

## **General measures of implementation**

The Slovak Republic became a State party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on 28 May 1993 effective from 1 January 1993 due to succession after the separation of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic.

In its Resolution No. 837 of 7 August 2002, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the 2002–2004 National Plan of Action for Children aiming at further implementation of obligations resulting from the Convention. The objective of the National Plan of Action for Children was mainly to contribute to building and developing a consistent and effective system for the protection of the rights and interests of children. Governmental and non-governmental entities participated in the implementation of the tasks specified in the Action Plan and, in addition to the conceptual and legislative nature, the tasks also had the nature of specific measures adopted by the individual task performers in the interest of the protection of the rights of the child and education in the area of the rights of the child. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR, which prepared its implementation report, was the lead coordinator of the National Plan of Action for Children.

In the period covered by this report (2002-2006), significant reforms were implemented in most areas of the life of the Slovak society and they were also reflected in adopted legal acts mainly in the field of education, social security, health care, family law, criminal law, access to information and public administration. In the Slovak legal system, the rights of the child stipulated in the individual articles of the Convention are mainly laid down in these laws: Act No. 36/2005 Coll. on the family and on the amendment of certain laws amending also Act No. 99/1963 Coll. the Civil Procedure Code as amended; Act No. 305/2005 on social and legal protection of children and social guardianship; Act No. 452/2004 Coll. on substitute subsistence; Act No. 311/2001 Coll. the Labour Code; Act No. 300/2005 Coll. the Criminal Code; Act No. 301/2005 Coll. the Criminal Procedure Code, and also other laws and generally binding legal acts.

Act No. 136/2003 Coll. and Act No. 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas and on protection against discrimination, and on amendments to certain acts (the Anti-Discrimination Law) amended Act No. 308/1993 Coll. on the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights as an initiative of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the SR for European Integration, Human Rights and Minorities, Human Rights and Minorities Section of the Office of the Government of the SR and the Ministry of Justice of the SR. Pursuant to these amendments, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights has the obligation to draft and elaborate an annual National Human Rights Report on the Slovak Republic that also covers compliance with the rights of the child before 31 January of the previous year. The main tasks of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights include, in particular, monitoring and evaluating human rights and equal treatment principle compliance under the Anti-Discrimination Law; collecting

and providing information on racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism upon request; performing research and surveys to have data on human rights; collecting and disseminating information in this area; preparing training activities and participating in awareness-raising campaigns aimed at the growth of tolerance in society; arranging legal assistance to victims of discrimination and expressions of intolerance; publishing of expert opinions on matters concerning compliance with the principle of equal treatment, and upon request by natural persons or legal entities or out of an own initiative; and rendering human rights services.

The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights drafted and implemented the Rights of the Child Monitoring Project focusing on:

- monitoring the process of mediating substitute family care for children given to pre-adoption care or being adopted under the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption,
- monitoring custodial measures enforcement in the education and upbringing provided by youth diagnostic centres, re-educational homes for children and youth and youth re-educational homes,
- monitoring mandatory vaccination of children in the context of the on-going health care system reform with a special focus on the vaccination of children belonging to the Roma minority,
- monitoring placement of children in special schools with a particular focus on placing of children belonging to the Roma minority into these schools.

The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights updated Rights of the Child Monitoring Project and its priorities focusing on:

- Monitoring compliance with the child's right to see the parents of children placed under institutional care or in foster care.
- Monitoring compliance with the child's right to express one's views freely in all matters affecting him/her.
- Monitoring the protection of the child against violence.
- Monitoring compliance with the right to education concerning the children of aliens living in the territory of the Slovak Republic.

In December 2005, the Government of the SR approved the Analysis of Child's Rights Protection Efficiency Improvement document that envisages the establishment of a separate legal institution of a child's rights defender, in harmony with its intention to enhance the protection of the rights of the child.

The Slovak Republic raises awareness of the principles and provisions in international human rights instruments including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, by performing tasks and activities also contained in the 2000 - 2001, 2002 - 2003, 2004 - 2005 and 2006 – 2008 Action Plans for the Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination, Racism, Xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Other Expressions of Intolerance. The action plans are the only comprehensive and systemic tool of the Government of the SR in the area of preventing discrimination and intolerance. The decision of the Slovak Government to be active in the area of preventing all forms of intolerance and discrimination is an expression of its effort to cooperate with NGOs, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, and other entities in this area.

- The 2000 - 2001 Action Plan focused on the increase in the level of awareness of Slovak citizens in the area of human rights in the context of the current UN Decade for Human Rights Education and also on the prevention of these negative phenomena and strengthening of legal awareness of Slovak citizens in the area of effective use of protective measures.
- The 2002 - 2003 Action Plan focused on preventing negative phenomena such as discrimination, racism, xenophobia, and other similar intolerances in society and on strengthening the legal awareness of Slovak citizens in the area of the effective use of protective measures.
- The 2004 - 2005 Action Plan mainly focused on systemic education of persons belonging to professional groups who are able to influence the prevention of all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other expressions of intolerance in the exercise of their profession; systemic education and opinion-making activities of the representatives of state administration and municipality and primary school pupils and secondary school students with respect to migrants; social and cultural activities on human rights and prevention of all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other expression of intolerance. This Action Plan is the response by the Slovak Republic to the declaration of the Second 2005–2014 UN Decade for Human Rights Education and Slovakia's obligations arising from its membership in the EU and other international organizations.
- The 2006–2008 Action Plan will continue the efforts to improve the awareness of Slovak citizens in the area of human rights, in the effective implementation of anti-discrimination legislation, and addressing the situation of migrants in Slovakia and other specific activities in the area of preventing negative phenomena in society. Its priorities are added activities in the area of preventing extremism and anti-Semitism mainly by educating professional groups. The reason for these added activities is the recent trend towards increased expressions of extremism, and also the fact of Slovakia's membership in the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF) on 15 November 2005. The focus on education is a continuation of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education. In this context, one of the objectives of the Action Plan is ensuring cooperation with the newly established National Commission for the Education to Human Rights at the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights.