online, taking into account European standards on the protection of journalists.
- Some progress on ensuring that 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.

On this basis, and considering other developments that took place in the period of reference, and in addition to recalling the relevant commitments made under the Recovery and Resilience Plan, it is recommended to Slovenia to:

- Take further measures to ensure a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences, including in high-level cases.
- 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.
- 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.

## I. JUSTICE SYSTEM<sup>1</sup>

### Independence

**The level of perceived judicial independence in Slovenia continues to be average among both the general public and companies.** Overall, 56% of the general population and 55% of companies perceive the level of independence of courts and judges to be ‘fairly or very good’ in 2025<sup>2</sup>. The perceived judicial independence among the general public has significantly increased in comparison with 2024 (45%), as well as in comparison with 2021 (47%). The perceived judicial independence among companies has significantly increased in comparison with 2024 (40%) as well as in comparison with 2021 (43%).

**Safeguards for judicial independence and autonomy of prosecutors as regards parliamentary inquiries are now in force, fully implementing the 2024 recommendation<sup>3</sup>.** Amendments to the Parliamentary Inquiries Act in July 2024, introduced safeguards for judicial independence and autonomy of prosecutors. The legislation allows a request to the Constitutional Court to decide on the constitutional conformity of any parliamentary inquiry, including in relation to judicial independence and autonomy of prosecutors<sup>4</sup>. As the amendments entered into force on 4 January 2025<sup>5</sup>, the 2024 Rule of Law Recommendation has been fully implemented.

**Proposed amendments to the Judicial Council Act and a new Judges Act aim to overhaul the disciplinary framework for judges.** Following the public consultation in autumn 2023, the Government on 16 May 2025 submitted to Parliament the amendments to the Judicial Council Act which focus on the transparency and judicial review in elections of judge-members of the Council, and on more detailed provisions on withdrawal and recusal, with the aim of preventing potential conflicts of interests and ensure the impartiality of Judicial Council members, both in disciplinary matters and judicial appointments<sup>6</sup>. The amendments would also limit the term of office of Council members to a single six-year term. The procedural changes in the Judicial Council Act concern the regulation of disciplinary prosecutors, the suspension of judges during disciplinary proceedings, and the legal remedy against a disciplinary decision. The amendments also envisage to address the unconstitutionality of certain provisions on disciplinary proceedings by removing the Judicial Council’s power to initiate disciplinary proceedings regarding judges<sup>7</sup>. A new ground for the

<sup>1</sup> An overview of the institutional framework for all four pillars can be found [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> Figures 50 and 52, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard and Figures 51 and 53, 2024 EU Justice Scoreboard. The level of perceived judicial independence is categorised as follows: very low (below 30% of respondents perceive judicial independence as fairly good and very good); low (between 30-39%), average (between 40-59%), high (between 60-75%), very high (above 75%).

<sup>3</sup> The 2024 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia to ‘[f]inalise the legislative process to amend the rules on parliamentary inquiries with adequate safeguards for independence of judges and state prosecutors, taking into account European standards on judicial independence’.

<sup>4</sup> This request may be made by one third of all deputies (who have not submitted the request for the parliamentary inquiry), the Judicial Council or the State Prosecutorial Council. Until the decision of the Court, the proposed parliamentary inquiry may not be established.

<sup>5</sup> The entry into force was delayed due to an initiative to hold a referendum on the amendments. In November 2024, the Constitutional Court held that a referendum would not be permissible as the amendments aim at addressing the unconstitutionality established in two Constitutional Court judgments. Judgment of the Slovenian Constitutional Court, U-I-109/24, Slovenian Parliament, written input, pp. 19-20, and 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Judicial Council.

<sup>7</sup> 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 4-5.

termination of the mandate of a Judicial Council member is envisaged, namely the member's appointment as the president or vice-president of a court, in view of the Council's extensive competences regarding the selection, appointment, and dismissal of court presidents and vice-presidents. On 16 May 2025, the Government submitted to Parliament the new Judges Act, which would provide, on the initiative by the judiciary, for a more precise definition of disciplinary offences and clearer procedures for the evaluation of the judicial work by a special body and as the basis for a judge's promotion.

**A refocus towards safeguards in the appointment of Supreme Court judges constitutes significant progress on the recommendation concerning the judicial appointments reform<sup>8</sup>.** Previous Rule of Law Reports noted a lack of adequate safeguards for judicial independence in the reform of judicial appointments<sup>9</sup>. In 2024, due to lack of quorum, the Parliament's Constitutional Commission did not continue the process of the constitutional revision regarding appointment of judges, which had been initiated with the aim of transferring the power to appoint first-time judges from Parliament to the President of the Republic<sup>10</sup>. On 16 May 2025, the Government submitted to Parliament the new Judges Act which would transfer the power to appoint Supreme Court judges (if the candidate is already a judge) from Parliament to the Judicial Council. The revised procedure would allow for judicial review of the appointment of Supreme Court judges and the appointment decision, would also need to be reasoned. Additionally, the proposed amendments to the Judicial Council Act aim at strengthening the guarantees in the selection procedure for judges conducted by the Judicial Council<sup>11</sup>. However, Parliament would keep the power to appoint the Supreme Court President, which would not be, as envisaged previously, transferred to the Judicial Council, and the Supreme Court expressed concerns about Parliament's influence in the appointment process<sup>12</sup>. Considering that the proposed legislative amendments contain adequate safeguards in judicial appointment of Supreme Court judges, there was significant progress on the 2024 Rule of Law Report recommendation.

**Work is ongoing to strengthen rules on protection measures for judges and state prosecutors.** In 2024, incidents involving judges and state prosecutors<sup>13</sup> led to a reflection on whether the regulations are appropriate to ensure their protection. In November 2024, the Ministry of Justice established an interdepartmental working group consisting of the representatives of ministries, the police, the judiciary and state prosecution to develop systemic solutions for enhancing protection<sup>14</sup>. Its objective is, amongst others, to review, by

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<sup>8</sup> The 2024 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia to '[t]ake further measures to ensure that the reform of judicial appointments contains adequate safeguards for judicial independence, taking into account European standards on judicial independence'.

<sup>9</sup> 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 6-7. In the past, Parliament rejected several candidates for Supreme Court judges (three between 2018 and 2022 alone) or a candidate for the President of the Supreme Court (in 2010). 2023 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> The proposed changes to the composition of the Judicial Council also stalled. Slovenian Parliament, written input, p. 20.

<sup>11</sup> See previous paragraph. The amendments envisage that the Council's decision on the selection of a candidate for a vacant judicial position should contain an assessment of the fulfilment of all criteria and reasoning why the selected candidate meets them, or why the selected candidate meets the criteria best.

<sup>12</sup> Country visit Slovenia, the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court.

<sup>13</sup> These security incidents included an arson attack on a court president's private house, alleged irregularities in how the Police exercised protective measures over a state prosecutor at the Specialised State Prosecution Office, and statements made by protesters about judges and the State Prosecutor General in front of a court during a hearing. Association of judges condemned the arson attack. Association of judges (2024).

<sup>14</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice.

the end of 2025, the regulations on protection measures, legal safeguards, and personal assistance, evaluate systemic responses to severe security incidents against officials, and formulate proposals for systemic improvements in judicial officials' protection. The Ministry of the Interior is preparing amendments to the Regulation on the protection of certain persons, which would change the protocol regulating cooperation between the Police, the protected judge/state prosecutor (and their superiors), the adjustment period for a protected person, the conditions for revoking protection, and regarding the jurisdiction of the superior of the protected person in the protection process. In December 2024, the Parliament Committee on Justice addressed the attacks on the judiciary and efforts to discredit it, as well as the responsibility of politicians to respect the judiciary and uphold the rule of law<sup>15</sup>.

