



Serbia (includes Kosovo)

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - [2007](#)

Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
March 11, 2008

The Republic of Serbia is a parliamentary democracy with approximately 7.5 million inhabitants. Prime Minister's time limits. Civilian authorities generally maintained effective control of the security forces.

The government generally respected the human rights of its citizens and continued efforts to address human rights concerns; speech and religion; societal intolerance and discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities, particularly Roma; large n

During the year the government assisted in the arrests of Zdravko Tolimir and Vlastimir Djordjevic, two of the remaining six in

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

There were no reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings.

On May 23, the Belgrade special court for organized crime concluded the trial of 12 suspects, including former secret police s years in prison. The other defendants received sentences ranging from the minimum of eight years to 35 years in prison. Spe

In June the Supreme Court upheld its 2006 confirmation of the conviction of Ulemek and others for the 2000 killing of former :

Investigation continued into the deaths of Dragan Jakovljevic and Drazen Milovanovic, two guards from Belgrade's Topcider r filed in 2005 against the military prosecutor, Vuk Tufegzdic. The judge issued a warning to Tufegzdic, now a judge, and fined

The government continued its investigation into the disappearance and subsequent killing of Yili, Mehmet, and Agron Bytyqi i Stojanovic. On February 26, police arrested four additional suspects in the Bytyqi case and charged them with war crimes ag

In September the acting prosecutor general announced that he would soon make a decision whether to file indictments in the

In January the trial of eight police officers for the 1999 killing of 48 ethnic Albanians in Suva Reka in Kosovo resumed. The tri

Domestic courts and the ICTY continued to try cases arising from crimes committed during the 1991-99 conflicts in Croatia, B

On September 19, the Novi Pazar District Court found Estan Gegic, Ismet Derdemet, and Sead Papic guilty of the 2006 killing

There was no new information available on the trial of Kikinda policeman Sasa Misin for the 2005 fatal beating of a civilian.

b. Disappearance

There were no reports of politically motivated disappearances.

The government made modest progress in cooperating with neighboring countries and Kosovo, the International Commission bodies uncovered to date in Serbia had been returned to Kosovo. On June 5, the War Crimes Court and the Serbian governn

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The constitution and law prohibit such practices; however, police at times beat detainees and harassed persons, usually during

On June 28, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) reported that it won a lawsuit against four police officers from Dolje

There was no further information available in the following 2006 cases: the March beating of Kikinda resident Mihalj Koloncaj

There was no information available on developments in the following 2005 cases: the abuse of a 17-year-old girl at a Belgrad

Prison and Detention Center Conditions

Prison conditions varied greatly among facilities, and there were reports that some guards abused prisoners.

The media reported prison overcrowding, with 8,500 prisoners incarcerated in the prison system, exceeding the official capacity. Prisoners staged hunger strikes to protest delays in passing a draft law on amnesty.

Unlike in previous years, there were no reports of juveniles held in the same cells with adult prisoners.

The government permitted the ICRC and local independent human rights monitors, including the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, to deal with prisoner allegations of mistreatment.

d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention

The constitution and law prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention, and the government generally observed these prohibitions. Unlawful

Role of the Police and Security Apparatus

The approximately 43,000 police officers in Serbia fall under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior. The police are divided into

The effectiveness of the police was uneven. While most officers were Serbs, the force included Bosniaks (Slavic Muslims), et

There were reports of corruption and impunity in the police force, and the government took measures to address them during the year. In

The inspector general's office initiated disciplinary measures against approximately 100 officers, primarily traffic police in Novi

During the year the government, together with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and foreign officials, investigated

Arrest and Detention

Arrests were generally based on warrants, although police were authorized to make arrests without a warrant in limited circumstances.

The law provides that police must inform arrested persons immediately of their rights, and authorities respected this requirement.

The law provides access for detainees to counsel, at government expense if necessary, and authorities generally respected this right.

The law prohibits police use of force, threats, deception, and coercion to obtain evidence, as well as use in court of evidence obtained

Unlike in previous years, there were no reports that authorities used arbitrary arrest and selective enforcement of the law for political

The law limits the length of pretrial detention from indictment to the conclusion of a trial to two years for most cases, but allows for extensions in

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The law provides for an independent judiciary; however, the courts remained susceptible to corruption and political influence, prosecutions, including by applying pressure on prosecutors and judges.

