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The rule of law situation in the European Union

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ABSTRACT

In Slovenia, the justice system saw extensive reform, with the new Judges Act transferring the power to appoint Supreme Court judges from Parliament to the Judicial Council which, along with amendments to the Judicial Council Act, refined safeguards on judicial independence. Additionally, the amendments to the Judicial Council Act and the new Judges Act overhauled the disciplinary framework for judges, and the new Courts Act introduced a reform of the judicial map. Efforts continued to strengthen protection measures for judges and state prosecutors. Digitalisation of the workflow in courts continued, including by introducing new electronic communication tools. While the number of resolved cases remained broadly stable, the overall backlog further increased. The length of trials remains a challenge, particularly in money laundering and corruption cases. The measures to address the Constitutional Court's considerable caseload have contributed to a significant reduction in backlog.

The implementation of the Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption, the national anti-corruption strategy, and its 2025-2030 Action Plan is ongoing. While some efforts are ongoing to strengthen capacities of state prosecution offices, limited further steps were made to ensure a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences. While its resources remained stable, the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (CPC) reported attempts to undermine its credibility. The new Public Employees Act of July 2025 unified the regulation of conflicts of interest for all public officials. The CPC continued to underline the low reporting levels of lobbying contacts. The CPC issued recommendations to tackle risks related to the transfer of state officials to publicly owned companies. The number of whistleblowers who have been granted a protection status increased in 2025, indicating increased awareness of the law and the protection it provides. Large infrastructure projects and the health sector are among the high-risk areas.

The media regulator generally remains independent, while concerns persist regarding its human and financial resources. The financial challenges of the Slovenian Press Agency were addressed, while some limited steps were taken to improve the financial situation of public broadcaster. While the media market remains concentrated, reforms were introduced to improve its transparency and functioning. The framework for accessing official information remained favourable, but journalists report some obstacles in practice. Journalists highlighted persistent difficult working conditions, while efforts to strengthen their profession and introduce self-regulation continued. Some further steps were made to improve the protection of journalists, while challenges remain pending the practical application of new laws.

The Ombudsperson continued responding to an important number of complaints. The environment for civil society organisations remained favourable and the former Government adopted two framework strategies in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, based on the recommendations in the 2025 Rule of Law Report, 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, the Commission concludes the following:

- There has been limited further progress on ensuring a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences, as results remain modest in investigating and moderate in prosecuting and reaching final judgments, including as regards high-level corruption, although some efforts to strengthen capacities of state prosecution offices are ongoing. Therefore, 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*.
- Some further progress has been made to further advance with the process of adopting legislative and non-legislative safeguards to improve the protection of journalists, as the Act on Protective Measures against Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation and the Media Act have been adopted, while challenges remain. Therefore, it is recommended to Slovenia to *broaden the range of available safeguards to improve the protection of journalists, taking into account European standards on the protection of journalists*.

As regards the other 2025 recommendations, the Commission concludes that:

- Limited further progress has been made on completing 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, as the financial challenges of the STA have been addressed, while those of the RTV improved to a limited extent. Given that the topic of this recommendation is covered by provisions of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), while the Rule of Law Report will continue to monitor significant developments and report on their impact, further follow-up will be ensured as part of the Commission's support to Member States and enforcement of the EMFA.

I. JUSTICE SYSTEM¹

Independence

The level of perceived judicial independence in Slovenia continues to be average among both the general public and companies. Overall, 59% of the general population and 55% of companies perceive the level of independence of courts and judges to be ‘fairly or very good’ in 2026². The perceived judicial independence among the general public has slightly increased in comparison with 2025 (56%), and has significantly increased in comparison with 2022 (49%). The perceived judicial independence among companies remains at the same level as in 2025 (55%), and has increased in comparison with 2022 (49%).

The new Judges Act transferred the power to appoint Supreme Court judges from Parliament to the Judicial Council, and, along with amendments to the Judicial Council Act, refined safeguards on judicial independence. The new law, adopted on 21 November 2025, transferred the power to appoint Supreme Court judges from Parliament to the Judicial Council³. Unlike the previous parliamentary appointment procedure, the new law explicitly allows for judicial review of the Council’s decision on appointment of Supreme Court judges, which must also contain reasoning⁴. Additionally, amendments to the Judicial Council Act, also adopted on 21 November 2025, refined the guarantees in the selection procedure for appointment of judges to all court instances, particularly regarding the reasoning of decisions and impartiality of Council members⁵. Furthermore, the amendments limited the term of office of Council members to a non-renewable six-year term and introduced detailed provisions on elections of judge-members⁶. The safeguards on judicial independence have been reinforced also in the procedure for dismissal of judges, as the new Judges Act explicitly allows for judicial review of the Parliament’s dismissal decision⁷. At the same time, the Judicial Council noted that the new Judges Act may increase the influence of court presidents in judicial selection procedures, as it introduced the right for a court president to participate in the Council’s deliberations⁸.

The amendments to the Judicial Council Act and a new Judges Act overhauled the disciplinary framework for judges. As proposed by the judiciary, the new Judges Act provides for a more precise definition of disciplinary offences. This is complemented by procedural changes in the Judicial Council Act concerning the regulation of disciplinary

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

² Figures 48 and 50, 2026 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%).

³ This applies if the candidate is already a judge.

⁴ These safeguards are important as in the past, Parliament rejected several candidates for Supreme Court judges (three between 2018 and 2022 alone). 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 4, and 2023 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 6.

⁵ The Council’s decisions should contain an assessment on how the selected candidates fulfil all eligibility criteria. To prevent conflicts of interest, the reasons for withdrawal of Council members were expanded and the recusal procedure was specified, which now includes judicial review. Appointment of a Judicial Council member as a court president or vice-presidents is now a new ground for the termination of office of a Judicial Council member. Articles 14, 30, 30a, and 35 of the Judicial Council Act. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, pp. 2-3.

⁶ Previously, the term of Council members was renewable, but not consecutively. The amendments introduced judicial protection of the right of judges to elect and be elected as Council members.

⁷ Art. 105, Judges Act allows for review before the Supreme Court, acting as the highest administrative court.

⁸ Art. 17, Judges Act. Judicial Council (2026a), additional written input, p. 2.

prosecutors, the suspension of judges during disciplinary proceedings, and the legal remedy against a disciplinary decision⁹. The amendments to the Judicial Council Act also adapted certain provisions on disciplinary proceedings, which had been declared unconstitutional, notably by removing the Judicial Council's power to initiate disciplinary proceedings regarding judges¹⁰. The Judicial Council welcomed the new arrangement of disciplinary proceedings regarding judges¹¹.

Efforts continued to strengthen protection measures for judges and state prosecutors.

As previously reported, incidents involving judges and state prosecutors, including attacks, led to a reflection on whether the regulations are appropriate to ensure their protection¹². In 2025, preparatory work continued in the interministerial working group consisting of representatives of ministries, the police, the judiciary and state prosecution on systemic solutions to enhance protection of officials within judicial authorities and enable judicial institutions to operate more safely and effectively¹³. Draft amendments to the rules, among others, envisage that the risk assessment would be made regularly by a police working body, including for judicial officials¹⁴. Amendments to the Regulation on the protection of certain persons, premises, facilities, and surroundings of facilities protected by the police have not yet been adopted due to ongoing deliberations. Since the new Government took office in June 2026, the procedure is expected to resume. In the meantime, to provide support in cases of threats and other difficult situations at work, the new Courts Act and amendments to the State Prosecution Office Act introduced the possibility of psychological assistance for judges, state prosecutors and judicial staff, which was welcomed by the Judicial Council¹⁵.