## Quality

**Full transition to electronic communication in administrative, civil and commercial cases remains a priority, while pilot trials are planned for criminal cases.** Advanced case management tools are used for all courts and by the Supreme Court to assist in the allocation of resources. The electronic communication tools show only small improvements, while advances could be made particularly in the State Prosecution Offices, and before courts in criminal, civil and administrative cases<sup>16</sup>. In 2025, the full transition to e-communication in administrative, civil and commercial cases for all courts and participants in court proceedings remained a priority task for the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court, and several tools were being implemented in 2025. The Ministry aims to equip 19 courts with videoconferencing systems by mid-2026, enabling remote hearings. It is also developing a solution for e-authentications with a centralised register. In 2024, a speech-to-text application, aiming to address staffing challenges, was implemented in all courts. The introduction of electronic communication in criminal cases remains a priority as well, despite delays in upgrading IT systems of State Prosecution Service and the Supreme Court. The Ministry of Justice established a working group in 2024, tasked to identify and address the delays. The transfer of e-documents between the police units and prosecution service is being tested, and all police units would be included in 2025<sup>17</sup>. The application for viewing and annotating electronic court cases is currently in use in district courts in insolvency cases, while its use in civil and criminal procedure was being tested in beginning of 2025. All the staff at the Administrative Court have been trained for transition to the transition to electronic

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<sup>15</sup> Among its conclusions, it strongly condemned the protests held in front of a court organised with the intent of exerting pressure on the judiciary. Parliament (2025), written input, p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard. In 2024, apart from the improvements in machine-readability of judicial decisions (Figure 48), no change was made in the digitalisation of justice compared to the situation in 2023. Figures 40-48, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard. Since September 2024, filing of electronic applications and documents via the e-Justice portal, including electronic communication, is also possible in judicial redress procedures of former holders of qualifying liabilities of banks. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> However, the plan to start pilot testing of e-communication between prosecution service and district court in Kranj was postponed from January to autumn 2025 (in 2025, additional testing and adjustment of e-communication between the Supreme Court and the Supreme State Prosecution Office took place). As part of RRF, the eSpis application has begun additional upgrades to enable integration with judicial procedure systems and to ensure electronic access for participants and their legal representatives to electronic case files. A new security scheme is being implemented, and the e-Justice portal – through which parties and their legal representatives carry out electronic actions in digitally supported court procedures – is also being updated. Slovenian Government (2025a).



communication, planned in autumn 2025<sup>18</sup>. The implementation of real-time subtitling of court hearings for hearing impaired users is planned for 2025, as well as an IT solution for recording and managing financial obligations in the judiciary for the criminal and later for other judicial proceedings.

**Proposed amendments on judicial map reform would merge first instance District and Local Courts.** As stated in past Rule of Law Reports, the split between the first instance courts has long been identified as affecting the efficiency of the courts, and the previous attempts to conclude this reform have not been successful<sup>19</sup>. On 16 May 2025, Government submitted to Parliament the new Courts Act which would merge District and Local Courts (and keep 11 District Courts only, making all first instance judges into District Court judges), while retaining the geographical distribution of court units<sup>20</sup>. The primary objective is to equalise the workload across the eleven judicial districts, thereby enhancing the efficiency of courts. The proposed law also emphasises the responsibility of court presidents for the effective functioning of the court<sup>21</sup>. The Judicial Council has stated its support for this optimisation but warned of two past unsuccessful reforms which negatively affected the length of court proceedings<sup>22</sup>. With regard to the network of local courts, the Judicial Council found that an analysis would be appropriate to determine whether any of them should be abolished, as some operate with only one or two judges but with a larger number of public servants who could be more effectively reassigned to other courts.

**With the increases in the level of remuneration of judges and state prosecutors the recommendation is fully implemented<sup>23</sup>.** Following a Constitutional Court judgment in June 2024<sup>24</sup>, the Government increased the salaries of judges and state prosecutors by

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<sup>18</sup> In June 2025, testing of electronic serving to public bodies was nearing its end. A significant part of the digitalisation investments is co-funded from the Recovery and Resilience Facility (Target no. 105), requiring the authorities to finalise them by June 2026. The Supreme Court continues to upgrade and further develop IT tools to facilitate the decision-making process such as the collaborative virtual sessions (eSEJE), the internal search engine and the smart query (DoR) to identify and classify submissions and assess them against past decision. By mid-2026, the Supreme Court is set to establish the national Central Documentation Digitalisation Centre (CDDC), which would take over the process of digitalising documents from all courts, while the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office should fully implement the AI tool Virtual Assistant to facilitate the decision-drafting process and set up the Green Meeting Room system to enable teleworking. Slovenian Government (2025a), and Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> Currently, the court system has 55 first instance courts (44 Local Courts and 11 District Courts). 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 10. As a partial remedy, the 2009 and 2015 reforms brought Local Courts under the stronger control of District Courts in order to even-out the caseload and reduce jurisdictional conflicts. 2020 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup> Local Courts would be transformed into external departments, which would continue to operate in their local environments. The law also provides for an evaluation of the district court network after two years of operation. On 16 May 2025, the Government submitted to Parliament amendments to the State Prosecution Office Act, which would align the status of prosecutors with the new framework for judges (unified title, rights, and responsibilities).

<sup>21</sup> Court presidents' key task would be to ensure efficient operation, balanced workload among judges, and timely case resolution. The proposed law would introduce mandatory regular internal audits of the court administration every three years, would shorten the term of court presidents (from six to five years) with the possibility of one reappointment at the same court, and would enable the suspension of a court president.

<sup>22</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Judicial Council.

<sup>23</sup> The 2024 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia to '[f]inalise the measures to increase the remuneration of judges and state prosecutors, taking into account European standards on resources and remuneration for the justice system'.

<sup>24</sup> The level of remuneration of judges and state prosecutors was largely unchanged since 2012. The 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 8-9.

12.35% starting from January 2024<sup>25</sup>. Additionally, as part of the larger public salaries reform, a new Common Foundations of the Public Sector Salary System Act was adopted in October 2025, which led to the higher salary grade classifications of judges and state prosecutors. The salary increases started in January 2025 and will be implemented gradually until January 2028 for all public employees, including for judges and state prosecutors. In addition, an automatic indexation mechanism was introduced into the law: if no agreement is reached through negotiations, salary grades will be by law automatically adjusted by 80% of the increase in the cost of living. Representatives of the judiciary nevertheless noted that compared to the legislative and the executive branch, salaries are still lower in the judicial branch<sup>26</sup>. Considering that the salaries of judges and state prosecutors were increased and that an automatic indexation mechanism was introduced, the 2024 Rule of Law Report recommendation was fully implemented.

**Plans to amend the procedure of promotion and appointment of prosecutors are envisaged to address staffing challenges in State Prosecution Offices.** As noted in the 2021 and 2022 Rule of Law Reports, State Prosecution Offices experienced staffing shortages due to unjustifiable delays in appointments of state prosecutors, which were later resolved<sup>27</sup>. However, due to the prolonged appointment and promotion procedures for state prosecutors, lasting 12 months on average, the negative effects of past delays continue and, at the end of 2024, only 216 out of 268 state prosecutor posts were occupied, only 3,8% more than at the end of 2023<sup>28</sup>. According to the procedure, the Government approves not only the appointment of new state prosecutors, but also promotion into a higher position (e.g. from local state prosecutor to district state prosecutor) – following a proposal from the State Prosecutorial Council. Consequently, a procedure to appoint a new state prosecutor following the promotion of an existing state prosecutor could last up to two years in total<sup>29</sup>. Amendments to the State Prosecution Office Act are envisaged for 2026 that would transfer the power to promote state prosecutors from the Government to the State Prosecutorial Council, shortening the procedures<sup>30</sup>.

## Efficiency

**The efficiency gains in recent years have not prevented backlogs from further increasing and the length of trials remain a challenge, particularly in money laundering and corruption cases.** Based on 2023 comparative data, the justice system continued to function efficiently overall, except in administrative cases, where courts continued to experience challenges in managing the increasing caseload<sup>31</sup>. In 2024, according to the latest Supreme Court data, in total, all courts received 4% more cases and resolved 4% more cases than in 2023, which continued to reverse the past positive trends and again slightly increased,

<sup>25</sup> Slovenian Government, written input, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> For example, in January 2025, the salary of a first instance (local court) judge was about 14% lower than the starting salary of a member of Parliament (by January 2028, the salary of the first instance judges would be 9% lower, if, following the judicial map reform, all local court judges would become district court judges), while the salary of a Supreme Court judge was about 8% higher than that of a minister (to be equalised by January 2028). Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Public Administration, Judicial Council and Association of Judges, and Slovenian Government (2025a).