On July 20, the Special Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime began an investigation into the 2001 release from detention

In June the Supreme Court upheld the 2006 conviction of former Supreme Court justice Slavoljub Vuckovic for bribe-taking in

There was no new information in the case of former deputy public prosecutor Milan Sarajlic, whom the court convicted in 200

The private sector considered corruption in the commercial courts to be widespread. Land transfers often were difficult to con

The courts were inefficient, and cases could take years to be resolved. The number of judges at the main courts was inadequ

The judicial system consists of municipal courts, district courts, commercial courts, a Supreme Court, and a Constitutional Co
constitution.

During this year, the Military Department of the Belgrade District Court assumed responsibility for military cases.

Trial Procedures

Trials are generally public, but they are closed during testimony of a state-protected witness. There are no juries. The law stip

The criminal procedure code, adopted in June 2006, introduced prosecutor-led investigation, plea bargaining, and use of spe

The special war crimes chamber continued trying war crimes cases. According to the law, evidence gathered by special inves

On October 15, the OSCE released a statement expressing concern that members of the parliament were verbally attacking

On October 19, police arrested four members of the Scorpions paramilitary unit for participation in the 1999 killing of 14 ethnic

On November 29, the war crimes chamber reported the indictment of 14 former volunteers and members of paramilitary units

There were developments in the Ovcara case (also known as the Vukovar massacre). On March 1, media reported that the S
community criticized the ruling as politically motivated, noting that every major war crimes conviction (e.g., Podujevo, Sjeverir

On April 12, the Belgrade special war crimes chamber convicted four of five Scorpions members indicted for involvement in th

The Zvornik trial, involving the 1992 killing of 21 Bosnian Muslims and expulsion of 1,822 others, continued in the special war

Political Prisoners and Detainees

There were no reports of political prisoners or detainees.

Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies

The country has an independent and impartial judiciary in civil matters where citizens can bring lawsuits seeking damages for

Property Restitution

During the year a government commission continued to register claims for private property seized since 1945 but made no pr

The Union of Jewish Communities noted that Serbia has not ensured the restitution of private Jewish property that was expro

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

The constitution and law prohibit such actions; however, the government interfered with privacy and correspondence. While the
 Most observers believed that authorities selectively monitored communications, eavesdropped on conversations, read mail and
 Media reported that the Security Information Agency placed journalist Dejan Anastasijevic under surveillance and tapped his

Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and the Press

The law provides for freedom of speech and of the press; however, there were reports that the government interfered with the
 tabloid journalism. Many reporters lacked professionalism in citing sources and achieving accuracy.

Serbian media were mostly independent and privately owned, although most municipally-owned media had not been privatized.

The law grants the parliament the power to approve the budget of the independent broadcast council, which has broad authority.

Radio-Television Serbia (RTS), a public media outlet funded by mandatory subscription, was a major presence, operating two

In 2006, the government-controlled Republic Broadcasting Agency awarded national television licenses to private operators. The
 lacked transparency. The Broadcasting Agency rejected the ruling, and the agency's president called for the Supreme Court to

In April 2006, police shut down the country's first private television station, BK (Karic Brothers) Television, for operating without

Media organizations, particularly the radio station B92, were victims of vandalism, bomb threats, and intimidation for coverage
 Sad correspondent of news agency Beta and chairman of the Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina, appeared on
 Stefan Cvetkovic, editor-in-chief of independent radio and television station TNT in Bela Crkva, received death threats; according

On December 3, producers of the popular B92 radio show *Pescanik* (Hourglass), which offers political commentary often critical

The Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia criticized delays in investigating attacks on journalists, stating that they could

In April a bomb exploded outside the Belgrade apartment of Dejan Anastasijevic, journalist for the weekly *Vreme*. The attack

Journalists and media NGOs reported that the local government in the city of Novi Pazar restricted media access to municipal

Journalists sometimes practiced self-censorship due to possible libel suits and fear of offending the public, particularly on subjects

Libel is a criminal offense; those convicted of libel face imprisonment or fines of \$720 to \$18,000 (40,000 to 1 million dinars).

In April Zeljko Bodrozic avoided an 80-day prison sentence for his 2002 defamation conviction after his publisher and human rights

In September the Belgrade District Court ordered tabloid *Kurir* to pay damages to Economy Minister Mladjan Dinkic for publishing

Internet Freedom

There were no government restrictions on access to the Internet. Individuals and groups could engage in the peaceful expression

Academic Freedom and Cultural Events

The government generally respected academic freedom. Unlike in previous years, there were no reports of censorship of cultural

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

The law provides for freedom of assembly and association, and the government generally respected it in practice.

c. Freedom of Religion

The law provides for freedom of religion, and the government generally respected this right in practice; however, the governm

While there is no state religion, the majority Serbian Orthodox Church received some preferential treatment. For example, the

The 2006 law on religion recognizes seven "traditional" religious communities: the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Roman Catl religions in Serbia for over 50 years and were present in the republic for as long as 150 years.