The allocation of court cases, which is based on a predefined order, will by 2029 move from manual to electronic allocation. Civil and administrative cases are being allocated manually by court staff according to the alphabetical order of judges' surnames based on the time of filing in the court. An automatic system is in place for allocation of criminal cases, although it is not used by all courts. The new Courts Act mandated the Supreme Court to establish by January 2029 an IT system for the electronic allocation of cases¹⁶. The aim of the law is to strengthen impartiality and fairness of proceedings¹⁷. The allocation of cases at lower courts is being monitored by higher court instances and by the Judicial Council¹⁸.

⁹ For more details see 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰ 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 4-5. Initiative to start the disciplinary proceedings can be submitted by the court president, president of the higher court and the minister of justice. Article 45(2) of the Judicial Council Act.

¹¹ Judicial Council (2026a), additional written input, p. 1.

¹² In April 2026, a person was convicted to a 6,5-year jail sentence for threatening a court president in 2024. 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 4-5.

¹³ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 4.

¹⁴ Draft amendments to the Regulation on the protection of certain persons, premises, facilities, and surroundings of facilities protected by the police. Slovenian Government (2026a), additional written input, p. 6. Additionally, revision of the Rules on the Determination of Security Standards for Court Operations and of the Court Rules of Procedure is envisaged.

¹⁵ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 2, and Judicial Council (2026a), additional written input, p. 1.

¹⁶ Supreme Court (2026c), additional written input, p. 5.

¹⁷ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 2.

¹⁸ For example, in February 2026, the Higher Court in Ljubljana, based on a report by investigative journalists and request of the Judicial Council, examined the allocation of several criminal cases concerning a mayor and did not find any irregularities. Higher Court of Ljubljana (2026). In November 2025, the Judicial Council dismissed the Ljubljana District Court President in the function of court president due to breaches of case allocation rules. Judicial Council (2025).

Quality

The new Courts Act introduced a reform of the judicial map to take effect on 1 January 2027. The new Courts Act will, from 1 January 2027, merge District and Local Courts, keeping 11 District Courts only and making all first instance judges into District Court judges, while retaining the geographical distribution of court units¹⁹. Its primary objective is to balance the workload among judges, reduce vulnerability to staff absences, improve specialisation and increase consistency of case law, thereby enhancing the efficiency and quality of justice²⁰. The new act increased the responsibility of court presidents to ensure the effective functioning of the court²¹. Every year, the court presidents must, by means of an annual work schedule, determine the types of cases and geographical court units in which the judges of a District Court will work²². The Judicial Council raised concerns about the postponement of decisions on the jurisdiction of geographical court units and its potential impact on legal certainty for court users and the overall functioning of the justice system²³. In February 2026, the Supreme Court President and the Minister of Justice held the first meeting of the umbrella working group, supervising several sub-groups, to ensure a systematic and coordinated implementation of the new judicial legislation, including the new judicial map²⁴. In parallel, the amendments to the State Prosecution Office Act aligned the title, rights and responsibilities of state prosecutors with the new framework for judges²⁵.

Digitalisation of the workflows in courts continued, including on the introduction of new electronic communication tools. All courts have advanced case management tools in place, which also assist the Supreme Court in the allocation of resources²⁶. Efforts are ongoing to close the digitalisation gap concerning the electronic communication tools used by courts and court users²⁷. Since 30 March 2026, court users can file and receive documents electronically in all types of civil cases before first instance civil courts²⁸. The launch of the new e-Sodstvo portal is scheduled for July 2026. The portal will operate as a single-entry point, providing

¹⁹ Currently, the court system has 55 first instance courts (44 Local Courts and 11 District Courts). 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 10.

²⁰ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 2.

²¹ The act has introduced mandatory internal audits of the court administration every three years, shortened the term of court presidents (from six to five years) with the possibility of one reappointment at the same court, and enabled the suspension of a court president.

²² The judges may challenge the annual work schedule before the Personnel Council of the Higher Court.

²³ According to the Judicial Council, the issue is exacerbated by the fact that none of the procedural acts have so far been amended which means that the existing provisions on the subject-matter and territorial jurisdiction of the courts remain in force. Judicial Council (2026a), additional written input, p. 1.

²⁴ Supreme Court (2026c), additional written input, and Supreme Court (2026d).

²⁵ Local state prosecutors will become District state prosecutors. State prosecutors of all ranks (also Higher and Supreme) will be able to appear before District Courts. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 3. The 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia (p. 7) mentioned plans to transfer the power to promote state prosecutors from the Government to the State Prosecutorial Council - they have been postponed for the next revision. Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice. In March 2026, 238 out of 268 state prosecutor posts were occupied (up from 216 at year-end 2024). Slovenian Government (2026a), additional written input.

²⁶ Figures 39-47, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard.

²⁷ In December 2025, a digitalised workflow was introduced also in the Administrative Court. Since 1 December 2025, court users have been able to file and receive documents electronically in administrative disputes before the Administrative Court. This follows the Order determining the date from which electronic filing and electronic service of documents may be used in administrative disputes in proceedings before the Administrative Court. Improvements can be seen particularly in figures 44 and 45 of the 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard.

²⁸ Supreme Court (2026a). This follows the Order determining the date from which electronic filing and electronic service of documents may be used in all civil judicial proceedings before courts of general jurisdiction at first instance.

users with access to electronic judicial services and content that are currently dispersed across various websites. User identification and authentication will be carried out through the national SI-PASS system. Speech-to-text systems are implemented in all courts, with text recognition aided by AI. In 2025, real-time subtitling of court hearings for hearing impaired users was introduced in 19 courtrooms across Slovenia²⁹. The Supreme Court developed several IT tools to be introduced by August 2026; amongst them, the new Centre for digitising all incoming paper court documents, an eSessions tool to support Supreme Court judges, and the Knowledge database tool incorporating three AI-powered modules³⁰. Digitalisation gaps remain in criminal proceedings, particularly in state prosecution offices; this is expected to be addressed by the project to upgrade the electronic equipment, including integrating AI³¹. A pilot project to introduce electronic communication among courts, state prosecution offices and other participants was postponed to 2026³². Testing of electronic communication between state prosecution offices and police took place in 2025 but does not yet cover all offices³³. The new Courts Act mandated the online publication of first instance judgments from January 2027³⁴.

While salaries of judges and state prosecutors are being gradually increased by 2028, questions have been raised about their level. As previously reported, the salaries of judges and state prosecutors are being gradually increased between January 2025 and January 2028 as provided for by the Public Sector Salary System Act³⁵. The law also provides for an automatic indexation mechanism³⁶. In January 2026, the Judicial Council requested the Constitutional Court to review the constitutionality of the Common Foundations of the Public Sector Salary System Act as far as it concerns the salaries of judges, as it considers there is an unjustified difference with the salaries of members of Parliament, and inadequate alignment with inflation³⁷.

²⁹ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 5, and Supreme Court (2026b). The project was supported by the target 105 under the Recovery and Resilience Plan. The target is part of the seventh, and last payment request due to be submitted by the Slovenian authorities by 31 August 2026 and has therefore not yet been assessed by the Commission.

³⁰ The Central Documentation Digitisation Centre will be operational from June 2026. Supreme Court (2026a). E-Sessions tool will facilitate the overview of case-load, sharing of documents and drafting of judgments. Knowledge database will include an AI assisted research/legal/keyword identification analysis tools. This was supported by the target 105 under the Recovery and Resilience Plan, not yet assessed by the Commission. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, pp. 5-6.

