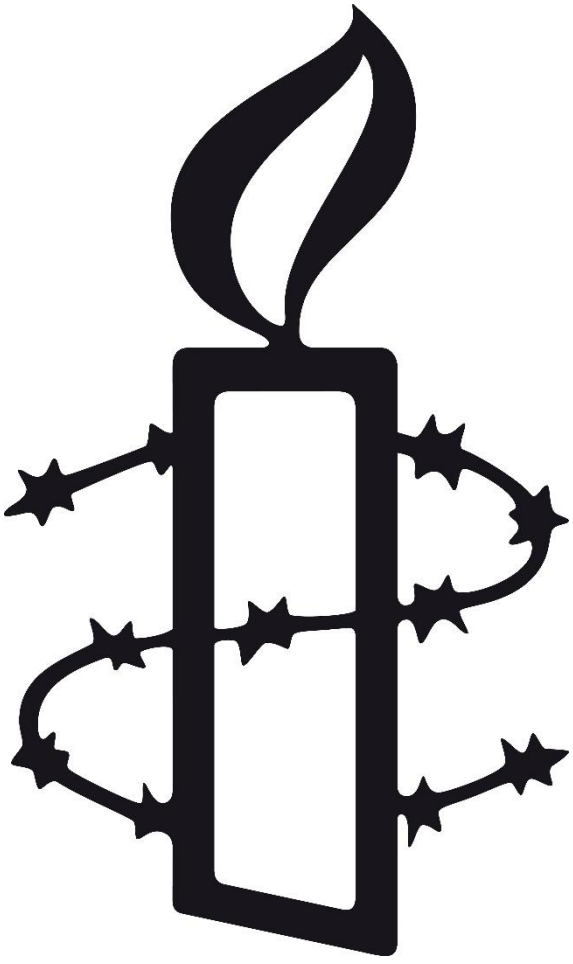
SLOVENIA

SUBMISSION TO THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

117TH SESSION, 13 APRIL-1 MAY 2026



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Amnesty International submits this briefing to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (the Committee) in advance of its review of Slovenia's implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (the Convention) in April-May 2026, In it the organization outlines its concerns regarding Slovenia's failures to address the Committee's concerns and recommendations from Slovenia's last examinations, including persistent exclusion and discrimination against Roma people, including in housing and education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Amnesty International submits this briefing to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (the Committee) in advance of its review of Slovenia's implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (the Convention).

In this briefing the organization outlines its concerns regarding Slovenia's failures to address the Committee's concerns and recommendations from Slovenia's last examinations, including persistent exclusion and discrimination against Roma people, including in housing and education.

Amnesty International notes with concern that Slovenia's legal and institutional human rights framework is ineffective in upholding the right to non-discrimination, or to provide effective remedies in cases of discrimination, especially for individuals from historically discriminated and marginalized groups and communities, such as Roma people.

Roma people continue to face pervasive and systemic discrimination in Slovenia, in particular in their access to secure tenure and adequate housing, to safe drinking water and sanitation, to life in a healthy environment and to health care but also in their access to education. This amounts to violations of different economic and social rights, as well as a violation of the right to equality and non-discrimination.[1]

2. ENTRENCHED EXCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION OF ROMA PEOPLE (ARTICLES 2, 5, 6 AND 7)

Effectively addressing and preventing discrimination against ethnic and national minorities, particularly Roma people, remains a problem.

Discrimination on any personal grounds is prohibited in Article 14 of the Constitution of Slovenia. The responsibility to monitor this is shared by the Human Rights Ombudsman, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality, the police and the courts. Furthermore, the Government Office for National Minorities monitors and facilitates specific programmes meant for Roma people.

National action programmes for Roma people have existed since 1995,[2] usually spanning five or more years. The most recent one was adopted in 2021 and applies until 2030. The programme uses as its framework the EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation and ensures that Roma are included in planning and execution of the measures. It covers access to housing, education, healthcare, and employment.