The registration requirements for nontraditional groups include submitting names, identity numbers, and signatures of membe

While the law states that unregistered communities can continue to practice under prior law, unregistered communities were c

Many minority religious groups, attempting to register with the Ministry of Religion, reported confusing and irregular procedure groups.

During the year the Ministry of Religion re-registered all seven traditional religious groups and registered 10 "nontraditional" r

In February, following two failed attempts to register, the Jehovah's Witnesses filed a suit in the Supreme Court. The Religion

The 2006 law stipulates that no religious group may be registered if its name contains part of the name of an existing group, & distinct from the names of other registered churches.

Tax law exempts property owned by the seven recognized traditional religious groups, although a challenge to the law was pe

Non-Serbian Orthodox religious organizations continued to report difficulty obtaining permission from local authorities to build

Serbian law requires students in primary and secondary schools either to attend classes of one of the seven traditional religio

Small religious groups continued to report official bias. Some government officials made public statements equating Protestar

After a July attack on an Adventist church in Sombor, police asked church officials if they were registered under the new law l

On August 27, Marija Arsenijevic lost custody of her infant based on the accusation of the baby's father that she was a memb

The government, in accordance with a 2006 law on restitution of communal property in Serbia, including religious sites seizec 1945 as a baseline, since their properties were largely confiscated between 1941 and 1944.

Societal Abuses and Discrimination

During the year there were a few cases of physical and verbal attacks against religious minorities.

On March 28, Jehovah's Witnesses missionaries were attacked and held at gunpoint for nearly an hour in Stari Banovci. Polic

On June 29, Zivota Milanovic, a Hare Krishna devotee in Jagodina, was stabbed several times after opening his door to an in

Religious communities, especially minority religious communities, reported continuing problems with vandalism of buildings, c

On July 9, following attacks earlier in the year that damaged Adventist Churches in Sombor, Stapari, Kikinda, and Ruma, you

On September 17, unknown perpetrators sprayed "stop sects" on the walls of the Evangelical Church in Kraljevo.

On December 25, unknown perpetrators pulled out several crosses at the Orthodox cemetery in Subotica in Vojvodina. Police

The press continued to label smaller, multiethnic Christian churches, including Baptists, Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, an

The Jewish community comprised an estimated 3,000 persons. Jewish leaders in Serbia reported continued incidents of anti-members, the release of such publications often led to an increase in hate mail and other expressions of anti-Semitism. Seven

On October 7, participants in an unauthorized neo-Nazi rally in Novi Sad clashed with counterdemonstrators. Police arrested The cases of the remaining individuals were pending at year's end.

Holocaust education was incorporated into the school curriculum, and the role of the government in the Holocaust was also discussed.

While government leaders publicly condemned incidents of anti-Semitism, there was no significant government effort to prevent

During the year the Islamic community significantly split along political lines. One group aligned itself with a newly-established followers of one group attacked followers of the other group when they attempted to enter a religious building where the latter

For a more detailed discussion, see the [2007 International Religious Freedom Report](#).

d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons, Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons

The law provides for freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, and the government

The law prohibits forced exile, and the government did not employ it.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

According to UNHCR figures, approximately 206,500 IDPs resided in Serbia, mainly Serbs, Roma, Ashkali (an Albanian-speaking temporary accommodations, rather than for long-term occupancy.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare established a Department for Population Policy to address the needs of vulnerable IDPs.

The government continued to pay salaries to IDPs who were in the Kosovar government and state-owned enterprises before

The law requires residents to register changes of residency, deregistering from the old address in person. Those IDPs from Kosovo

There were 23,164 officially registered Romani IDPs in the country. However, the UNHCR estimated that there were a total of 23,164 accommodate them. If Roma did stay, they often lived in unauthorized encampments near major cities or towns. In at least one

Unlike in previous years, there were no reports that IDPs were targeted for attacks. There were reports that the government's

The government allowed IDPs access to assistance from NGOs and international organizations.

While government officials continued to make public statements that IDPs should return to Kosovo, senior government officials

Protection of Refugees

During the year, the law did not provide for the granting of asylum or refugee status in accordance with the 1951 UN Convention at borders during the year.