³¹ Figure 43, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard. Integrating AI is a project of the Supreme State Prosecution Office supported by the target 105 under the Recovery and Resilience Plan, which is part of the last payment request due by 31 August 2026, and has therefore not yet been assessed by the Commission. The AI would be used only as a support tool for prosecutors to draft and retrieve information in complex cases. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, pp. 4 and 6.

³² Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 6.

³³ As of 15 December 2025, the exchange covers the entire territory, apart from the Ljubljana District State Prosecution Office (less complex cases only), the Specialised State Prosecution Office and the National Bureau of Investigation. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 6.

³⁴ Figure 46 in the 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard shows that the rate of publication of judgments is among the lowest in the EU.

³⁵ 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 6-7.

³⁶ 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.

³⁷ Judicial Council (2026b). The Association of Judges further raised concerns about the mechanism for indexation of salaries. It argued that negotiations of trade unions with the Government may lead to improvements only for certain categories of public officials, while judges' salaries might remain unchanged. Country visit Slovenia, Association of Judges.

The Bar Association is challenging the lawyers' fees for legal aid cases before the Administrative Court. The fee, which sets the basis for remuneration of lawyers when working in legal aid cases and for the legal costs borne by the losing party in civil cases, has not been changed since 2019, despite the cumulative inflation reaching more than 26% by December 2025³⁸. Since 2022, the Bar Association has repeatedly called on the Ministry of Justice to increase the fees. In October 2025, the Administrative Court, on the Bar Association's initiative, ordered the Ministry of Justice to respond to the request, and in January 2026, the Ministry rejected the requested increase³⁹. Subsequently, the Bar Association in February 2026 challenged the level of lawyers' fees before the Administrative Court; the court's decision is pending. The Ministry of Justice stated it will continue to seek a solution that would allow for the adjustment of the value of the attorney's fee point, while taking into account public finance constraints, the principle of sustainable public spending, and the status of the legal profession as an autonomous and independent service.

Efficiency

While the number of resolved cases remained broadly stable, the overall backlog further increased and the length of trials remained a challenge, particularly in money laundering and corruption cases. The justice system continued to function efficiently in general, compared to 2024 data, except in administrative cases, where further increases in caseload have caused challenges⁴⁰. In 2025, the total backlog of court cases further increased by 3%, despite the caseload decreasing by 1%, while the number of resolved cases, following the Supreme Court's efforts, remained broadly stable⁴¹. The Supreme Court raised concentrating the court hearings as a possible solution for expediting the proceedings⁴². The overall backlog increased for courts with the exception of the Supreme Court, Local, and Labour and Social courts. In 2025, the average length of proceedings at first instance courts improved in civil cases, remained stable in commercial cases and increased in criminal cases⁴³. 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. At first instance criminal courts, the average length in 2024 decreased to 739 days in money laundering offences (926 days in 2023) and increased in corruption offences (597 days) – remaining the fifth and third longest in the EU, respectively⁴⁴. The continued increase in the administrative courts' caseload (by 2% in 2025, compared to 2024) is partly due to new competences of the court, introduced by different legislative amendments. Alongside a high load of priority cases, this has led to a further increase in pending cases (by 2% year-end 2025), despite a further 4% increase in resolved cases.

³⁸ Country visit Slovenia, Bar Association.

³⁹ Judgment of the Administrative Court of 22 October 2024, U-I-2199-2024-22. Bar Association (2026), additional written input.

⁴⁰ In 2024, the estimated time for resolving litigious civil and commercial cases increased to 355 days (344 in 2023), and for administrative cases decreased to 570 days (627 in 2023). Figures 1-14, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard.

⁴¹ See 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 8, on Supreme Court's measures resulting in an increase in the number of resolved cases. All 2025 court data provided by Supreme Court (2026c), written input, p. 2.

⁴² Currently, the court hearings are spread out and could be months apart. However, court presidents have limited powers to encourage concentrated hearings over several days and the Judicial Council would likely need to adjust the standards regarding the expected amount of work for judges when it decides on their promotion. Country visit Slovenia, Supreme Court, and Supreme Court (2026c), additional written input.

⁴³ In 2025, the average length at district courts was 24,9 months in large value civil cases (25,7 months in 2024), 13 months in litigious commercial cases, and 22,9 months in more serious criminal cases (20,7 in 2024). Supreme Court (2026c), written input, p. 2.

⁴⁴ Figures 20 and 21, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard.

The measures to address the Constitutional Court's caseload have contributed to a significant reduction in backlog. As previously reported, the Constitutional Court has been raising concerns about its considerable caseload, which prevented the Court from dedicating more attention to the most constitutionally relevant cases⁴⁵. In 2025, the Constitutional Court again further reduced its backlog by 25%, including the oldest pending cases, while it also received nearly 21% fewer cases⁴⁶. In 2025, the average time needed to conclude a constitutionality review before the Constitutional Court decreased to 456 days (472 in 2024) while constitutional complaints took around 379 days on average (460 in 2024)⁴⁷. As reported in 2025, following a call by the Constitutional Court, former Parliament adopted amendments allowing the Court to establish the incompatibility of office of its members⁴⁸. Until March 2026, no such procedures were conducted⁴⁹.

II. ANTI-CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK

The perception among experts, citizens and business executives is that the level of corruption in the public sector remains relatively high. In the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, Slovenia scores 58/100 and ranks 15th in the EU and 41st globally⁵⁰. This perception has been relatively stable over the past five years⁵¹. The 2026 Special Eurobarometer on Corruption shows that 90% of respondents consider corruption widespread in their country (EU average 71%) and 36% of respondents feel personally affected by corruption in their daily lives (EU average 30%). As regards businesses, 89% of companies consider that corruption is widespread (EU average 65%) and 53% consider that corruption is a problem when doing business (EU average 37%). Furthermore, 26% of respondents find that there are enough successful prosecutions to deter people from corrupt practices (EU average 38%), while 24% of companies believe that people and businesses caught for bribing a senior official are appropriately punished (EU average 31%)⁵².

The implementation of the Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption (the national anti-corruption strategy) and its 2025-2030 Action Plan is ongoing. Progress on the measures set out in the Action Plan are to be reported annually to the Commission of Prevention of Corruption (CPC), which is the central coordination body responsible for implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the strategy. The first reporting on

⁴⁵ While Parliament in 2025 rejected the constitutional amendments which aimed to reduce the Constitutional Court's caseload, the Constitutional Court allowed the review of spatial planning acts before the administrative courts to continue, while ordering Parliament to resolve the constitutionality issue within one year. 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 19. See also 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 31; and 2023 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 30.

⁴⁶ In 2025, the Constitutional Court received 1 056 cases (1 330 in 2024). It resolved 12% more cases than in 2024. At year-end 2025, the Court had 874 pending cases (1 173 year-end 2024), of which, a total of 27 cases older than two years remained pending (79 at year-end 2024). This is a notable improvement, as at the end of 2021, there were 553 cases pending that were up to 5 years old. Data provided by the Constitutional Court.

⁴⁷ Data provided by the Constitutional Court.

⁴⁸ 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, pp. 19-20.

⁴⁹ Country visit Slovenia, Constitutional Court.

⁵⁰ 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).

⁵¹ In 2021 the score was 57, while, in 2025, the score is 58. The score significantly increases/decreases when it changes more than five points; improves/deteriorates (changes between 4-5 points); has been relatively stable (changes from 1-3 points) in the last five years.