<sup>27</sup> 2023 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 4-5.

<sup>28</sup> Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 4 and country visit Slovenia, State Prosecutor General and State Prosecutorial Council.

<sup>29</sup> Country visit Slovenia, State Prosecutor General and State Prosecutorial Council.

<sup>30</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice and State Prosecution Office.

<sup>31</sup> Figures 1 – 14, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard.



by 3%, the total backlog of cases at the end of 2024<sup>32</sup>. This continued slight decrease in efficiency could be seen in most courts, except in local, labour and social courts. In 2024, the average length of proceedings at first instance courts slightly increased in civil cases but remained stable in commercial cases and decreased in criminal cases<sup>33</sup>. The time needed for the first instance courts to conduct the first hearing stagnated, taking up to 21 months in civil and 16 months in commercial cases<sup>34</sup>. At first instance criminal courts, the average length in 2023 increased in money laundering offences (926 days) and decreased in corruption offences (526 days) – remaining the third and second longest in the EU<sup>35</sup>. The continued increase in the administrative courts' caseload in administrative courts (by 7% in 2024, compared to 2023) has led to a further increase in pending cases (by 6% end 2024), despite a further 7% increase in resolved cases and increased efficiency of judges. At the first-instance Administrative Court, the average length of proceedings decreased (by 1 month) to 15.8 months<sup>36</sup>.

**Measures taken by the Supreme Court resulted in an increase in the number of resolved cases.** The Supreme Court identified a shortage of court staff, new competences assigned to courts by the legislation (especially in administrative courts), complex procedural rules and inadequate courthouses as the main factors affecting the performance of the courts<sup>37</sup>. It identified measures which seek to ensure that the number of resolved cases in courts remains at least at the level of previous years. Proposals include the unification of case registration in all courts, increased support for court operations by the Ministry of Justice, and some legislation changes. In commercial cases, it found that pending cases are due to higher number of incoming cases and increased complexity of cases, including high value of claims and specialised exclusive competences. Proposed activities include transfer of cases to less burdened courts, unification of case registration and implementation of case-weighting, additional judges and assistance from other courts. The work of the Administrative Court is closely monitored. The Supreme Court has set ambitious timeframes for all courts to encourage them to resolve cases more efficiently and is also developing unified criteria for quality of work of courts, encompassing formal court management measures and best practices. In 2024, timeframes for some procedures have already been fully met (particularly at appellate courts of general jurisdiction and social disputes). Following the gradual implementation of measures, the number of resolved cases started to increase (by 4% in 2024 in total, compared to 2023)<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Supreme Court (2025), written input.

<sup>33</sup> In 2024, the average length at district courts was 25,7 months in large value civil cases (about two years in 2023), 13 months in litigious commercial cases, and 20,7 months in more serious criminal cases (21,2 in 2023, and 18,5 months in 2022). Country visit Slovenia, Supreme Court.

<sup>34</sup> Values for first instance district courts.

<sup>35</sup> Average length in money laundering cases was 631 days in 2023 and 1 043 days in 2022, while in bribery cases it was 889 days in 2023 and 793 days in 2022. Figures 21 and 22, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard.

<sup>36</sup> Supreme Court (2025), written input, and Slovenian Government (2025a).

<sup>37</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Supreme Court.

<sup>38</sup> Supreme Court (2025), written input.

## II. ANTI-CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK

**The perception among experts, citizens and business executives is that the level of corruption in the public sector is relatively low.** In the 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, Slovenia scores 60/100 and ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in the EU and 36<sup>th</sup> globally<sup>39</sup>. This perception has been relatively stable over the past 5 years<sup>40</sup>. The 2025 Special Eurobarometer on Corruption shows that 85% of respondents consider corruption widespread in their country (EU average 69%) and 33% of respondents feel personally affected by corruption in their daily lives (EU average 30%). As regards businesses, 84% of companies consider that corruption is widespread (EU average 63%) and 42% consider that corruption is a problem when doing business (EU average 35%). Furthermore, 26% of respondents find that there are enough successful prosecutions to deter people from corrupt practices (EU average 36%), while 13% of companies believe that people and businesses caught for bribing a senior official are appropriately punished (EU average 33%)<sup>41</sup>.

**The recommendation to adopt the new anti-corruption strategy and action plan was fully implemented**<sup>42</sup>. The new Resolution on the prevention of corruption was adopted by Parliament on 28 March 2025. The Resolution takes a strategic and ‘whole-of-society’ approach, covering the public and private sectors, civil society, media, and the public. It provides sector- and policy-specific objectives to mitigate corruption risks, increase transparency, integrity and accountability, and strengthen the enforcement of rules on conflicts of interest, lobbying, political party financing, public procurement, public spending and whistleblower protection. It sets out that appointments to public sector and state-owned bodies must be free from undue influence, that the effectiveness of the prosecution of corrupt practices must be improved, and that cooperation between supervisory institutions and public sector cooperation with civil society must be strengthened. The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (CPC) adopted the corresponding Action Plan for the Implementation of the Resolution on 23 June 2025. The Action Plan includes concrete measures to address the strategy’s broader and more strategic objectives, including those with high corruption risks, and with specific timelines for their implementation. Amendments to the Action Plan over time will be possible to reflect evolving risks. In March 2025, a working group was set up to determine whether the Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act (IPCA) requires updating<sup>43</sup>. In view of these developments, the 2024 Rule of Law Report recommendation has been fully implemented.

**Some further progress was made towards establishing a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences**<sup>44</sup>. In 2024, several open and major investigations from previous years were concluded by the police, which overall

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<sup>39</sup> The level of perceived corruption is categorised as follows: low (above 79); relatively low (between 79-60), relatively high (between 59-50), high (below 50).

<sup>40</sup> In 2020, the score was 60, while in 2023 the score is 60. The score significantly increases/decreases when it changes more than five points; improves/deteriorates (changes between 4-5 points); is relatively stable (changes from 1-3 points) in the last 5 years.

<sup>41</sup> Data from Special Eurobarometer 561 (2025) and Flash Eurobarometer 557 (2025).

<sup>42</sup> The 2024 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia to ‘complete the adoption of the new anti-corruption strategy and action plan and begin implementation’.

<sup>43</sup> The Action Plan is conceived as a living document. The CPC must report on implementation annually. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 10. Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Administration, Parliament Secretariat, the CPC and Transparency International.

<sup>44</sup> The 2024 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia ‘to take measures to ensure a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences, including in high-level cases’.

transmitted to the state prosecution offices many more corruption cases and crimes with elements of corruption (695 cases) compared to 2023 (212 cases)<sup>45</sup>. Looking at the six main corruption offences, in 2024 the State Prosecution Office managed to reduce the backlog of unresolved criminal notifications (181; 375 in 2023), although there were considerably fewer indictments and convictions<sup>46</sup> and no foreign bribery cases were reported or investigated<sup>47</sup>. While no judgments have been delivered since 2020 in high-level corruption cases, investigations and prosecutions are progressing in some high-level cases<sup>48</sup>. Operational cooperation and training between the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office and the General Police Directorate on the investigation of corruption offences intensified<sup>49</sup>. Following the 2024 internal peer review that found deficiencies in the effectiveness of prosecutions of local officials, mainly relating to abuse of functions and misuse of public financing resources, a specialised working group was established to develop and share best practices, develop uniform or comparable approaches to the conduct of pre-trial proceedings. Targeted training of state prosecutors started in December 2024<sup>50</sup>. At the same time, the state prosecution reported that their capacity to access information and to collect evidence on natural persons, including banking information, in an efficient way has been impacted by the changes to the Criminal Procedural Code enacted last year, as a judicial decision is now required for the acquisition of such data, which may also affect international cooperation<sup>51</sup>. On 16 May 2025, the Government submitted to Parliament amendments to the State Prosecution Office Act, which aim to contribute to more effective prosecution of corruption by facilitating the filling of state prosecutor's post at the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office. Cooperation between the European Public Prosecutor's Office and the national prosecution offices continues to work well<sup>52</sup>. In light of these developments, there has been some further progress in the implementation of the recommendation made in the 2024 Rule of Law Report.