The UNHCR maintained an office at the airport to receive third-country asylum seekers, including those who entered the country status during the year and were waiting to be resettled. At year's end, a total of 44 individuals remained under UNHCR protection.

UNHCR, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Interior, in October opened an asylum center for receiving and sheltering asylum

The government cooperated with the UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations in assisting refugees and asylum seekers may not qualify as refugees under the 1951 convention and its 1967 protocol, and provided it to 33 persons during the year.

There were no reported cases of abuse or discrimination of refugees during the year.

Stateless Persons

The basis for citizenship is jus sanguinis. The UNHCR estimated that there were up to 18,000 stateless persons in the country living in isolated areas.

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

The law provides citizens with the right to change their government peacefully, and citizens exercised this right in practice through Elections and Political Participation

The country held parliamentary elections on January 21, which the OSCE and other election observers judged free and fair. E

Political parties generally operated without restrictions or outside interference. However, in a report released at midyear, YIHF

There were 50 women in the 250-seat parliament, and one of six parliamentary vice presidents and the secretary of the Parli

The constitution and law exempt ethnically based parties from the five percent threshold required for a political party to enter parties won one seat each. An ethnic Albanian party also won a seat for the first time in 15 years. One of the six parliamentar

Government Corruption and Transparency

The law provides criminal penalties for official corruption; however, the government did not implement the law effectively, and

Public officials are subject to financial disclosure under the conflict of interest law; however, the Committee for Financial Discl

During the year authorities made some new arrests for corruption and continued the prosecution of high-profile cases from pr

On January 22, the trial of the "bankruptcy mafia" commenced. A total of 36 defendants, including Goran Kljajevic, former pre

In April Dejan Simic, former vice governor of the National Bank of Serbia, and Socialist Party of Serbia director Vladimir Zagr

In May the trial of 53 persons charged in the "highway mafia" case began. Prosecutors accused the defendants of using false

In July police charged a former general manager of the power utility Elektroprivreda Srbije, Ljubomir Geric, and three other fo

In September the fraud and embezzlement trial of Mihalj Kertes, the former Head of the Customs Service during the Milosevi

The leader of the Power of Serbia Movement, Bogoljub Karic, remained outside the country at year's end. Shortly after Karic

The trial of deputy public prosecutor Milorad Cvijovic was underway at year's end. Cvijovic was charged with the unauthorize

There was no new information in the trial of former minister of defense Prvoslav Davinic, charged with facilitating apartment le

Government implementation of the 2004 access to information law continued to be slow, and the government generally did not report by Transparency International, 81 percent of local institutions, 67 percent of public enterprises, and 35 percent of minis

On March 30, the government signed a contract to build a highway from Horgos to Pozega through Vojvodina. The Anticorrup ministry posted most of the contract on its Web site. At year's end, the government was in the process of implementing the cc

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human

A variety of independent domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restriction, in for Human Rights.

In July YIHR activist Maja Stojanovic avoided imprisonment when a group of NGOs paid a fine on her behalf. A Nis municipal

During the year media campaigns aimed at demonizing human rights activists led to threats, harassment, and attacks against Biljana Kovacevic-Vuco.

During the year there were several physical attacks and threats against NGO workers. NGOs reported that officials were often. However, the suspect claimed an alibi for the time of the attack, and police took no further action.

On January 24 in Nis, YIHR activist Radojica Buncic was punched in the face and verbally abused by unknown assailants. PC

On July 11 in Nis, youth members of My Initiative were hanging posters calling for the arrest of ICTY indictee Mladic when six

In March 2006, HCS issued a report on the targeting of human rights defenders in Serbia. While praising some positive legal

In July the government selected Sasa Jankovic to serve as ombudsman for the country, a position established in 2005 but pr

During the year the government assisted in the arrests of Zdravko Tolimir and Vlastimir Djordjevic, two of the remaining six in

While the constitution prohibits the extradition of any person with Serbian citizenship, the law allows for an exception in cases

Section 5 Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

The constitution and law prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, disability, language, or social status; however, discrim

Women

Rape, including spousal rape, is punishable by one to 40 years for a simple case, a minimum of three years for an aggravated

Violence against women was a problem, and high levels of domestic violence persisted. Domestic violence is a crime punish; few official agencies dedicated to coping with family violence had inadequate resources.

A report by several Romani NGOs released in April found that, of the half of the respondents who would discuss domestic vic

The Serbian Victimology Society reported in July 2006 that one-third of women have been victims of physical violence and ha arrangements were common), and the lack of support from extended family were prevalent.