An external evaluation of the first year of the 2017 action programme was conducted by a non-governmental organization - The Peace Institute. [3] This only evaluation warned that the measures in the action program lacked strategy and priority and had little effect on the ground, offering no promise of improving Roma people's living conditions. The evaluation highlighted the lack of coordination at the governmental level, leading to a failure to fully implement measures in the action plan, and noted a lack of measures to improve the housing conditions of Roma people as recommended by the CERD in 2010.

The Advocate of the Principle of Equality (an independent state body that provides independent analysis, assistance and support to persons subjected to discrimination) prepared a special report in 2025 on the

[1] Amnesty International, "Parallel Lives", 2011, https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/eur680052011en.pdf
[2] National Action Programme for Roma for the Period 2021-2030, 28th December 2021, https://www.gov.si/assets/vladne-sluzbe/UN/Dokumenti-Romi/35778fa671/Program_ukrepov.pdf (in Slovenian).
[3] Annual evaluation of the implementation of the National Action Programme for Roma for the period 2017–2021 - Final report on the interim assessment, November 2018, https://www.gov.si/assets/vladne-sluzbe/UN/SIFOROMA-3/Letna-evalvacija-uresnicevanja-NPUR-2017-2021.pdf (in Slovenian).

challenges faced by Roma children and youth in education.[4] The report highlighted that "general intolerance" towards Roma people had increased since 2020. It further noted that poor educational results for Roma children – estimates suggest that only one tenth finish primary schooling – in the South-East of Slovenia (where approximately a third of Slovenia's Roma people live) are in part due to inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on part of the state of the measures that have been taken to improve educational outcomes.

In July 2025, the Slovenian government amended the legislation on primary schools to allow schools to officially gather data on Roma children if their parents' consent. This is the first time that Slovenia has attempted to formalize gathering of data disaggregated by ethnicity, especially for Roma people, after passing the new Personal Data Protection Act in 2023. Lack of disaggregated data remains a problem in all other areas, making it difficult to highlight what challenges Roma people and other marginalized groups may face in different settings. A lack of such disaggregated data limits the effectiveness of measures designed to address challenges facing marginalized groups, including Roma people. Collection of desegregated data is essential to ensure that state complies with obligation to equality and non-discrimination, as well as monitors how successful these measures are.

The insufficiency of measures to eliminate the marginalization of and discrimination against Roma people was also highlighted in a report by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2025,[5] which noted that despite the progress achieved in some areas, numerous issues, including the poor living conditions and pervasive discrimination against Roma, raised concerns. The report highlighted health disparities: Roma people have at least 20 years shorter average life expectancy than the general population (29 years shorter for men and 20 years shorter for women). Roma children aged one to five are seven times more likely to die than the national average, and Roma women are sixteen times more likely to be hospitalized for complications during pregnancy and childbirth. ECRI announced interim follow-up in 2027 given the severity of the situation.

2.1 PUNITIVE EMERGENCY LEGISLATION DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTS ROMA PEOPLE

In November 2025, the Slovenian Parliament adopted the Act on Urgent Measures to Ensure Public Security ("Security Law"), which significantly expanded executive and police authority, increased surveillance, allowed searches without warrants to seize firearms, and increased police powers in so-called "high-risk areas", seemingly targeting the settlements where Roma people predominantly live. In January 2026, police announced that they were introducing two "high-risk security areas", one in Ljubljana and one in Novo Mesto in the Roma settlement, where they would have greater powers to monitor and record data under the Act.[6]

In addition, the Act allowed the Slovenian Tax Authority to seize social assistance from individuals who have accumulated three unpaid fines for "minor offences" over a two-year period.[7] Unlike ordinary enforcement regimes, the Act imposes no limits on the percentage of the social assistance that can be taken to pay the fine and lacks crucial safeguards regarding the recovery of outstanding fines from the social assistance received by the individual. In other circumstances, the Tax Authority could only recover outstanding fines by seizing no more than two thirds of an individual's salary, leaving them with a minimum of 76% of the