<sup>45</sup> These data concern ten offences, among them six classical corruption offences, as well as two offences relating to abuse of position and two relating to electoral process. They involved 130 natural persons and 16 legal persons. Slovenian Government and Police Economic Crime Division (2025), written input, p. 21, and p. 1, respectively, and country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Interior, Police and NBI, and Prosecution Services.

<sup>46</sup> In 2024, state prosecutors requested investigative judges to conduct 12 investigations (89 in 2023) and launched 13 indictments (33 in 2023) on corruption. Courts adjudicated 15 corruption cases at first instance (29 in 2023), handed down 11 convictions (21 in 2023), 3 acquittals (4 in 2023) and 1 dismissal (4 in 2023), and imposed 4 prison sentences (12 in 2023) and 7 conditional sentences (8 in 2023). Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 18.

<sup>47</sup> The OECD Working Group on Bribery carried out a high-level mission to Slovenia in February 2025 to discuss its concerns relating to the implementation of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention. OECD (2025).

<sup>48</sup> These include an ongoing trial involving a former Prime Minister concerning a controversial land purchase, a criminal investigation into a criminal complaint against the current Prime Minister in relation to irregularities in political interference in the appointment of the former Police Director-General (who resigned in January 2025) and a criminal pre-trial procedure concerning the procurement of premises by the ex-Minister of Justice. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input pp. 18-21; Country visit Slovenia, Specialised State Prosecution Office and the Police.

<sup>49</sup> Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, pp. 10 and 21-22.

<sup>50</sup> Country visit Slovenia, State Prosecutor General.

<sup>51</sup> Country visit Slovenia, State Prosecutor General, Supreme State Prosecution Office and Specialised State Prosecution Office. The 2024 amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act limit the possibility for Police and prosecutors to access certain financial or communications data. As explained by the Ministry of Justice, the changes to the Criminal Procedure Act regarding the collection of banking information of natural persons implement the judgment of the Constitutional Court U-I-144/19\_3 of 6 July 2023. See also 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 15 and related footnotes.

<sup>52</sup> EPPO (2025), written input, pp. 53-55. In 2024, none of the EPPO investigations in Slovenia concerned corruption offences, EPPO (2025), Annual Report 2024, p.55.

**Recommendations were issued to improve the transparency and integrity in the appointment of high-level officials including the Police Director-General.** In November 2024, an Administrative Court judgment found irregularities in the procedure for the appointment of the Police Director-General in September 2023, who subsequently resigned in January 2025<sup>53</sup>. The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (CPC) concluded its own-initiative investigation into a possible infringement of the Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act in relation to that appointment. On 20 March 2025, it issued two recommendations to change and improve the selection procedures for high-level appointments to ensure greater transparency and integrity in decision-making, improve public trust and avoid corruption risks, which closely align with the findings of the Administrative Court judgement<sup>54</sup>. The selection procedure for a new Director-General started in April 2025 and is still ongoing. Changes announced to the Police Tasks and Powers Act to improve the supervision of police work and prevent any political influence in decision-making in 2024 are envisaged for end 2025. Amendments to the relevant provision in the Organisation and Work of the Police Act (Art. 47) are being discussed among Ministries to address some of the issues regarding the appointment and dismissal of the Director General of the Police. A working group to coordinate the implementation of the Resolution on the National Programme for the Prevention and Suppression of Crime (2024-2028) held its first meeting in January 2025 to discuss an action plan and next steps<sup>55</sup>.

**The technical capabilities of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption are being improved although further measures are needed to improve recruitment.** In 2024 and 2025, the CPC continued upgrading its publicly accessible web portal 'ERAR' to modernise and enhance the presentation, accessibility and transparency of data on the expenditure of public funds as well as information on asset declarations, lobbying and business restrictions. However, the March 2025 'ERAR' upgrade uncovered multiple errors regarding data on public spending, apparently originating in the underlying databases from which the data were extracted as well as the huge amount of data involved<sup>56</sup>. The CPC's internal system and database 'Corruptio' is also being upgraded so as to provide a 'one-stop-shop' to submit reports under the Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act and improve the efficiency of the CPC's monitoring of the reporting obligations. The overall aim is to strengthen transparency and oversight, reduce corruption risks and boost integrity. The CPC's 2025 budget was increased for technical support, although more is needed to employ additional in-

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<sup>53</sup> In the judgment I U 1401/2023-85, the Administrative Court found that the act of the Special Selection Board of the Council of Officials was unlawful due to insufficient reasoning as to why the selected candidate fulfilled the required leadership experience criterion. The parliamentary inquiry and the pre-trial investigation initiated in 2024 into allegations of undue political influence in this appointment are still ongoing. See also 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 16 and related footnotes.

<sup>54</sup> The CPC's recommendations call for changes to the Government's rules of procedure to ensure that decisions on appointments or dismissals are more detailed, reasoned and justified. CPC (2025e) and CPC (2025f). The CPC had made similar recommendations to the Government in December 2022. One of the objectives of the 2025 Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption is for all stages of the appointment and recruitment procedures in the public sector to be transparent, independent of undue influence and ensure equal treatment of persons, pp. 8 and 22-23.

<sup>55</sup> The Working Group is led by the Police and includes representatives from the relevant ministries, prosecution offices, the Court of Audit and the FIU amongst others. One deliverable is an international conference held in May 2025 bringing together foreign and domestic experts in the field of protection of national and EU financial interests, and the fight against corruption. Slovenian Government (2025b), additional written input, p. 10, and country visit Slovenia, Government.

<sup>56</sup> The CPC has since apologised for the detected malfunctions and has taken steps to rectify the situation. CPC (2025d) and Country visit Slovenia, CPC.



house experts to manage these complex systems<sup>57</sup>. A new CPC Deputy was appointed in August 2024 although difficulties in recruitment persist given that overall staffing remains at similar levels as in the past two years. While the CPC has continued its efforts to recruit more staff, it still faces difficulties to find the right qualified candidates, a situation that civil society continues to express concerns about<sup>58</sup>.

**The lobbying guidelines were updated to clarify the existing exemptions from the obligation to register as a lobbyist.** In December 2024, the CPC issued updated guidelines on lobbying to bring them in line with a Supreme Court judgment of September 2024 and to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the provisions of the Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act that govern lobbying activities. The updated guidelines clarify that elected representatives of an interest organisation that do not have a (legal) representative specifically provided for by law (e.g. associations, civil initiatives, housing communities) may carry out lobbying activities without the need to register or report<sup>59</sup>. The CPC noted low reporting levels about lobbying contacts especially at local level whereas reporting by the ministries and parliament works well. The CPC and stakeholders consider that amending the law to align the respective reporting deadlines for contacts between interest representatives and officials would improve the functioning and transparency of the lobbying system<sup>60</sup>.

**Rules on the content and method of submission of the annual report of political parties were updated to ensure greater transparency and clarity as regards their financing.** The rules on the annual reports of political parties were amended so as to align them with the Political Parties Act revised in 2023<sup>61</sup>. The rules determine the content, forms and method of submission of a political party's annual report to the Agency for Public Legal Records and Related Services and of its publication. The technical changes require parties' accounts to include amounts transferred to or received from affiliated parties and political foundations operating in Slovenia or other Member States for projects of common interest and the amounts spent to implement such projects. Moreover, these amounts are to be recorded separately from their normal political activities and must be used only for the designated purposes set out in a written agreement<sup>62</sup>. The new rules are intended to enhance transparency

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<sup>57</sup> An agreement between the CPC and the Ministry of Digital Transformation (MDT), that took over responsibility for the management of the public sector's servers last year, has been deferred to 2026 from August 2024 as the MDT has not yet adopted its leasing policy.