⁵² Data from Special Eurobarometer 573 (2026) and Flash Eurobarometer 582 (2026).

implementation progress under the Resolution was included in the Annual Report of the CPC published in May 2026⁵³.

While some efforts are ongoing to strengthen capacities of state prosecution offices, there has been limited further progress on the recommendation to ensure a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences⁵⁴. The State Prosecution Office reported higher numbers of requests for judicial investigation, indictments and convictions in 2025⁵⁵, indicating that increase resulted from the handling of three large-scale cases⁵⁶. The investigation and prosecution of high-level cases remain limited. As of March 2026, the State Prosecution Office was handling four new cases of high-level corruption alongside two existing ones, while one case was discontinued by the prosecution⁵⁷. Some efforts are ongoing to strengthen capacities of the state prosecution offices, particularly through increasing the number of state prosecutors⁵⁸. In 2025, one judgment was delivered in a high-level corruption case, the second judgment of this nature since 2020⁵⁹. The police raised the insufficient level of human resources as an obstacle to higher detection⁶⁰. In 2025, the police transmitted 26 corruption cases to the state prosecution offices⁶¹. Both the police and the state prosecutors continued to underline the challenges raised by the high evidentiary threshold resulting from the 2024 amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act⁶², following the 2023 judgment of the Constitutional Court⁶³. From 2027, the gradual reform of the judicial

⁵³ CPC (2026), 2025 Annual Report, p. 64 and following. The first reporting on the implementation of the measures of the Action Plan was completed in February 2026. According to CPC, it received 1150 reports: 18 from ministries, 127 from municipalities, 34 from health centres and hospitals, 49 from administrative units and 12 from inspectorates. The CPC underlined the lack of concrete indications of the activities performed in 2025 and that reporting by authorities is overly general.

⁵⁴ The 2025 Rule of Law Report recommended Slovenia to ‘take further measures to ensure a track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgments in corruption offences, including in high-level cases’. Some progress was previously assessed on this recommendation in 2024 and 2025.

⁵⁵ In 2025, state prosecutors requested investigative judges to conduct 138 investigations (12 in 2024 and 89 in 2023) and launched 104 indictments (13 in 2024, 33 in 2023) on corruption. Courts adjudicated 44 corruption cases at first instance (15 in 2024 and 29 in 2023). Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 12.

⁵⁶ These data relate to three large cases with 10-40 convicted persons in each, concerning falsified COVID-19 vaccination certificates, healthcare equipment procurement, and falsified technical inspection of vehicles certificates. Country visit Slovenia, Specialised State Prosecution Office.

⁵⁷ In October 2025, the Specialised State Prosecution Office dropped the prosecution against a former minister for alleged abuse of office. Country visit Slovenia, Specialised State Prosecution Office.

⁵⁸ In March 2026, 238 out of 268 state prosecutor posts were occupied (up from 216 at year-end 2024). Slovenian Government (2026a), additional written input. See above, section on Quality of justice system, paragraph on the judicial map reform.

⁵⁹ It concerned a former director of a public agency. Country visit Slovenia, Specialised State Prosecution Office. 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 10; 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 14.

⁶⁰ 77% of criminal complaints and supplementary reports filed for corruption offences are detected by the police. The General Police Directorate informed that about 30 police officers investigate corruption offences, while around 100 would be needed. Country visit Slovenia, National Bureau of Investigation and General Police Directorate (Economic Crime Division).

⁶¹ Data concerns criminal offences against official duty and public authority and related to active and passive bribery of public officials and persons vested with public authority in the areas of administrative procedures, public procurement procedures, police procedures, and the regulation of forestry activities. Figures are below the ten-year average of 147.8 cases per year (695 in 2024, where several open and major cases were concluded by the police; 212 in 2023). General Police Directorate (Economic Crime Division) (2026), additional written input.

⁶² 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 10. This also concerns access to information where a suspect has a bank account, which requires a court order. Country visit Slovenia, Specialised State Prosecution Office and National Bureau of Investigation.

⁶³ Judgment of the Constitutional Court U-I-144/19_3 of 6 July 2023.

map is expected to allow for greater specialisation and a more even distribution of workload among judges, which could expedite the resolution of corruption cases⁶⁴. The Supreme State Prosecution Office is implementing a project⁶⁵ to strengthen capacities to investigate and prosecute economic crimes, including corruption⁶⁶. In December 2025, a first meeting of the prosecution's working group focusing on the abuse of position discussed faster handling of such cases, specialised training and possible amendments regarding the special investigative measures. The cooperation between the European Public Prosecutor's Office and the national prosecutions offices continues to function well⁶⁷. Considering the modest results in investigation, and moderate results in prosecution and final judgments, including regarding high-level corruption cases, and some efforts to strengthen capacities of state prosecution offices, there has been limited further progress in the implementation of the recommendation.

While its technical and human resources remained stable, the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption reported attempts to undermine its credibility. The publicly accessible web portal 'ERAR', managed by the CPC and providing data on the use of public money, continued to function reliably with high daily traffic throughout the year⁶⁸. This follows technical improvements made in 2025 regarding the quality of information⁶⁹. The CPC's internal system and database 'Corruptio' is being upgraded to allow the electronic completion and submission of forms relating notably to lobbying contacts, lists of received gifts and registration of individuals subject to asset declaration obligations. The CPC's 2025 budget remained similar to that of 2024, while its staff slightly increased to 51 employees⁷⁰. At the same time, the CPC argued that lawsuits challenging its powers threaten its independence and discredit its institutional reputation⁷¹. Civil society similarly considers that such political pressure and legal challenges could hinder the CPC's capacity to carry out its mandate⁷².

The new Public Employees Act unified the regulation of conflicts of interest for all public officials. As of 1 January 2026, all public officials fall under the CPC's jurisdiction, which is competent to review all cases of conflict of interest⁷³. Any activity intended to generate income or material gain must be notified in advance to their superiors, who may prohibit it under certain conditions. According to the CPC, this is expected to improve the

⁶⁴ See above, Quality and Efficiency of the Justice System. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 2. At first instance courts, the average length in 2024 in bribery cases was the third longest in the EU (597 days). In 2025, it decreased to 574 days.

⁶⁵ EU funded project under the Technical Support Instrument: "Public Prosecutor capacity to fight Economic and Financial Crime" (October 2025 - October 2027). It includes the drafting of recommendations for the legal framework in cooperation with the Council of Europe, exchange of best practices with prosecutors from other Member States, and the development of a training strategy.

⁶⁶ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 8.

⁶⁷ EPPO (2026), written input, p. 64.

⁶⁸ More than 300 000 accesses per day, Country visit Slovenia, CPC.

⁶⁹ Country visit Slovenia, CPC.

⁷⁰ CPC's budget for 2026 is EUR 3.2 million (3.1 million in 2025). Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 9. In 2024, CPC operated with 44 employees. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 9.

⁷¹ CPC considered that certain lawsuits filed against it went beyond opposing the content of the CPC's decisions and recommendations, challenging CPC's powers to issue them. Country visit Slovenia, CPC. This has led to the publication of an open letter by the CPC President addressed to the Prime Minister. CPC (2025). Prime minister's Cabinet rejected the statements and, among others, stated that the Government has increased the CPC's budget and their salaries. Cabinet of the Prime Minister (2026).

⁷² Country visit Slovenia, Transparency International.