[4] Special Report by The Advocate of the Principle of Equality: 'Challenges in the Upbringing and Education of Roma Children and Adolescents', October 2025, https://zagovornik.si/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Izzivi-pri-vzgoji-in-izobrazevanju-romskih-otrok-in-mladostnikov-posebno-porocilo-1.pdf (in Slovenian).
[5] ECRI Report on Slovenia (sixth monitoring cycle), 30th October 2025, https://rm.coe.int/sixth-report-on-slovenia/4880291ae8
[6] National Public Broadcaster, 'Based on the Šutar Act, risky areas declared in Ljubljana and Novo Mesto', 23rd January 2026: https://www.rtvslo.si/slovenija/na-podlagi-sutarjevega-zakona-razglaseni-tvegani-obmocji-v-ljubljani-in-novem-mestu/771075 (in Slovenian).
[7] Act on Urgent Measures to Ensure Public Security, Article 8, November 2025, https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9360 (in Slovenian).

minimum wage. Slovenian Ombudsman's office warned that the Act significantly expanded the powers of Tax Authority and omitted the crucial provisions which could have protected the most marginalized.[8]

Furthermore, the Centres for Social Work (government entities responsible for processing and ensuring social rights) had not received notification of seizures in January 2026 and were not given advance warning that people's social assistance would be seized, in direct breach of a requirement in the new Act.[9]

As a result, in January and February 2026, thousands of individuals and their families were left without critical social assistance, leaving them unable to afford food and other necessities, and pushing many further into poverty and exclusion.[10] The law has had a disproportionate impact on Roma people, particularly in south-eastern Slovenia, who already face systemic discrimination, inadequate housing, exclusion from education, and persistent poverty. Families with multiple children, older people, single parents, and individuals experiencing homelessness have all been left without access to social assistance. These punitive measures risk exacerbating existing poverty and social exclusion facing Roma people and deepening inequality.[11]

The law was passed in a rushed procedure, following a killing of a man by a Roma individual. It was accompanied by a sustained populist public campaign, including by government officials, that portrayed the entire Roma community as a collective security threat, generating political momentum for its rapid passage.[12]

The draconian and punitive measures under the Act breach the right to social security and privacy and will have an inevitable chilling effect on the rights of those who live and work in the designated "high-risk" areas.[13] The law also poses risks to other rights, including the prohibition against discrimination and the right to equal protection of the law - as protected under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the European Social Charter.

The controversial legislation is facing several constitutional challenges. In January 2026, the Supreme Court filed a motion requesting the Constitutional Court to rule on the constitutionality of provisions in the Act that extend the maximum length of pretrial detention from two to three years.[14]

In February 2026, the Legal Network for Protection of Democracy, a collaboration between four NGOs, challenged before the Constitutional Court the Act's provision that allows for the confiscation of social assistance if the individual had three unpaid fines in the last two years.[15] Slovenian Ombudsman's Office also challenged the same provision before the Constitutional Court.[16]

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[8] Statement by the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia, 27th January 2026, https://www.varuh-rs.si/en/news/public-information/the-ombudsman-warns-of-the-risks-of-interference-in-cash-social-assistance-and-inadequate-implementation-of-the-law

[9] Second paragraph of Article 8; Act on Emergency Measures to Ensure Public Safety, https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO9360 (in Slovenian).

[10] Amnesty International, 'Slovenia: People stripped of social support, 10th February 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur68/0702/2026/en/

[11] Amnesty International, Urgent Action: People stripped of social support, 10th February 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/EUR6807022026ENGLISH.pdf

[12] Amnesty International, 'Slovenia: MPs must reject draconian 'security' bill which puts rights at risk and targets Roma community', 14th November 2025, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/11/slovenia-mps-must-reject-draconian-security-bill-which-puts-rights-at-risk-and-targets-roma-community/

[13] Amnesty International, 'Slovenia: MPs must reject draconian 'security' bill which puts rights at risk and targets Roma community', 14th November 2025, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/11/slovenia-mps-must-reject-draconian-security-bill-which-puts-rights-at-risk-and-targets-roma-community/

[14] National Public Broadcaster, 'The Supreme Court has filed a request for a constitutional review of part of the Šutar law', 14th January 2026, https://www.rtvslo.si/slovenija/vrhovno-sodisce-vlozilo-zahtevo-za-ustavno-presojo-dela-sutarjevega-zakona/770119 (in Slovenian).