During the year the MAS participated in a series of seminars and training sessions for magistrates to adjudicate domestic viol funds for a shelter to be built in cooperation with the City of Belgrade.

Prostitution is illegal, although being a client of a prostitute is not a criminal offense.

Sexual harassment was a common problem, but public awareness remained low and few complaints were filed during the ye

Women have the same legal rights as men, including under family law, property law, and in the judicial system, and these rig

Traditional views of gender roles, particularly in rural areas, resulted in discrimination against women. In remote rural areas, r

The social status of women was generally considered inferior to that of men, and women were not well represented in comm

Children

The government was committed to the rights and welfare of children.

Romani families experienced some difficulties registering the births of children, mostly due to a lack of permanent address or

The educational system provided nine years of free, mandatory schooling, including a year before elementary school. Howev including Roma and poor populations. Only 14.4 percent of children in rural areas attended preschool.

Romani education remained a problem. Many Romani children, especially girls, did not attend primary school, reportedly either for children with emotional disabilities because the Romani language and cultural norms made it difficult for them to succeed

The law provides that government clinics offer free medical care, including free medicines from a limited list of covered drugs

Child abuse was a problem. According to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Report, reported cases of family violence rose in 2006

Child marriage was a problem in some communities, particularly among Roma and in rural areas of southern and eastern Serbia

Trafficking in Persons

The law prohibits trafficking in persons; however, there were reports that persons were trafficked through, to, and from the country

Serbia was a transit point and a point of origin and destination for trafficking in women and children for the purpose of sexual exploitation. There has been a result of increased monitoring and improved identification of victims.

In 2006 the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Policy and the NGO Children's Rights Center released results of a survey

Traffickers tended to be part of small crime groups with international links. Unlike in previous years, there were no identified criminal

Traffickers recruited victims through enticements including advertisements for escorts, marriage offers, and offers of employment

The government increased funding for its antitrafficking programs. The criminal code differentiates between trafficking and smuggling

During the year authorities filed 26 criminal charges against 57 persons for trafficking. Government officials estimated that the

The government cooperated in combating trafficking with neighboring countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Hungary

On November 17, acting public prosecutor in Novi Pazar, Slobodan Radovanovic, announced the arrest of deputy public prosecutor

The government's antitrafficking team, headed by an antitrafficking coordinator who was the chief of the border police, incorporated

The government offered temporary resident visas and shelter to victims who agreed to testify against their traffickers, provide

The government's agency for coordination of protection to victims worked to ensure that trafficking victims were correctly identified and protected from sexual exploitation.

Unlike in previous years, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) did not have funds for repatriation of foreign victims

The IOM and the OSCE funded numerous training programs, including training for hot line volunteers, shelters, social welfare

Government and NGO public awareness efforts to combat trafficking included conferences on trafficking, documentary films and

Persons with Disabilities

The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, education, access to health care, and other areas. While there were no reports of overt discrimination against persons with mental disabilities to obtain employment. While there were no reports of overt discrimination against persons with mental

The law mandates access for persons with disabilities to new public buildings, and the government generally enforced this provision

Unemployment remained a serious problem for persons with disabilities. A study released by the Center for Development of the

In a report released in February, the HCS found that psychiatric hospitals in the country often provided inadequate living conditions and immobilization, could occur.

On November 21, Mental Disability Rights International (MDRI) released a report on government facilities for the mentally disabled

facilities.

National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities

Minorities constituted 25 to 30 percent of Serbia's population and included ethnic Hungarians, Bosniaks, Roma, Slovaks, and Roma, who constituted 1.4 percent of the population, continued to be targets of numerous incidents of police violence, verbal abuse, and discrimination. In January in the village of Medja in Leskovac municipality, 30 Romani homes were spray-painted with swastikas and anti-Roma graffiti. On February 6, a group of Serbs attacked the president and several members of the Democratic Association of Roma in Belgrade. In August there was a series of attacks on Roma in Belgrade, including destruction of homes, assaults, and hate speech graffiti. The July 2006 UN Development Program's social vulnerability report found that the Romani population continued to live in conditions of poverty. Many Roma, including IDPs from Kosovo, lived illegally in squatter settlements that lacked basic services such as schools, medical care, and electricity. Although not widespread, there continued to be incidents of vandalism and some physical attacks against minorities in Vojvodina. Political leaders in Vojvodina continued to object to certain provisions in the 2006 constitution. While the constitution ostensibly guarantees the right to use any native language and alphabet of a national minority with 15 percent of the population in a municipality, the law stipulates official use of any native language and alphabet of a national minority with 15 percent of the population in a municipality only if the minority is recognized. Ethnic Albanian leaders in the southern municipalities of Presevo, Bujanovac, and Medvedja continued to complain about unprovoked attacks and discrimination. In September the government announced a reorganization of the Coordinating Body for Southern Serbia, which coordinates minority concerns. The government operated a hot line for minorities and others concerned about human rights problems. The government also