<sup>58</sup> The technical upgrades are currently outsourced and will take place in phases. The CPC's total 2025 budget is around EUR 3.1 million. It operates with about 50% staff capacity. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input pp. 10 and Country visit Slovenia, CPC and Transparency International.

<sup>59</sup> Judgment of the Supreme Court, *I U 1093/2019-54* of 4 September 2024. CPC (2024a), pp. 25-27. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, pp. 11-12, and Country visit Slovenia, CPC.

<sup>60</sup> Country visit Slovenia, CPC and Transparency International. Currently, whereas lobbyists only need to report their contacts annually, lobbied officials must do so within eight days of their contacts. As of April 2025, there were 85 registered lobbyists compared to 84 at the end of 2023. Of these, 36 sent reports on lobbying activities performed in 2024. CPC (2025), p. 32. The 2025 Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption (pp. 8-9 and 19) highlighted the absence of reporting on lobbying contacts as one of the major challenges that need to be addressed. It calls for strict compliance with the rules on the part of both the public and the private sectors.

<sup>61</sup> The amendment was mainly necessary to comply with the 2023 amendments to the Political Parties Act. 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 18.

<sup>62</sup> Projects of common interest could include joint events and educational activities (seminars, consultations, conferences, workshops, training courses, research or publishing activities and so on) that do not involve the party's regular operations. A party must also keep separate records and report separately on funds transferred from its transaction account to another party or political foundation. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input and additional written input, p. 14 and pp. 8-10 respectively.



and clarify what financial information parties should record and publish. In 2024, the Court of Audit carried out six political party audits, where it found only minor technical breaches, and will carry out three more in 2025. In April 2025, it finalised its report on the European Parliament elections<sup>63</sup>. Parliament is conducting an inquiry into suspected illegal political party financing that allegedly involved state-owned enterprises and the misuse of public money<sup>64</sup>.

**Despite awareness-raising efforts, few reports of corruption were made through whistleblowing channels.** The CPC's second statistical report on the number of whistleblowing reports received from internal and external reporting channels did not reveal any information specifically on corruption. Throughout 2024, the CPC continued its outreach and awareness-raising activities explaining how the Reporting Persons Protection Act protects and supports whistleblowers in practice and the importance of whistleblowing including for detecting and preventing corruption. Parliament did not receive any whistleblower reports in 2024. The police registered only three reports none of which were relevant to corruption or conflicts of interest. The Specialised State Prosecution Office has not yet detected any positive effects on reporting or accusations of corruption criminal offences deriving from the Act and maintains that it is not useful for criminal cases. According to one civil society organisation, the law is still untested as it has not been in place for very long and a 'whistleblowing culture' is still lacking<sup>65</sup>.

**Efforts to improve transparency and competition in public procurement continued.** Businesses' attitudes towards corruption in the EU show that 28% of companies in Slovenia (EU average 25%) think that corruption has prevented them from winning a public tender or a public procurement contract in practice in the last three years<sup>66</sup>. 53% of companies perceive the level of independence of the public procurement review body (National Review Commission) as very or fairly good<sup>67</sup>. The Single Market and Competitiveness Scoreboard on access to public procurement in Slovenia reports 44% of single bids for 2023 (EU average 29%). Most authorities and stakeholders continue to highlight public procurement as a high-risk area<sup>68</sup>. To enhance transparency, the Government is preparing an updated module on the national eProcurement system that would give authorities the option to publish information on contracts below the national thresholds for public procurement on a rolling basis in addition to annual publication<sup>69</sup>. During 2024, the CPC conducted investigations of

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<sup>63</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Court of Audit.

<sup>64</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Parliament Secretariat. A report is expected by the end of 2025 or early 2026.

<sup>65</sup> Slovenian Government, Police and Parliament (2025), written input, pp. 12, 2 and 21, respectively. Country visit Slovenia, Specialised State Prosecution Office and Transparency International. As clarified by the Ministry of Justice, the Whistleblower Act is not specifically oriented toward corruption, but toward the reporting of any breach of law within the working environment. In addition, the reporting of criminal offences, including corruption and the protection of witnesses in criminal proceedings is regulated in the Criminal Procedure Code and Witness Protection Act.

<sup>66</sup> Flash Eurobarometer 557 (2025). This is 3 percentage points above the EU average.

<sup>67</sup> Figure 59, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard.

<sup>68</sup> Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, pp. 13-15. The objectives of the 2025 Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption include the mitigation and prevention of corruption risks in public procurement, including in the health and infrastructure sectors, pp. 7-8 and 25-28. Cases included the healthcare sector and the purchase of property. The high proportion of single bids, bid-rigging and market divisions was highlighted by civil society while businesses referred to problems with licensing at the local and municipal level. Country visit Slovenia, CPC, Specialised State Prosecution Office, Police, Court of Audit, Transparency International, and Business Associations.

<sup>69</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Public Administration.

misconduct in several large investment projects (e.g. purchase of real estate, acquisition of IT equipment, concessions for water sources), and issued recommendations to the government and respective ministries on handling corruption risks. In addition, the CPC continued to carefully monitor state-owned enterprises, which are considered to be especially prone to undue influence and conflicts of interest situations because of the close interaction between the public and the private spheres<sup>70</sup>. In December 2024, the CPC clarified the rules preventing a public-sector body from engaging in business activity with a company involving a family member of an office holder in that particular public-sector body<sup>71</sup>. The National Review Commission carried out several investigations into potential violations of procurement in 26 hospitals and health-care entities and filed four cases for irregularities<sup>72</sup>.

### **III. MEDIA PLURALISM AND MEDIA FREEDOM**

**The media regulator generally remains independent, while concerns exist regarding its human and financial resources, including in relation to the envisaged new responsibilities.** The Media Pluralism Monitor 2025 (MPM) notes medium-low risk as for the indicators regarding independence and effectiveness of the media regulatory authorities<sup>73</sup>, highlighting that concerns regarding the selection processes for the media regulator's (Agency for Communication Networks and Services, AKOS) main bodies (namely: the Council and Director) persist, as both bodies are appointed by the Government. The limited resources and AKOS's mostly passive and low-profile approach to media regulation reflect the internal strategies set by its leadership<sup>74</sup>. Moreover, in light of the ongoing reform of the media law and the new Mass Media Act that the Government submitted to Parliament in December 2024, aimed to update media legal framework and implement the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA)<sup>75</sup>, the media regulator is expected to receive additional regulatory powers<sup>76</sup>, although as indicated by some stakeholders, some further challenges remain regarding its level of human and financial resources<sup>77</sup>. AKOS remains legally and functionally distinct and independent from the Government<sup>78</sup>. However, some further concerns persist as the current mechanism of appointment of AKOS's director and members of the AKOS Council remains under the direct control of the Government, raising some concerns among stakeholders regarding the level of political influence on the media regulator<sup>79</sup>. Moreover, the current human and financial resources of AKOS are assessed by

<sup>70</sup> Country visit Slovenia, CPC, Specialised State Prosecution Office, and Transparency International. In February 2025, the Business Club of Slovenian Entrepreneurs sent an open letter to the Prime Minister calling out against what it terms as wide-spread corruption in Slovenia, especially in state-owned enterprises. Business Club of Slovenian Entrepreneurs (2025).

<sup>71</sup> CPC (2024a), pp. 10-12. The list of entities with restrictions on operations pursuant to the IPCA is publicly available on the ERAR portal.

<sup>72</sup> Country visit Slovenia, National Review Commission. The NRC was following-up on the CPC's July 2023 recommendations concerning its analysis of corruption risks in public healthcare institutions.

<sup>73</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 10.

<sup>74</sup> Liberties (2024), p. 557.

<sup>75</sup> The reform of Mass Media Act was first announced by the Government in the second half of 2023, with view to overhaul and update the media legal framework. 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 21. The proposed new Mass Media Law was removed from final reading in Parliament in May 2025 while the legislative procedure is ongoing.