⁷³ Following the new Public Employees Act adopted in April 2025, which entered into force on 1 January 2026. Previously, the CPC was only competent for high-level officials and hierarchically superior public officials were responsible for preventing the conflict of interest of public employees.

consistency of the framework on conflicts of interest. The CPC plans to recruit, within its existing 2026 budget, two additional members of staff to address the increased workload. At the time of reporting, one of these positions has already been filled⁷⁴. It also underlines the need to raise awareness on the rules on conflicts of interest, particularly at local level⁷⁵. To address GRECO recommendations⁷⁶, a protocol is under preparation⁷⁷ to establish preventive mechanisms applicable to members of Government in the areas of conflicts of interest, gifts, incompatibilities, assets reporting and lobbying. The CPC continues to monitor high volumes of asset declarations, although its effectiveness is reportedly constrained by limited human resources⁷⁸. The CPC issued recommendations to tackle risks related to the transfer of State officials to State-owned companies⁷⁹.

The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption continued to underline the low reporting levels of lobbying contacts⁸⁰. On 31 December 2025, the CPC maintained a public register of 84 registered professional lobbyists⁸¹, of which only 45 submitted their mandatory lobbying activity reports⁸². Civil society considered that many meetings at national and local level were not registered and continued to advocate for the alignment of the respective reporting deadlines for contacts between interest representatives and officials to improve the functioning of the lobbying system⁸³.

In its final report on alleged illegal financing of certain political parties in the 2022 elections, the former parliamentary majority concluded that funding from state-owned enterprises and other public sources were channelled to political parties. Following an inquiry, the former parliamentary majority also concluded that this may have circumvented the strict political party financing rules which prohibit funding by legal entities. It recommended strengthening the control over the financing of political parties and revising the Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act to also cover political party secretary generals⁸⁴. The Court of Audit continues to monitor the financing of political parties on a sample basis every year, and of election campaigns, particularly focusing on compliance with bans on corporate funding and strict limits on individual donations⁸⁵. Among the challenges, the Court of Audit highlighted the circumventions of the ban on corporate donations, non-monetary contributions to political parties and a blur between regular and other activities in campaigns.

⁷⁴ Country visit Slovenia, CPC.

⁷⁵ CPC (2025), p. 24.

⁷⁶ GRECO (2025). GRECO recommended that an integrity plan be established in respect of the Government, as an overarching structure to the plans existing in each ministry (recommendation iii). GRECO also recommended developing within the Government an organisational strategy and practices to improve the management of conflicts of interest, including through responsive advisory, monitoring and compliance mechanisms (recommendation iv).

⁷⁷ Protocol on the Conduct of the Government for Managing Corruption Risks. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 11.

⁷⁸ Country visit Slovenia, CPC.

⁷⁹ In a recruitment procedure from the former Government to the Slovenian Sovereign Holding, the CPC identified several corruption risks. CPC (2026). The former Government has challenged in court the competence of CPC to adopt such a recommendation, which raised concerns of the CPC. Country visit Slovenia, CPC.

⁸⁰ 2024 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 12. CPC (2025), p. 30.

⁸¹ CPC, Lobbying register, <https://www.kpk-rs.si/sl/instituti/lobiranje/register-lobistov>

⁸² CPC (2025), p. 32.

⁸³ For example, apparent lack of reporting included a former minister. Country visit Slovenia, Transparency International.

⁸⁴ Parliament (2026a).

⁸⁵ Country visit Slovenia, Court of Audit.

The number of whistleblowers who have been granted a protection status increased in 2025, indicating better awareness of the law and the protection it provides. In 2025, the CPC granted the status of protected reporting person to 23 individuals (compared to seven over the past two years). However, very few reports related to corruption cases despite awareness raising of whistleblower protection⁸⁶. The CPC continued to provide training and guidance to stakeholders regarding reporting channels and whistleblower protection and raised awareness about its role in detecting corruption. The CPC also conducted an analysis of internal reporting channels in municipalities and concluded that 66 municipalities out of 212 in total did not establish an internal reporting channel. It thereafter provided recommendations and assistance to municipalities in this regard⁸⁷.

Large infrastructure projects and the healthcare sector are considered, among others, as high-risk areas, and the CPC issued recommendations to the Government on necessary corruption prevention measures in large infrastructure projects. Businesses' attitudes towards corruption in the EU show that 30% of companies in Slovenia (EU average 30%) think that corruption has prevented them from winning a public tender in practice in the last three years⁸⁸. 59% of businesses perceive the level of independence of the public procurement review body (National Review Commission) as very or fairly good when it is reviewing public procurement cases⁸⁹. The Single Market and Competitiveness Scoreboard on access to public procurement in Slovenia reports 44% of single bids for 2025 (EU average 27%). The Ministry of Public Administration continued to implement two multi-year action plans, namely the Plan to increase competition in public procurement (2025-2030) and the Public Procurement Digital Transformation Plan (2025-2030), which aim to increase transparency, professionalisation and analytics and upgrade e-procurement capabilities⁹⁰. The National Review Commission expressed support for the simplification of the public procurement procedures and for the introduction of a single information system for public procurement, both of which would lower the administrative burden on SMEs⁹¹. The Court of Audit considered large infrastructure projects, healthcare public procurement, spatial planning and granting licences at local level as high-risk areas⁹². Civil society underlined that infrastructure projects, such as railways and the healthcare sector, are high-risk areas⁹³. The CPC issued a recommendation related to major infrastructure projects⁹⁴, calling for the adoption of a framework law that would regulate the entire process from planning to

⁸⁶ Country visit Slovenia, CPC and Transparency International.

⁸⁷ Slovenian Government (2026), written input p. 10.

⁸⁸ Flash Eurobarometer 582 on Businesses' attitudes towards corruption in the EU (2026). This is equal to the EU average.

⁸⁹ Figure 59, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard.

⁹⁰ Ibidem.

⁹¹ The publication of the contract notice and results has been digitalised already for several years, but the public procurement procedure is currently conducted in several ICT systems that could be unified. According to the National Review Commission, risks of fraud in public procurement exist especially in needs planning, preparation of procurement documents and in formulating the conditions, whereas the procedure after publishing the tender is rather transparent and subject to effective review. Country visit Slovenia, National Review Commission.

⁹² Country visit Slovenia, Court of Audit.

⁹³ Country visit Slovenia, Transparency International.

⁹⁴ The Resolution on the Prevention of Corruption underlines that "corruption risks are prominent in major public investment projects in the field of infrastructure, supported by large financial resources. In these investment projects, there are significant risks of rigging of public contracts in favour of a particular bidder, undue influence in the process of awarding public contracts, cartel agreements between bidders, bribery and unauthorised, undeclared gifts, and abuse".

monitoring implementation and would include corruption preventive measures at various stages⁹⁵. A follow-up to this recommendation is still pending.

III. MEDIA PLURALISM AND MEDIA FREEDOM

The media regulator generally remains independent, while some concerns persist regarding its human and financial resources. The media regulator (Agency for Communication Networks and Services, AKOS⁹⁶) continues to be generally functionally and operationally independent in its role of overseeing the media market, although certain challenges persist that might increase its vulnerability to political influence on programming work and financial management⁹⁷. As in 2025, the Media Pluralism Monitor 2026 (MPM) notes medium-low risk for the indicators regarding the independence and effectiveness of the media regulatory authorities, while highlighting ongoing concerns about the Government's role in appointing its leadership⁹⁸. Some stakeholders flagged the concerns regarding the appointment procedures allowing for some level of continued governmental influence⁹⁹. Regarding the financial resources, AKOS funding remained separate from the state budget, relying instead on a self-financing system based on contributions from the undertakings under its regulatory remit. However, as in previous years, stakeholders reported that AKOS, considering the large scope of assigned tasks, has limited human and financial resources, which may affect its effectiveness¹⁰⁰.