[15] Amnesty International, 'Slovenia: Amnesty joins Constitutional Court challenge to stop vulnerable communities being stripped of critical social support', 11th February 2026, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/02/slovenia-amnesty-joins-constitutional-court-challenge-to-stop-vulnerable-communities-being-stripped-of-critical-social-support/

[16] The Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia, 'The Ombudsman will request a constitutional review of Article 8 of the so-called Šutar Act', 13th February 2026, https://www.varuh-rs.si/en/news/public-information/the-ombudsman-will-request-a-constitutional-review-of-article-8-of-the-so-called-sutar-act

2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International is calling on Slovenian authorities to:

- Immediately stop enforcing punitive measures under the Act on Urgent Measures to Ensure Public Security and ensure that social assistance is restored to the affected individuals and families;
- Initiate proceedings to amend the Act to ensure its compliance with Slovenia's international human rights obligations.
- Effectively implement, monitor and evaluate the national action programmes, including with the meaningful and effective participation of Roma people, and through the collection of relevant disaggregated data.
- Ensure disaggregated data is collected and used to implement effectively the national programmes with appropriate measures to address the discrimination of the Roma people; and monitor the implementation independently and inclusively.

2.3 ACCESS TO HOUSING

Despite repeated calls to "regulate" or legalize informal settlements, many Roma people in Slovenia continue to live in makeshift and isolated settlements, many of which have existed for decades. The lack of security of tenure and the precarious legal status of these settlements mean that Roma people who live in them are at permanent risk of forced eviction and lack access to essential public services, including water, sanitation and electricity – the services which require a legal land title for access.

Slovenian Ombudsman[17] and the Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation have found that conditions in which Roma live, in particular the lack of access to water and adequate sanitation, have had a broader impact on their health and impeded their access to education and employment.[18]

In October 2017, Constitutional Court issued a landmark decision prohibiting a demolition of a home if no prior judicial overview of the proportionality of an interference is ensured with the right to respect for home.[19]

In some cases, including in Ribnica in Lepovče settlement, municipalities, which typically own the land where settlements are located, sold the land to private owners making it even more difficult for residents to legalize their homes.[20]

Since 2020, the national authorities have been providing additional funds to local municipalities to aid them in registering and legalizing settlements where Roma people live and ensure their inclusion. Until 2025 the municipalities that did not use these funds were allowed to transfer the money then into their general budgets if left unspent, lacking appropriate oversight.

Some municipalities plans designated for the projects to support Roma included measures such as building "a protective wall" around an industrial zone bordering the Roma settlement in order to prevent the residents from accessing to the zone in case of potential eviction.[21] Instead of promoting measures that could address persistent discrimination facing Roma, such projects further stigmatise and exclude the community.

In Novo mesto, for example, despite over three million euros that the government granted to the municipality to regularise the Žabjak-Brezje settlement, which was on the land that the Ministry of Defence

[17] The Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia, Annual report 2020, June 2021, https://www.varuh-rs.si/assets/uploads/publications/65/2024/letno-porocilo2020-pop.pdf (in Slovenian). (includes the incident of the death of a baby that was blamed also on unsanitary conditions; no access to safe, drinking water, p. 144); Annual Report 2022, May 2023, https://www.varuh-rs.si/assets/uploads/publications/63/2024/letno-poroc-ilo-vc-p-rs-za-leto-2022.pdf; Annual Report 2024, June 2025, https://www.varuh-rs.si/assets/uploads/publications/2565/2025/letno-porocilo-vcp-rs-za-leto-2024.pdf (in Slovenian).