Other Societal Abuses and Discrimination

Violence and discrimination against homosexuals was a problem. Some NGOs reported that homosexuals were denied equal employment opportunities. Although the broadcasting law prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, the media carried slurs against homosexuals. Human rights organizations were sometimes targeted for their vocal support of gay rights, sometimes leading to harassment. In a 2006 poll conducted by lesbian rights organization Labris, 65 percent of homosexual respondents claimed they had experienced discrimination. NGOs reported acts of discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS, including job loss and harassment from neighbors. The

Section 6 Worker Rights

a. The Right of Association

The law and constitution provide the right for workers, except military and police personnel, to join or form unions of their choice, which competed with the government-affiliated federation. In the state-owned sector, 61 percent of workers belonged to unions, down from 75 percent in 2005. The law does not prohibit antiunion discrimination. According to the trade union Nezavisnost, during the year there were cases of antiunion discrimination.

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

The law and constitution allow unions to conduct their activities without interference, and the government protected this right in the state-owned sector. It reported to be substantial and widespread. Approximately 40 percent of employed workers were covered by collective bargaining

The law and constitution provide for the right to strike except by persons providing essential services such as education, elec
 Serbia continued to lack a general collective agreement since the previous agreement expired in 2005. Following unsuccessf
 There are no export processing zones.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The law and constitution prohibit forced and compulsory labor, including by children; however, women and children were traff

d. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment

The government effectively enforced laws protecting children from exploitation in the workforce; however, there were reports
 In villages and farming communities, younger children commonly worked in family businesses. Children, particularly Roma, a
 The minimum age for employment is 15, and youth under 18 require written parental or guardian permission for employment.

The Labor Inspectorate of the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Issues checked for child labor during its inspections

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

The minimum wage for the period July-December was set by the Social Economic Council at approximately \$205 (11,094 din

According to figures released at year's end, the average salary in November was approximately \$524 (29,373 dinars) or \$26

The standard workweek of 40 hours was generally observed in state-owned enterprises but not in private companies. The lav

Collective agreements were the primary means of providing premium pay for overtime. However, the labor law requires that t

It is mandatory for companies to establish a safety and security unit to implement safety and security regulations; however, in

KOSOVO

Kosovo has a population of approximately 2.2 million and is administered by the UN Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo
 of self-government (PISG). Multiparty elections in November for the Kosovo Assembly generally reflected the will of the voter:

UNMIK and the PISG generally respected the human rights of residents; however, there were problems in some areas, partic
 discrimination against women; trafficking in persons, particularly girls and women for sexual exploitation; societal violence, ab

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From:

a. Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

The government or its agents did not commit any politically motivated killings; however, UNMIK forces killed two persons duri

During a February 10 demonstration by the Self-Determination Movement in which protestors turned violent, UNMIK security
 Department of Justice also concluded that insufficient evidence existed for charges to be lodged against any particular officer
 His trial was ongoing at year's end. Several international human rights organizations voiced concerns at the length of Kurti's p

There were no developments in the December 2006 case of Hetem Sadri Rexhaj, who was killed in police custody in Pec/Pej

Unlike in 2006, there were no reports of deaths from landmines or unexploded ordnance from the 1998-1999 conflict.

There were no developments in the investigations of the following killings that may have been politically motivated: the May 2

Unlike in previous years, there were no apparently politically motivated killings of police officers. However, two Kosovo Police

On August 30, KPS officer Triumf Riza was shot in a Pristina parking lot while off duty and died at the hospital shortly thereafter.

In 2006 the murder trial of Shkumbin Mehmeti, Florim Ejupi, Nazim Kadriu, Arben Ahmeti and Arsim Rashiti began before the Pristina District Court. In 2005 Ejupi, Nazim Kadriu, Arben Ahmeti, and Arsim Rashiti were acquitted of all charges. A separate ruling was issued extending the trial to 2006.

Florim Ejupi was also indicted earlier on charges that he and accomplices planned and executed the 2001 Merdare bus bombing. The trial was ongoing at year's end.