Efforts to improve governance of the public service media are ongoing. The appointment procedure established in 2022 for the management bodies of the public service media, comprising members that are not politically appointed, continues to be favourably received for the positive effect on the independence of RTV Slovenia, as also reported by a civil society organisation¹⁰¹. In the assessment of the MPM, independence of public service media scored within the medium-low risk band¹⁰², and programme creators of RTV Slovenia continue to be generally assessed by stakeholders as independent and autonomous in their professional work¹⁰³. Despite positive developments in public service media noted in the 2025 Report¹⁰⁴, stakeholders continue to report challenges in implementing the new governance framework, referring to partially overlapping responsibilities and their perception of a lack of clarity in the allocation of competences between the RTV Council and the Management Board, particularly in areas such as interpreting statutory obligations, funding, and strategic decisions¹⁰⁵. In December 2025, the former Parliament adopted amendments to

⁹⁵ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 10, and Country visit Slovenia, CPC.

⁹⁶ AKOS was designated Digital Services Coordinator in March 2024.

⁹⁷ Electronic Communications Act, Arts. 115-122. The Government issues consent regarding the programme of work and the financial plan of the Agency. The Agency must prepare annually a report on its work and a business report and consent of the Government is required for both reports.

⁹⁸ 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. 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 14. Media Pluralism Monitor (2026), pp. 6, 15.

⁹⁹ Liberties (2026), p. 6. Similarly, 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 14.

¹⁰⁰ Liberties (2026), p. 28; The Peace Institute (2026), written input, p. 3; Country visit Slovenia, RTV Council.

¹⁰¹ Rule of Law Report (2025), p. 15. Country visit Slovenia, Peace Institute.

¹⁰² Media Pluralism Monitor (2026), pp. 23-24

¹⁰³ Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

¹⁰⁴ Particularly the reform regarding the appointment and dismissal of RTV's management bodies. 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ Country visit Slovenia, RTV Management.

the RTV Act, including a delineation of competences within the management and between the management and the RTV Council, and to better distinguish the management from supervisory responsibilities¹⁰⁶.

Former Parliament adopted amendments aimed to improve the sustainability of funding for public service media, while certain challenges remain¹⁰⁷. The former Government adopted new provisions regarding the funding for public service media, both for the public broadcaster (RTV) and the Slovenian Press Agency (STA). In December 2025, the former Parliament adopted amendments to the RTV Act with the aim of improving the financial sustainability of RTV¹⁰⁸. The amendments, among others, define the competences of the RTV Financial Board to ensure effective control of operations, aim to introduce greater transparency and verifiability of expenditures from the RTV licence fee, and provide for the funding of minority programming and musical production¹⁰⁹. Stakeholders noted that the amendments only specify budgetary support for selected programmes, addressing relatively short-term funding gaps¹¹⁰. Despite planned restructuring to improve the efficiency of available funds, RTV considered that the envisaged increase in funding will not be sufficient to ensure its long-term goals¹¹¹. The main funding pillar of public service media continues to be a mandatory license fee, with an amount set by the Government, which was not changed by the adopted amendments¹¹². In particular, the license fee for RTV Slovenia continues to depend on governmental decisions and is not automatically indexed to inflation, limiting long-term financial predictability¹¹³. Some stakeholders expressed concerns about the funding model, as they consider it a potential risk for the independence of public service media¹¹⁴. In February 2026, the former Parliament adopted a new Act which regulates the status, activities, organisation, and financing of the Slovenian Press Agency (STA), as well as the oversight of its operations¹¹⁵. Among others, it clarifies the public service remit, which are financed from the state budget¹¹⁶, and introduces a more structured net-cost financing model. Civil society organisation assessed the reform as improving long-term funding, ensuring more consistent implementation and stable future appropriations of STA¹¹⁷. Considering that the financial challenges of the STA have been addressed, while those of the RTV improved to a limited extent, there was limited further progress on the recommendation.

While the media market remains concentrated, reforms were introduced to improve its transparency and functioning. The Slovenian media market is relatively small and financially constrained, which makes it particularly sensitive to concentration trends¹¹⁸. The

¹⁰⁶ Slovenian Parliament (2026), written input, p. 5.

¹⁰⁷ The 2025 Report recommended Slovenia to ‘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’. Some progress was previously assessed on this recommendation in 2025.

¹⁰⁸ Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

¹⁰⁹ Slovenian Parliament (2026), written input, p. 6.

¹¹⁰ Liberties (2026), p. 28. Similarly, the Media Pluralism Monitor (2026), p. 27.

¹¹¹ Country visit Slovenia, RTV Management.

¹¹² Country visit Slovenia, CNVOS.

¹¹³ Liberties (2026), p. 30; Country visit Slovenia, RTV Management. Some stakeholders raised that, despite the funding rules established by law, RTV management still needs to sign contracts with the Government on the annual transfer of funding, raising questions about the independence and predictability of funding.

¹¹⁴ Peace Institute (2026), written input, p. 2; Slovenian Union of Journalists (2026), written input, p. 1.

¹¹⁵ Act on the Slovenian Press Agency. Slovenian Parliament (2026), written input, p. 6.

¹¹⁶ Liberties (2026), p. 28.

¹¹⁷ Liberties (2026), pp. 40-41.

¹¹⁸ Slovenian Government (2026), additional written input, p. 8.

MPM notes very high-risk bands for the plurality of media providers, as well as high risk for media viability and editorial independence from commercial and owner influence.¹¹⁹ However, the new Media Act¹²⁰, which was adopted with a view to alignment with the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), introduced media market concentration assessments, focusing on its impact on media pluralism and editorial independence¹²¹ and some practical improvements regarding the procedures for granting broadcasting licenses¹²². During the parliamentary procedure, civil society organisations raised concerns about reassigning media market oversight to the Competition Protection Agency (AVK), highlighting the lack of formal involvement of the media regulator in the assessment procedure, and the absence of a public consultation on this matter¹²³. As regards transparency of ownership, the new Media Act provides for creating a new ownership database to disclose data on media ownership, including indirect ownership and beneficial owners. It also introduces procedures with the aim of enhancing the fair and transparent allocation of state advertising and requires media service providers to publicly disclose information on state advertising and other public funding received¹²⁴. The media regulator AKOS called for more clarity on their role regarding the assessment of media market concentration¹²⁵.

The framework for accessing official information remained favourable, but journalists report some obstacles in practice. The legal framework regulating the access to information and documents remained stable and is generally assessed as favourable¹²⁶. Moreover, for access to public information held by any public body, media and journalists benefit from an accelerated procedure pursuant to the Media Act¹²⁷. Civil society and professional organisations have reported some practical obstacles in accessing information, including an increasing number of complaints as well as lengthy complaint procedures¹²⁸. Of the contested cases brought by journalists before the Administrative Court, more than half ended in favour of the journalists¹²⁹. In general, the risk regarding protection of right to information has been assessed as low by the MPM¹³⁰.

Journalists highlighted persistent difficult working conditions, while efforts to strengthen their profession and introduce self-regulation continued. Among the main challenges, they listed layoffs, low pay, and precarious employment conditions, including short-term contracts, which negatively affect editorial independence¹³¹. Some stakeholders

¹¹⁹ Media Pluralism Monitor (2026), p. 17.

¹²⁰ On 27 September 2025, the Media Act entered into force, which marks the first comprehensive overhaul of media legislation in more than twenty years.