<sup>76</sup> According to the envisaged media law reform AKOS would be equipped with the tasks, among others, in the field of allocation of state advertising. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 22.

<sup>77</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 13.

<sup>78</sup> 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 21.

<sup>79</sup> Liberties (2025), p. 902. 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 22.

some stakeholders as insufficient, given the increase in its regulatory powers and the tasks foreseen under the ongoing reform of media legal framework, in addition to its existing regulatory powers<sup>80</sup>. AKOS funding has been separate from the state budget, relying instead on a self-financing system based on contributions collected from the undertakings that operate under its regulatory remit<sup>81</sup>. However, new regulatory tasks related to digital services and media are projected to be funded by the state budget, raising some concerns among stakeholders regarding the predictability of the annual budget allocation<sup>82</sup>.

**The independence of public service media has further improved.** The 2022 public service media reform has been well-received and is seen as a success in maintaining the independence of public service media<sup>83</sup>. The establishment of a governance structure with members who are not politically appointed has strengthened the independence of RTV Slovenia<sup>84</sup>. Programme creators of RTV Slovenia are independent and autonomous in their professional work<sup>85</sup>. In the assessment of the MPM, independence of public service media scored within the medium-low risk band<sup>86</sup>. However, in December 2024, journalists' associations cautioned that the RTV Slovenia Council overstepped its authority and responsibilities outlined in the RTV Act by providing obligatory guidelines to RTV Slovenia's management<sup>87</sup>. Moreover, despite the positive developments in the public service media, some stakeholders have continued to report challenges in implementing the new governance structure, which also impacted the efficient functioning of both the RTV Council and the Management Board<sup>88</sup>.

**Some progress has been achieved on ensuring the adequate funding for public service media although challenges persist<sup>89</sup>.** The Government is working on a legislative reform to guarantee sustainable, independent, and politically neutral funding for public service media, namely for both RTV Slovenia and Slovenian Press Agency (STA)<sup>90</sup>. To address these concerns, the Ministry of Culture in May 2025 submitted proposed amendments to the RTV Slovenia Act for public consideration. The changes focus on the institution's governance, the scope of its public service, and its funding model. The aim is to enhance the efficiency of RTV Slovenia's management and ensure more stable public financing by tailoring it to the

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<sup>80</sup> In 2024, the size of the department enforcement of media regulation, overseeing radio, television and VOD amounted to 12 employees, what is considered disproportionate to the scope of responsibilities, Liberties (2025), p. 903. Country visit Slovenia, AKOS. As flagged by some stakeholders, the financial statement with budgetary implications linked to the proposed new Mass Media Act did not specify the amount of funding allocated for the new regulatory tasks of AKOS or the number of potential additional staff assigned to the regulatory authority for this purpose. Liberties (2025), pp. 903-904.

<sup>81</sup> 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 23.

<sup>82</sup> Liberties (2025), p. 903.

<sup>83</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

<sup>84</sup> Amendments to the Radio Television Slovenia Act. Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists. The changes in the perception of independence are reflected also by the increase in the public trust, 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 24.

<sup>85</sup> Country visit Slovenia, RTV Management Board.

<sup>86</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 20.

<sup>87</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 24.

<sup>88</sup> The challenges include the remaining lack of clarity in some aspects of the division of competences between the RTV Council and RTV Management Board. Country visit Slovenia, RTV Management Board.

<sup>89</sup> The 2024 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia to '[e]nsure that 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'.

<sup>90</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture, and Liberties (2025), p. 900.

changing inflation rates<sup>91</sup>, to provide RTV Slovenia with the necessary resources to ensure their financial viability and effective fulfillment of their public service mission<sup>92</sup>. The increase in RTV Slovenia's license fee for 2025 was approved<sup>93</sup>. Although the increase has been deemed necessary, stakeholders have questioned its long-term effectiveness, arguing that it serves only as a temporary solution. Public service media are still dealing with severe financial difficulties, which affect their long-term viability and decisions regarding programme planning. With an estimated funding gap of approximately EUR 11 million anticipated for 2025, comprehensive and durable measures to address the issue are needed<sup>94</sup>. Moreover, in December 2024 the agreement on budgetary funding for STA in 2025 was signed, guaranteeing an increase in funding for STA by 18.6% compared to 2024<sup>95</sup>. Nevertheless, some concerns have been raised that any such increase is dependent on the decision of the Government or Parliament, creating risks of undue influence<sup>96</sup>. Overall, there has been some progress on the 2024 Rule of Law Report recommendation to ensure sufficient funding for public service media while guaranteeing their independence. However, in view of the overall financial crisis of the public service media, further measures will be needed.

### **The private media remain affected by financial difficulties and risks to media pluralism.**

The media market remains highly concentrated, including at the local market<sup>97</sup>, with the limited information on ultimate ownership<sup>98</sup>. Despite legal provisions prohibiting daily newspaper publishers from also owning or co-founding radio or television stations, stakeholders have reported that such practices persist<sup>99</sup>. Moreover, the concerns regarding the transparency and fairness of the distribution of state advertising persist<sup>100</sup>. There are also indications suggesting that the media market will become even more concentrated in 2025<sup>101</sup>. Financial difficulties continue to have a significant impact on the media sector as a whole, especially on the press media<sup>102</sup>. MPM notes high risk bands regarding the transparency of media ownership, plurality of media providers, media viability and editorial independence from commercial and owners influence<sup>103</sup>. The discussions in Parliament are ongoing as regards the rules regarding assessment of media market concentrations<sup>104</sup>. The Association of Journalists considers the adoption of the new Mass Media Act as necessary, despite the concerns expressed also as for the planned model of state subsidies<sup>105</sup>. Some stakeholders

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<sup>91</sup> GOV.SI (2025).

<sup>92</sup> Slovenian Government, written input, p. 22. Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>93</sup> The TV license fee was increased from EUR 12,75 to EUR 14,02 per month starting from January 2025, after it has remained unchanged for 12 years. Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>94</sup> The labour and productions costs have increased due to inflation, while it has been emphasised that there is a need for deep modernisation and digitalisation of RTV Slovenia. Country visit Slovenia, RTV Management.

<sup>95</sup> GOV.SI (2024).

<sup>96</sup> Liberties (2025), p. 903.

<sup>97</sup> Country visit Slovenia, AKOS.

<sup>98</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists. Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 7.

<sup>99</sup> Liberties (2025), p. 905.

<sup>100</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 7.

<sup>101</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

<sup>102</sup> Country visit Slovenia, AKOS. Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 7.

<sup>103</sup> The Market Plurality area scored within the high-risk band, making the highest scoring area in the Slovene monitoring in terms of risk bands. Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 15. In general, market plurality scores the risk band of 76 %.

<sup>104</sup> The proposal of the new Mass Media Act envisages that the national competition authority, the AVK, would be responsible for media concentration assessments.

<sup>105</sup> STA (2025), Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists. The proposal is subject to ongoing legislative procedure.

indicated that the difficult financial situation of media resulted in reductions of newsroom staff, deteriorating working conditions of journalists, and that a broader trend of media divestment is eroding media pluralism<sup>106</sup>. The MPM highlights also risks of political control over certain media outlets by political entities, undermining their editorial autonomy and integrity of content<sup>107</sup>. As raised by journalists, this could result in a lack of diverse content and a decline in overall media quality at both national and local levels<sup>108</sup>. As part of the media law reform, the Government supports the adoption of a new Mass Media Act and relevant amendments in other legislative acts, covering the necessary aspects of the European Media Freedom Act, as part of the implementation process, addressing, among others, media market concentrations and its impact on media pluralism, state advertising and aiming to significantly increase the transparency of the media landscape<sup>109</sup>.

**The framework for accessing public information remains favourable.** Slovenia has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents<sup>110</sup>. The legal framework regulating the access to information and documents remains stable, as set out in the Access to Public Information Access Act. Moreover, the media and journalists benefit from an accelerated procedure pursuant to the Mass Media Act in relation to requests to access to public information held by any public body<sup>111</sup>. Overall, the risk as regarding protection of right of information has been assessed as low by MPM<sup>112</sup>.