On September 19, the Pec/Peja regional court sentenced Bedri Krasniqi to 27 years imprisonment for the 2003 shooting of KFOR soldier

There were developments in some alleged war crimes cases from previous years. On January 17, the Prizren District Court convicted

On February 8, prosecutors indicted Idriz Gashi, who was brought to Kosovo from Sweden to face war crimes charges for crimes

There were developments in the case of Kosovo Albanian Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) officers (Selim Krasniqi, Bedri Zyber, and Zyber Zyber) in an ongoing war crimes trial against Krasniqi. On July 17, an international prosecutor indicted Zyber and another suspect, Shyqet Zyber.

On August 22, the Supreme Court acquitted Sali Veseli of the murder of a former KLA leader from Prizren and ordered his imprisonment.

There were no developments in the investigation into the 2005 killing of UNMIK police officer Omar Ali, who died when a bomb exploded.

There were no developments in the possibly politically motivated 2005 killing of ethnic Turk and Turk Democratic Party of Kosovo member

There were no developments in the following apparently politically motivated killings of Kosovo Albanians in 2005: the killing of a Kosovo Albanian brother Jeton.

There were no developments in the case of Faton Hajrizi, arrested in 2006 for the alleged killing of a Russian KFOR soldier in Kosovo.

b. Disappearance

There were no reports of politically motivated disappearances; however, there were still thousands of persons missing from the Balkans.

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), at the end of June, there were 2,047 persons still listed as missing.

During the year the UNMIK Office of Missing Persons and Forensics (OMPF) continued to identify the remains of missing persons.

By the end of the year, 455 unidentified bodies were under OMPF custody (397 bodies were exhumed in Kosovo and 58 were in Serbia); 155 of the remains were returned during the year; identification of the remaining bodies was in process.

During the year OMPF also continued exhumations; it recovered and autopsied 73 bodies from 66 sites. Exhumations were ongoing.

In June 2006 the Serbian government transferred the last sets of identified remains of Kosovo Albanian victims of the 1998-99 conflict.

Four times during the year, officials from Kosovo and Serbia met in a working group on missing persons, chaired by the ICRC.

According to the ICRC, during the period between January and August, 155 identified sets of human remains were handed over to the Serbian government.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The constitutional framework and criminal procedure code prohibit such practices; however, there were reports that the PISG

According to media reports, the KPS used force to disperse violent demonstrations and beat demonstrators while making arrests.

The KPS Professional Standards Unit initiated three investigations, one of which was dismissed as unfounded. The other two

Prison and Detention Center Conditions

Prisons and detention centers reportedly met international standards; however, there were allegations of abuse and mistreat

On August 18, seven prisoners incarcerated for terrorism, murder, attempted murder, and robbery escaped from Dubrava pri; subsequently arrested one escapee in a Pristina cafe on October 5 and another outside Pristina soon afterwards. One escap

UNMIK reported bringing disciplinary proceedings against members of the 1,650-strong KCS during the year. Behavior result

Dubrava prision held 1,161 inmates as of July 1, above its total capacity of 1,100. The Dubrava prison and five detention cent

During the year UNMIK police corrections officers continued to transfer responsibility for administering Kosovo's prisons to th

UNMIK permitted ICRC visits and monitoring by the ombudsperson of Kosovo's prisons and detention centers. In February th a NATO/KFOR base. During the year the ICRC visited some of Kosovo's prisons, but issued no public findings.

d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention

The constitutional framework and criminal procedure code prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention, and UNMIK, KFOR, and the

Role of the Police and Security Apparatus

Local security forces included the KPC, a civilian emergency response organization, and the KPS, a local police force that fur

An international commissioner of police directed both UNMIK police and the KPS. A Kosovar deputy commissioner and four k

Executive authority over the KPS is a reserved power of the SRSG. Day-to-day police operations were transferred to the KPS intervene in any particular criminal matter. As a practical matter, most policing duties and responsibilities were in the hands of

Corruption and government influence remained problems in the security forces.