¹²¹ Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

¹²² Country visit Slovenia, AKOS.

¹²³ Country visit Slovenia, CNVOS; Liberties (2026), p. 39; The Peace Institute (2026), written input, p. 3.

¹²⁴ Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Culture.

¹²⁵ Country visit Slovenia, AKOS.

¹²⁶ Slovenia is a party to the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents, Access to Public Information Access Act. Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

¹²⁷ Art. 45, Media Act.

¹²⁸ Association of Journalists (2025); The Peace Institute (2026), written input, p. 6; Country visit Slovenia, CNVOS.

¹²⁹ Association of Journalists (2025), pp. 1-2. In the past 17 years, the number of complaints submitted to the Information Commissioner has increased sevenfold, while journalists represent just under 10% of all complainants. Approximately 9–12% of decisions are subject to judicial review by the Administrative Court. More than half of the contested cases ended in favour of journalists. Journalists had to wait on average two years to reach a decision.

¹³⁰ Media Pluralism Monitor (2026), p. 11.

¹³¹ Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists; Liberties (2026), p. 41; Slovenian Union of Journalists (2026), written input, p. 2; The Peace Institute (2026), written input, p. 3.

also reported occasional pressure linked to ownership interests¹³² and noted the absence of a sector-wide collective agreement protecting journalists in private media¹³³. To address some challenges for the economic sustainability of media outlets, the new Media Act introduced support schemes that were generally positively perceived by stakeholders¹³⁴. Local media continue to be almost exclusively supported by local funding schemes, while some are directly owned or controlled by local authorities, raising questions about the level-playing field on the local media market¹³⁵. Efforts continue to establish a journalistic council to create a self-regulatory body that could contribute to strengthening the status of journalists¹³⁶. Overall, MPM flags medium-high risk for the protection of freedom of expression and medium-low risk for the journalistic profession, standards and protection¹³⁷.

Some further progress was made on the recommendation to improve the protection of journalists, while challenges remain, pending the practical application of new laws¹³⁸. With a view to alignment with EMFA, the new Media Act adopted in September 2025 enhanced protection of journalistic sources and stricter conditions for the use of surveillance measures against journalists and newsroom devices to further strengthen the safeguards for journalists¹³⁹. Powers under the Act regarding assistance in the area of the protection of journalistic sources have been assigned to the Culture and Media Inspectorate within the Ministry of Culture¹⁴⁰. Further, in January 2026, the former Parliament adopted the Act on Protective Measures against Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (‘Anti-SLAPP Act’), which provides protection in both cross-border and domestic cases¹⁴¹. Journalists pointed out that most SLAPP cases are brought in criminal courts, particularly on defamation and insult grounds, and are not covered by the Anti-SLAPP Act¹⁴². The new Act provides the possibility to apply the security-for-costs also in criminal proceedings¹⁴³, but stakeholders consider that this is not sufficient¹⁴⁴. The Ministry of Justice is monitoring the application of the law, including its impact in criminal cases against journalists¹⁴⁵. According to the Ministry, the introduction of a legal definition of SLAPPs would improve the collection and analysis of data on such cases¹⁴⁶. According to civil society, 64 SLAPP cases were recorded in Slovenia in the 2010-2024 period, which places the country among those with a high

¹³² The Peace Institute (2026), written input, p. 4; Slovenian Union of Journalists (2026), written input, p. 2.

¹³³ Liberties (2026), p. 39; Slovenian Union of Journalists (2026), written input, p. 2.

¹³⁴ Country visit Slovenia, AKOS; RTV Council. The Media Act establishes dedicated state aid schemes for both the digital transformation of print media and the production of digital-only media.

¹³⁵ Country visit Slovenia, AKOS.

¹³⁶ Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists. The new Media Act also establishes a legal framework for allocating public funding to NGOs holding public-interest status in the media sector, including professional associations. This framework may, in the future, be used to support public financing of journalists’ professional associations engaged in the protection and safety of journalists.

¹³⁷ Media Pluralism Monitor (2026), p. 11.

¹³⁸ 2025 Report recommended Slovenia to ‘[f]urther 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’. Some progress was previously assessed on this recommendation in 2025, 2024 and 2023.

¹³⁹ Liberties (2026), p. 29; Country visit Slovenia, RTV Council.

¹⁴⁰ Country visit Slovenia, AKOS.

¹⁴¹ Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice.

¹⁴² Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

¹⁴³ Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice. This safeguard implies allowing a court, once it suspects a claim may be a SLAPP, to order the claimant to deposit money or provide a bank guarantee that can later be used to cover the defendant’s legal costs if the case fails. Anti-SLAPP Act, Article 20.

¹⁴⁴ Stakeholders raised the possibility of early dismissal as an additional possible safeguard for criminal cases. Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

¹⁴⁵ Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice

¹⁴⁶ Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice.

incidence of SLAPP cases in Europe compared to population size¹⁴⁷. However, since SLAPP cases against journalists are assessed to be largely underreported¹⁴⁸, dedicated trainings for judges and journalists on the Anti-SLAPP Act are planned¹⁴⁹. According to the new act, as of February 2026, a focal point within the Ministry of Justice began operating¹⁵⁰. Journalists welcomed the ambition and argued that such mechanism should be established outside a ministry to ensure its independence and trust¹⁵¹, while further noting that the available support mechanisms for safety and security of journalists remain short-term and project-oriented¹⁵². The focal point is cooperating with representatives of media, CSOs and the academic community, as well as with the Office of the Ombudsperson¹⁵³. Since the 2025 Rule of Law Report, two new alerts have been recorded on the Council of Europe's Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists, both concerning harassment and intimidation of journalists¹⁵⁴. The Mapping Media Freedom monitoring report has noted 9 new alerts, including verbal attacks and legal incidents¹⁵⁵. Overall, given that some legislative and non-legislative measures have been adopted, to enhance the protection of journalists, there has been some further progress on the recommendation.

IV. OTHER INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO CHECKS AND BALANCES

The Ombudsperson continued responding to an important number of complaints. The Ombudsperson is the National Human Rights Institution, accredited with A-Status¹⁵⁶. On 3 February 2026, the former Parliament appointed a new Ombudsperson, filling the position which had been vacant for nearly a year¹⁵⁷. In 2025, the financial and human resources of the Ombudsperson's office remained adequate. The amendments to the Human Rights Ombudsperson's Act, which were previously in preparation and were shared with the Ombudsperson, have been postponed to 2026¹⁵⁸. As regards the Ombudsperson's powers, efforts continued with a view to organising the monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of

¹⁴⁷ Coalition Against SLAPPs in Europe (2026), Report: A 2025 Report on SLAPPs in Europe: Democracy in the Dock, p. 16.

¹⁴⁸ The Association of Journalists stated that SLAPP cases against journalists are largely underreported, due to concerns of journalists on the effectiveness of the protection mechanisms and the legal costs.

¹⁴⁹ In April 2026, the Ministry of Justice organised a conference dedicated to journalists and civil society to promote the Anti-SLAPP Act. Country visit Slovenia, Ministry of Justice.

¹⁵⁰ Article 16 of Act on Protective Measures against Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation. The focal point for providing relevant information on available support measures was already established within the Ministry of Justice in 2026. Ministry of Justice (2026).

¹⁵¹ Country visit Slovenia, Association of Journalists.

¹⁵² The Peace Institute (2026), written input, p. 5.

¹⁵³ Slovenian Government (2026b), additional written input, p. 10. As reported by the former Government, a dedicated website has also been set up, and some public events aimed at raising awareness and informing the public have been organised.