**Some further progress was made on the recommendation to improve the protection of journalists, yet the challenges remain<sup>113</sup>.** MPM flags medium-high risk for the protection of freedom of expression and for journalistic profession, standards and protection<sup>114</sup>. The number of reported incidents concerning the safety of journalists has decreased while SLAPP lawsuits and online harassment against journalists have continued, including at the local level<sup>115</sup>. The proposed new Mass Media Act currently under legislative procedure aimed at implementing EMFA would contain provisions regarding strengthen protection for journalistic sources as well as the prohibition to install intrusive surveillance software on devices used by journalists<sup>116</sup>. The transposition of anti-SLAPP Directive is also ongoing<sup>117</sup>. Since the 2024 Rule of Law Report, no new alerts have been recorded on the Council of Europe's Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists<sup>118</sup>, although eleven new alerts have been reported in the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) monitoring report, out of them, eight relating to verbal attacks, two related to

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<sup>106</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists, Union of Journalists.

<sup>107</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), pp. 9, 18.

<sup>108</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists and Union of Journalists.

<sup>109</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>110</sup> The Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (CETS No. 205), also known as the *Tromsø Convention*, entered into force on 1 December 2020.

<sup>111</sup> Mass Media Act, Article 45.

<sup>112</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 12.

<sup>113</sup> The 2024 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia to “[f]urther advance with the process of adopting legislative and non-legislative safeguards to improve the protection of journalists, particularly online, taking into account European standards on the protection of journalists”.

<sup>114</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 10.

<sup>115</sup> Media Pluralism Monitor (2025), p. 11.

<sup>116</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>117</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture; Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 23. The draft anti-SLAPP bill was prepared by the Government and submitted for public consultation and expert coordination on 10 December 2024.

<sup>118</sup> Council of Europe, Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists.



physical assaults, two related to attacks to property and two amounting to interference and blocked journalistic activity<sup>119</sup>. Concerns have also been raised about a systematic problem of low reporting of SLAPP incidents by journalists<sup>120</sup> and ongoing use of defamation laws against them<sup>121</sup>. The Association of Journalists considers that authorities' efforts to secure support from the Ministry of Culture for safety initiatives, including legal aid, training, and protocols of cooperation with law enforcement authorities, have been present but insufficient, while further efforts would be welcomed on protection and safety<sup>122</sup>. Overall, while challenges remain in practice and the legal provisions on strengthening the safeguards are still to be adopted<sup>123</sup>, there has been some further progress on the recommendation to improve the protection of journalists.

#### IV. OTHER INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO CHECKS AND BALANCES

**Over two-thirds of companies surveyed in Slovenia express confidence in the effectiveness of investment protection.** 69% of companies are very or fairly confident that investments are protected by law and courts<sup>124</sup>. As regards authorities relevant for economic operators, 57% of companies perceive the level of independence of the national competition authority (Slovenian Competition Protection Agency) as very or fairly good<sup>125</sup>. A number of judicial mechanisms are in place in the Supreme Court to ensure the implementation of their judgments, which include the possibility to substitute annulled administrative acts. However, these mechanisms do not include fines or disciplinary actions against the responsible officials, nor the possibility to award direct or consequential damages or compensation<sup>126</sup>.

**On 1 January 2025, Slovenia had 4 leading judgments of the European Court of Human Rights pending implementation, a decrease of 1 compared to the previous year<sup>127</sup>.** At that time, Slovenia's rate of leading judgments from the past 10 years that had been implemented was at 88% (compared to 86% in 2024; 12% remained pending), and the average time that the judgments had been pending implementation was 1 year and 7 months (compared to 1 year and 2 months in 2024)<sup>128</sup>. The oldest leading judgment, pending implementation for 3 years, concerns the authorities' failure to introduce remedies that would provide the applicants with a reasonable opportunity to challenge the Bank of Slovenia's 2013-2014 decisions<sup>129</sup>. As regards the respect of payment deadlines, on 31 December 2024

<sup>119</sup> European Centre for Press and Media Freedom, Media Freedom Rapid Response – Slovenia.

<sup>120</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Union of Journalists.

<sup>121</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

<sup>122</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

<sup>123</sup> Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 23, and country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

<sup>124</sup> Figure 54, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard. In Slovenia, 21% of companies perceive the frequent changes in legislation or concerns about quality of law making process as the main reason for the perceived lack of effectiveness of investment protection. Figure 55, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard.

<sup>125</sup> Figure 60, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard.

<sup>126</sup> Figure 49, 2025 EU Justice Scoreboard. The data presented reflect exclusively the mechanisms in place at the level of the highest administrative jurisdiction; the same or other mechanisms may be in place at lower instance administrative courts.

<sup>127</sup> For an explanation of the supervision process, see the [website](#) of the Council of Europe.

<sup>128</sup> All figures calculated by the European Implementation Network (EIN) and based on the number of cases that are considered pending at the annual cut-off date of 1 January 2025. EIN (2025), written input, p. 8.

<sup>129</sup> Judgment of the ECtHR, 49969/14, *Pintar and Others v. Slovenia*, pending implementation since 2021.

there were no cases awaiting confirmation of payments (same as in 2023)<sup>130</sup>. On 16 June 2025, the number of leading judgments pending implementation had remained 4<sup>131</sup>.

**To address the Constitutional Court's considerable caseload, the transfer of certain types of cases to administrative courts was achieved by interpretation of legislative changes.** As noted in past Rule of Law Reports, for several years, the Constitutional Court has been raising concerns about its considerable caseload, which prevents the Court from dedicating more attention to the most constitutionally relevant cases<sup>132</sup>. While Parliament rejected the constitutional amendments which aimed to reduce the Constitutional Court's caseload<sup>133</sup>, the Constitutional Court allowed the review of spatial planning acts before the administrative courts<sup>134</sup> to continue, even though it had ordered Parliament to resolve the constitutionality issue within one year<sup>135</sup>. In 2024, the average time needed to conclude a constitutionality review before the Constitutional Court decreased to 472 days (600 in 2023) while constitutional complaints took around 460 days on average (540 in 2023)<sup>136</sup>. The oldest pending cases were further reduced<sup>137</sup>. In total, the backlog again decreased considerably (by 40%), also due to a lower number of incoming cases (by 35%)<sup>138</sup>.

**Following a call by the Constitutional Court, Parliament adopted amendments allowing the Court to establish the incompatibility of office of its members.** In May 2024, the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption initiated misdemeanour proceedings against a Constitutional Court judge due to a failure to report in relation to business restrictions, which is on-going<sup>139</sup>. Following this case and calls by the Constitutional Court to address the gap in its ability to act in such circumstances<sup>140</sup>, the Parliament President submitted amendments to the Constitutional Court Act, which were adopted by Parliament on 25 March 2025. The amendments explicitly state that the function of the Constitutional Court members is incompatible with carrying out professional or other gainful activity, except when allowed by

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<sup>130</sup> Council of Europe (2025), p. 157.

<sup>131</sup> Data according to the online database of the Council of Europe (HUDOC).

<sup>132</sup> 2023 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 30, and 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 31.

<sup>133</sup> Parliament decided in April 2025. Among the proposed changes were setting into the Constitution the current list of privileged bodies that can request constitutional review, the gradual transfer of review of local government issues and spatial planning acts to the administrative courts, and allowing the Constitutional Court to select constitutional complaints and initiatives for constitutional review. 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 31-32.

<sup>134</sup> In 2021, Parliament adopted amendments to the Spatial Planning Act, allowing the review before the administrative courts, unless a parallel procedure before Constitutional Court started.

<sup>135</sup> The Constitution provides that the review of such acts should be before the Constitutional Court. In the judgment published on 11 April 2025, the Constitutional Court stated that the transfer of those cases to administrative courts is required also in view of an increasing need for factual assessments, as also required by EU law, for which the Constitutional Court would be less appropriate, and in order to ensure the effective judicial protection under EU law. Judgment of the Constitutional Court, *U-I-474/22-15*, 20 March 2025.