[18] UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque, 4th July 2011, p.10, 11, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/18session/A-HRC-18-33-Add2_en.pdf

[19] The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia, Reference number U-I-64/14, 12th October 2017, https://www.us-rs.si/en/case-law/decisions/u-i-6414

[20] Interview with Amnesty International, Ribnica, January 2026.

[21] Strategy for addressing Roma issues in the municipality of Škocjan 2023–2030+, The estimation of the costs of implementing measures, 19th December 2023, https://obcina-skocjan.si/DownloadFile?id=660822 (in Slovenian)

granted to the municipality, the informal settlement remains precarious due the failure of the municipality to act.[22] Roma people also continue to face numerous obstacles, including persistent discrimination when trying to access social housing. In 2025, Amnesty International supported a Roma family, which was repeatedly denied access to social housing despite being the first on the list of applicants after a public call. The Municipal Housing Fund refused to accommodate the family because of their family name and ethnic origin, citing "bad previous experience" they had had with members from the family with the same surname.[23]

Amnesty International was also made aware of a case where a Roma family who tried to buy a house outside of a Roma settlement were prevented from doing so after the owners faced threats and a backlash by their neighbours.[24]

2.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International calls on Slovenian authorities to:

- Take urgent, concrete steps to ensure that Roma people have access to adequate and safe housing, as well as clean water, electricity and sanitation, in all settlements where they live. Ensure that Roma people are given an accessible and realistic pathway to regularize their homes.
- Ensure that Roma people are not discriminated against when it comes to accessing public housing schemes or on the private market when they wish to buy or rent their homes, and ensure accessible and effective ways of complaint and redress in cases of discrimination.

2.5 ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The authorities in Slovenia still do not systematically collect data on Roma children in school, making it difficult to develop meaningful and targeted measures to address numerous challenges facing Roma children's access to education. Numerous sources, however, indicate that Roma children are significantly underrepresented at all levels of education, from kindergarten to secondary schools.[25] Where children attend schools, there are reports of ongoing segregation in pre-schools and primary schools, where Roma children frequently sit classes in separate sections. Many Roma children have limited access to early childhood education (pre-schools), which also affects their preparedness for primary schools. Roma children also continue to have lower completion rates of primary schools, at just estimated 21.3% nationally, leaving a significant part of the generation socially excluded. There is a notable geographical difference between north and south, and according to some estimates, in South-East Slovenia, less than 13% of pupils complete primary education, mostly due to poor knowledge of Slovenian language, social exclusion and hostile attitudes towards Roma.[26] Moreover, Roma children remain disproportionally represented in special needs education and as recipients of integrated special needs assistance, further hindering their transition to secondary education. This contributes to the stereotyping and stigmatization of Roma people within wider society.

In 2025, Slovenia's Advocate of the Principle of Equality noted that a lack of adequate housing and unregulated settlements, lack of access to water, electricity and sanitation, and poorly organized transport contributed to low educational outcomes for Roma children, especially in South-Eastern Slovenia.[27]

The National Strategy for Roma Inclusion 2021- 2030 continued with positioning of "Roma assistants" in kindergartens and primary schools, and their numbers have steadily increased. At the moment, there are

[22] Slovenian Press Agency, ' The government approved the project for the arrangement of the Novo Mesto Roma settlement Žabjak-Brezje', 18th October 2017, https://www.sta.si/2440688/vlada-potrdila-projekt-ureditve-novomeskega-romskega-naselja-zabjak-brezje (in Slovenian).
[23] Notes from the meeting with relevant authorities available at Amnesty International Slovenia.
[24] Documents available in Amnesty International Slovenia, as it has supported the mentioned Roma family.
[25] National Action Programme for Roma for the Period 2021-2030, 28th December 2021, https://www.gov.si/assets/vladne-sluzbe/UN/Dokumenti-Romi/35778fa671/Program_ukrepov.pdf (in Slovenian).
[26] ECRI Report on Slovenia (sixth monitoring cycle), 30th October 2025, https://rm.coe.int/sixth-report-on-slovenia/4880291ae8
[27] Special Report by The Advocate of the Principle of Equality: 'Challenges in the Upbringing and Education of Roma Children and Adolescents', October 2025, https://zagovornik.si/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Izzivi-pri-vzgoji-in-izobrazevanju-romskih-otrok-in-mladostnikov-posebno-porocilo-1.pdf (in Slovenian).