¹⁵⁴ Council of Europe Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists (2026). One of the cases concerned a Slovenian municipality filing a criminal complaint against investigative outlet Oštro for allegedly misusing and misreporting personal data while investigating a mayor's assets, which journalists and the Slovenian Journalists' Association argue is an attempt to suppress legitimate public-interest reporting on political transparency. The former Government responded to both alerts providing the explanations.

¹⁵⁵ European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (2026).

¹⁵⁶ Accreditation by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). The new process of re-evaluation was conducted in 2025-2026, followed by GANHRI re-confirming status A for the Ombudsperson as of 5 June 2026.

¹⁵⁷ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 17.

¹⁵⁸ The Ombudsperson's Office reiterated its opposition to the previously proposed change that the election in Parliament would be carried out by a secret ballot (which would decrease the transparency). Country visit Slovenia, Ombudsperson and Ministry of Justice. 2025 Rule of Law Report, Slovenia, p. 20.

Persons with Disabilities within the Ombudsperson's office¹⁵⁹. In 2025, the Ombudsperson issued 62 new recommendations (95 in 2024)¹⁶⁰. In addition, the Ombudsperson acting in the capacity of National Prevention Mechanism issued further 329 recommendations to various institutions (294 in 2024). In 2025, the Ombudsperson highlighted approximately 253 especially relevant past recommendations that remain either unimplemented or partially implemented (100 in 2024). Of the latter, 139 were under the National Prevention Mechanism (114 beyond). In 2025, the Ombudsperson continued to respond to an important number of complaints. It handled more than 6 500 cases, representing a nearly 4% increase compared to 2024, including 3 681 individual complaints¹⁶¹. Among 207 substantiated complaints, the Ombudsperson identified 238 violations of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and other irregularities¹⁶². According to the Ombudsperson's findings, the authority most frequently responsible for violations or irregularities in 2025 was the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, followed by municipalities, and the Ministry of Solidarity-Based future¹⁶³.

More than two thirds of companies surveyed in Slovenia express confidence in the effectiveness of investment protection. 67% of companies are very or fairly confident that investments are protected by law and courts, a figure which has slightly decreased in comparison with 2025 (69%)¹⁶⁴. As regards authorities relevant for economic operators, 53% of companies perceive the level of independence of the national competition authority (Slovenian Competition Protection Agency) as very or fairly good, a figure which has slightly declined in comparison with 2025 (57%)¹⁶⁵. The Supreme Court has jurisdiction in several business-related cases, including in cases related to public procurement, public concessions, public contracts and economic regulation. A number of judicial mechanisms to improve efficiency are available in these cases, including the possibility to apply interim measures, joint examination of similar cases and the consolidation of multiple appeals¹⁶⁶.

On 1 January 2026, Slovenia had five leading judgments of the European Court of Human Rights pending implementation, an increase of one compared to the previous year¹⁶⁷. At that time, Slovenia's rate of leading judgments from the past 10 years that had been implemented was at 85% (compared to 88% in 2025; 15% remained pending), and the average time that the judgments had been pending implementation was two years (compared to one year and seven months in 2025)¹⁶⁸. The oldest leading judgment, pending implementation for more than four years, concerns the authorities' failure to introduce remedies that would provide the applicants with a reasonable opportunity to challenge the

¹⁵⁹ Country visit Slovenia, Ombudsperson.

¹⁶⁰ Data provided by the Ombudsperson.

¹⁶¹ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 18.

¹⁶² In addition, there were 147 cases in the field of child advocacy, in which no violations are formally determined but which are nevertheless treated as substantiated complaints.

¹⁶³ Slovenian Government (2026), written input, p. 18.

¹⁶⁴ Figures 52 and 53, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard. Only 19% and 13% of the surveyed investors respectively perceive the frequent changes in legislation or concerns about the quality of the law-making process and concerns about quality, efficiency or independence of justice as a reason for the lack of confidence in investment protection.

¹⁶⁵ Figure 60, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard.

¹⁶⁶ Figures 66 and 67, 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard. The data presented reflects exclusively the mechanisms in place at the level of the highest administrative jurisdictions; the same or other mechanisms may be in place at lower instance administrative courts.

¹⁶⁷ For an explanation of the supervision process, see the [website](#) of the Council of Europe.

¹⁶⁸ 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 2026. EIN (2026), written input, p. 9.

Bank of Slovenia's 2013-2014 decisions¹⁶⁹. As regards the respect of payment deadlines, on 31 December 2025 there were no cases in total awaiting confirmation of payments (same as in 2024)¹⁷⁰. By 17 June 2026, the number of leading judgments pending implementation increased to six¹⁷¹.

The environment for civil society organisations remained favourable and the former Government adopted two framework strategies in this area. The civic space in Slovenia remains 'open' according to Civicus¹⁷². In December 2025, the former Government adopted a new Strategy of the Development of Civil-Society Organisations (CSOs) until 2030 and a Volunteering Development Strategy until 2030, as a continuation of the previous joint strategy until 2023, which was welcomed by civil society organisations (CSOs)¹⁷³. The main aims of the two strategies are to strengthen cooperation with CSOs throughout the legislative process and the implementation of legislation, strengthen the transparency and stability of public funding of CSOs, create a stable and sustainable environment for the operations of volunteer organisations; and increase the number of volunteers. According to the CSOs, the civic space continues to be supported by a comparatively strong legal framework guaranteeing freedom of association and participation¹⁷⁴. At the same time, CSOs reported that during 2025 the political discourse surrounding civil society has grown more polarised and included more frequent direct confrontations or targeted verbal attacks¹⁷⁵.

¹⁶⁹ Judgment of the ECtHR, 49969/14, *Pintar and Others v. Slovenia*, pending implementation since 2021.

¹⁷⁰ Council of Europe (2026), p. 163.

¹⁷¹ Data according to the online database of the Council of Europe (HUDOC).

¹⁷² Slovenia's score is 85/100. Ratings by Civicus are on a five-category scale defined as: open, narrowed, obstructed, repressed and closed.

¹⁷³ Country visit Slovenia, CNVOS and Peace Institute. Slovenian Government (2026), written input, pp. 18-19. According to the CSOs, the adoption of the two strategies signalled the recognition of civil society's democratic role and establishing a long-term framework for cooperation with public authorities and included structured consultation with CSOs. Liberties (2026), p. 33.

¹⁷⁴ Liberties (2026), p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ Liberties (2026), p. 34.

Annex I: List of sources in alphabetical order*

* The list of contributions received in the context of the consultation for the 2026 Rule of Law Report can be found at https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2026-rule-law-report-targeted-stakeholder-consultation_en.

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Annex II: Country visit to Slovenia

The Commission services held virtual meetings in March 2026 with:

- Agency for Communication Networks and Services (AKOS)
- Association of Journalists
- Bar Association
- Commission for the Prevention of Corruption
- Constitutional Court
- Court of Audit
Crime division)
- 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
- National NGO umbrella network (CNVOS)
- National Review Commission (for public procurement)
- Parliament Secretariat
- Peace Institute
Prosecution Office, Specialised State Prosecution Office)
- 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
- State Prosecutorial Council
- Supreme Court
- Transparency International Slovenia

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

- Civil Liberties Union for Europe
- Civil Society Europe
- End FGM EU
- European Civic Forum
- European Partnership for Democracy
- Human Rights Watch
- ILGA-Europe
- International Federation for Human Rights
- Philea - Philanthropy Europe Association
- Transparency International EU