<sup>136</sup> Constitutional Court (2025), pp. 112-116.

<sup>137</sup> On 31 December 2024, a total of 79 cases older than two years remained pending. This is a notable improvement, as at the end of 2021, there were 553 cases pending that were up to 5 years old. Constitutional Court (2025), p. 116.

<sup>138</sup> End 2024, the Court had 1 173 pending cases (1 931 end 2023). Constitutional Court (2025), p. 116.

<sup>139</sup> This issue came up in April 2024 following uncertainties regarding the existing framework when it was reported that one of the Constitutional Court members exercised ancillary professional activities in academia as a sole trader ('samostojni podjetnik - s.p.'). 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 31.

<sup>140</sup> The Constitutional Court suggested a mechanism similar to the one in the European Court of Human Rights, where the judges themselves vote with a qualified majority on the alleged incompatibility of office of a judge. Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 31.

the law. The amendments allow the President of the Constitutional Court to adopt a decision on incompatibility of an activity of the Court's member, which can be challenged before the Constitutional Court.

**Legislative amendments would extend the competence of the Human Rights Ombudsperson and maintain the parliamentary appointment procedure.** The Human Rights Ombudsperson is the National Human Rights Institution, accredited with A-Status<sup>141</sup>. In March 2025, the Government shared with the Ombudsperson the revised amendments to the Human Rights Ombudsperson's Act<sup>142</sup>. Proposed amendments would extend the Ombudsperson's oversight to certain private law organisations, specifically those exercising public powers, establish a special deputy for children's rights (a Child Rights Ombudsman) within the Ombudsperson's office, grant the Ombudsperson a mandate to monitor human trafficking, and extend the term of office of the Ombudsperson and the deputies - from six to eight years<sup>143</sup>. Efforts are also underway to organise monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities within the Ombudsperson's office. These amendments have been largely welcomed by the Ombudsperson, including that the draft amendments maintain the appointment of the Ombudsperson by Parliament, and do not envisage the transfer of the appointment to the President of the Republic as initially planned<sup>144</sup>. However, the Ombudsperson raised concerns with regard to the proposed change that the election in Parliament would be carried out by a secret ballot (which would decrease the transparency) and that the draft amendments do not explicitly establish the Ombudsperson's power to suggest that Slovenia ratifies or accedes to international human rights instruments<sup>145</sup>, as recommended by the UN, although the Ministry of Justice states this right exists under general provisions of the existing law<sup>146</sup>. In 2024, the Ombudsperson issued 95 new recommendations (86 in 2023)<sup>147</sup>. In addition, the Ombudsperson acting in the capacity of National Prevention Mechanism issued further 294 recommendations to various institutions (578 in 2023). In 2024, the Ombudsperson highlighted approximately 100 especially relevant past recommendations that remain either unimplemented or partially implemented (80 in 2023).

**The civic space in Slovenia continued to improve.** The positive trend already highlighted in past Rule of Law Reports regarding the improving situation for civil society continued, and

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<sup>141</sup> Accreditation by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

<sup>142</sup> The Ombudsperson provided comments to the draft law and, in its letter of 25 March 2025, stated that it would not be legitimate that the revision of framework continues while the selection procedure for a new Ombudsperson is ongoing and the institution has only an acting head (since February 2025). The Ombudsperson also raised concerns about the lack of transparency in the procedure for appointment and the large discretionary power of the President of the Republic in the selection of a candidate. ENNHRI (2025), pp. 422-425. On 18 June 2025, a proposed candidate for the Ombudsperson did not obtain the required 2/3 of votes of all members of Parliament.

<sup>143</sup> Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 25.

<sup>144</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ombudsperson. In 2024, the Ombudsperson raised concerns about the envisaged transfer of the appointment of the Ombudsperson from Parliament to the President of the Republic, which would not be appropriate in the Ombudsperson's view, since the institution reports to Parliament, as is the case for parliamentary ombudspersons. 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 32-33.

<sup>145</sup> This was one of the recommendations from GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) Report, December 2020, p. 24.

<sup>146</sup> Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice.

<sup>147</sup> Human Rights Ombudsperson (2025).

the civic space in Slovenia has been upgraded to ‘open’<sup>148</sup>. While the Government’s attitude was reported as positive, there were some negative attitudes towards the civil society organisations (CSOs) coming from certain public actors and media outlets owned by or affiliated with certain political parties<sup>149</sup>. The new Strategy for developing non-governmental organisations until 2030 as well as the Strategy for developing volunteering until 2030 are being developed<sup>150</sup>. Their measures aim to ensure that CSOs, contribute to the realisation of the principles of pluralism and democracy in society. As regards funding, in 2024 and beginning 2025, several funding opportunities for CSOs were available at national level<sup>151</sup>.

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<sup>148</sup> Rating given by Civicus, Slovenia; ratings are on a five-category scale defined as: open, narrowed, obstructed, repressed and closed.

<sup>149</sup> ENNHRI (2025), p. 147 and Liberties (2025), pp. 95, 900 and 922-923.

<sup>150</sup> Public consultation ended in January 2025; Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, p. 27.

<sup>151</sup> The awards aimed at CSOs and volunteering organisations for providing effective and quality services in the amount of EUR 12,6 million, published in June 2024, were selected at the end of 2024, while a second call to match funding for EU projects with the co-financing of non-reimbursable costs for projects/organisations receiving EU or EFTA grants in the amount of EUR 5,3 million, were selected in January 2025. Another call for development and professionalisation of non-governmental organisations and volunteering in Slovenia was published beginning of June 2025, amounting to EUR 15,7 million. Slovenian Government (2025b), written input, pp. 27-28, and Slovenian Government (2025a). Legal challenges by some CSOs in relation to the annulled Spring 2023 public call for funding are still pending before courts. Liberties (2025), p. 921, country visit Slovenia, CNVOS and Peace institute, and 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 34.

## Annex I: List of sources in alphabetical order\*

\* The list of contributions received in the context of the consultation for the 2025 Rule of Law report can be found at [https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2025-rule-law-report-targeted-stakeholder-consultation\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2025-rule-law-report-targeted-stakeholder-consultation_en).

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### **National Legislation**

The Act on Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act (ZKP-P) of 19 June 2024.

Art. 56a and Art. 58 of the ZIntPK

Act amending the Political Parties Act (Official Gazette, No. 78/2023)

## **Annex II: Country visit to Slovenia**

The Commission services held virtual meetings in March and May 2025 with:

- Agency for Communication Networks and Services (AKOS)
- Association of Journalists
- Business associations: Advantage Austria & GZS
- Commission for the Prevention of Corruption
- Constitutional Court
- Court of Audit
- Energy Agency
- Faculty of Social Sciences (Prof. dr. Marko Milosavljević)
- Human Rights Ombudsperson Office
- Judges' Association
- Judicial Council
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Public Administration
- Ministry of the Interior
- National Bureau of Investigation (NPU) and General Police Directorate (Economic Crime division)
- National NGO umbrella network (CNVOS)
- National Review Commission (for public procurement)
- Parliament Secretariat
- Peace Institute
- Radio-television Slovenia (RTV): Council (President Goran Forbici)
- Radio-television Slovenia (RTV): Management Board (President Natalija Gorščak)
- State Attorney General (dr. Ana Kerševan)
- State Prosecution (State Prosecutor General dr. Katarina Bergant, Supreme State Prosecution Office, Specialised State Prosecution Office)
- State Prosecutorial Council
- Supreme Court
- Transparency International Slovenia
- Union of Slovenian Journalists

\* The Commission also met the following organisations in a number of horizontal meetings:

- Amnesty International
- Araminta
- Civil Liberties Union for Europe
- Civil Society Europe
- European Civic Forum
- European Partnership for Democracy
- European Youth Forum,
- International Commission of Jurists

- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
- JEF Europe
- Philea – Philanthropy Europe Association.
- Transparency International