60 Roma assistants working across the country to support and facilitate the integration of Roma children in education.

The recently passed Act on Urgent Measures to Ensure Public Security (see section above) requires Centres for Social Work to "penalize" the family, where children do not attend school regularly, through changing the social assistance families receive from financial into in-kind.

Previously adopted 2025 amendments of the Law on Primary Schools allow schools to introduce an exception from regular attendance if a pupil behaves inappropriately, endangers health and safety of others or the continuation of the educational processes. [28] Such measures risk disproportionately targeting Roma pupils and exacerbating the already high exclusion rates of Roma children from mainstream education.

2.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International calls on Slovenian authorities to:

- Systematically use the new provision to collect and analyse data disaggregated by prohibited grounds, including race, ethnicity, skin colour, descent, gender, disability and national origin, in order to develop timely and targeted measures to address numerous challenges affecting Roma children's access to education;
- Put in place measures to ensure that Roma children can access the pre-school programmes in full and an opportunity to learn Slovenian language to facilitate their better inclusion in education.
- Ensure mainstream education includes opportunities for Roma children to learn their language and learn about Roma culture and heritage.
- Ensure Roma children are offered appropriate support and opportunities to fully enjoy their right to education.
- Ensure that institutions react and report cases of discrimination against Roma people in education and employment.

3. THE 'ERASED PEOPLE'

More than 30 years after the 'Erasure', Slovenia continues to ignore the demands of the 'Erased people', court rulings and the recommendations of civil society. In 1993, following Slovenia's declaration of independence, some 25,000 citizens of other former Yugoslav republics were unconstitutionally removed from the official register of permanent residents. With the loss of status, they also lost all their economic and social rights tied to permanent resident status and their right to remain in Slovenia, rendering some people homeless and able to legally work, study, reside or access health and social services. [29]

The state has not restored the permanent residency status of around a half of the 'Erased people' or provided them with adequate compensation. Those whose status was restored had the possibility of claiming modest compensation.

People whose status was not restored continue to live precariously and on the margins of society. Many have no legal avenue to regularize their status and access justice for the harms they have experienced. Children of the 'Erased people', born outside of Slovenia, also continue to be denied their rights.

Despite judgements by the Slovenian Constitutional Court and the European Court for Human Rights clearly ruling in favour of the 'Erased people' and despite an official apology by the President of Slovenia in 2022, Slovenia has failed to fully ensure that there is a systemic path to genuinely address the violations and continuing injustices suffered by the 'Erased people' and their children.

[28] The Primary School Act, Article 95, https://pisrs.si/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO448 (in Slovenian).
[29] ECRI Report on Slovenia (sixth monitoring cycle), 30th October 2025, https://rm.coe.int/sixth-report-on-slovenia/4880291ae8

3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Amnesty International calls on Slovenian authorities to:

- Adopt a law to restore permanent residency to the 'Erased people' who were unconstitutionally removed from the official register of permanent residents.
- Ensure accessible legal pathways for the 'Erased people' to regularize status and provide them and their children with effective access to justice, including reparations.
- Ensure that knowledge about the 'Erasure' and its consequences is included in the school curriculum.

Amnesty International is a movement of 10 million people which mobilizes the humanity in everyone and campaigns for change so we can all enjoy our human rights. Our vision is of a world where those in power keep their promises, respect international law and are held to account. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and individual donations. We believe that acting in solidarity and compassion with people everywhere can change our societies for the better.

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