In 2006 the PISG Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission in

An UNMIK office of oversight investigated corruption in UNMIK and the criminal justice system. The judicial system generally

During the year the KPS professional standards unit, run by UNMIK police, opened 460 cases involving 678 KPS employees; investigation; in cases involving violations of the criminal code, many of the employees were suspended temporarily pending

In April a KPS-led raid in the Serb-majority municipality of Strpce/Shterpce, conducted solely by ethnic Albanian police officer

Arrest and Detention

Police generally made arrests openly using a warrant issued by a judge or prosecutor; however, in some cases, persons were remain silent and not answer any questions except those concerning their identity; to obtain free assistance of an interpreter;

Under extraordinary circumstances, KFOR can arrest and detain individuals without a warrant. The KFOR commander can ex

UNMIK police and the KPS may hold individuals for up to 72 hours without a court order. The court may hold individuals in pr

Lengthy detentions, both before and during judicial proceedings, remained a problem, although some improvements were ref

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The constitutional framework provides for an independent judiciary; however, the local judiciary was at times biased and subj

Legal authority is held by UNMIK under UNSC Resolution 1244. UNMIK police and justice authorities held executive respons

The court system includes a Supreme Court, five district courts including a commercial court, 25 municipal courts, 25 minor o
prosecutor was responsible for prosecuting human trafficking, while another was responsible for counterterrorism and serious

The PISG included a central public prosecutor's office, five district prosecutors, and seven municipal prosecutors.

While the law provides that a panel of two professional and three lay judges try serious cases, an UNMIK regulation authorize

In 2006 UNMIK and the Kosovo Judicial Council launched a recruitment campaign for judges and prosecutors targeting mem

UNMIK's Judicial Inspection Unit monitored judicial performance and made recommendations on discipline and training. The
351, the unit rejected 179 cases and completed 71 of 150 investigations. In the majority of investigations (64), the unit found i

Trial Procedures

Trials are public, and the law provides for the right of defendants to be present at their trials, to confront witnesses, to see evi

As of January the Kosovo Judicial Council increased monthly payments to court-appointed attorneys from approximately \$36:

During the year the PISG established a Legal Aid Commission. The prime minister appointed a head of the commission, and
encourage minority participation.

The UNMIK-established judicial integration section continued to address judicial system problems that affected minorities. In :
involving ethnic minorities, international judges and prosecutors--rather than Kosovo Albanians--tried and prosecuted cases i

Kosovo's justice system and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) continued to identify and pur

Political Prisoners and Detainees

There were no reports that KFOR, UNMIK, the KPS, or the PISG held political prisoners or detainees during the year.

Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies

According to a 2006 OSCE report, interference by municipal authorities and UNMIK Department of Justice hampered judicial
reported some progress in this area but not enough to reduce the backlog. UNMIK Department of Justice claimed that it did n
judicial independence in the proposed sale of property in the Roma settlement in Mitrovica region.

There were no reports of difficulty in enforcing court orders resulting from civil litigation. However, according to a 2006 survey

Property Restitution

The Kosovo Property Agency (KPA) was created in March 2006 under the PISG as the successor to the UNMIK Housing and
Kosovo Albanians in the southern part occupied and denied Kosovo Serbs access to their property.

The Housing and Property Claims Commission held its final session in June, where it considered 53 requests pending for rec
unaffected.

At year's end the property agency had 4,665 properties under administration; 3,350 upon the request of a successful claiman

The KPA's mandate includes supervising the rental of certain abandoned property in Kosovo. To this end, the agency manag

The backlog of property-related claims in municipal courts remained high, with some 21,000 at year's end, representing almo

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

UNMIK regulations and the constitutional framework prohibit such actions, and UNMIK, KFOR, and the PISG generally respect

Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

UNMIK regulations and the constitutional framework provide for freedom of speech and of the press, and UNMIK and the PISG regulatory body to deal with complaints related to newspaper articles.

Individuals generally could criticize authorities publicly or privately without reprisal.

According to the Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo, media outlets' financial difficulties left their editorial independence UNMIK pressured or influenced the independent print media.

Print media were self-regulated by a press code of conduct adopted by the Press Council of Kosovo, an organization composed

During the year Kosovo had 114 licensed broadcasters (45 of which broadcast in minority languages), and these broadcaster

International media were allowed to operate freely.

Journalists reported that pressure from politicians and organized crime resulted in indirect forms of censorship; some refrain

Since January 2006 Kosovo's popular public broadcasting company, Radio Television Kosovo (RTK), has been directly overs

In August 2006 the Independent Media Commission replaced UNMIK's temporary media commissioner. The commission is a

In previous years public naming of Kosovo Serbs as war criminals resulted in vigilante killings and other violence. Beginning in

Unlike in 2006 there were no cases of police violence against the press. However, the Association of Professional Journalists

During the year there were several incidents of violence or harassment directed at the media.

On March 6, *Lajm* reporter Enis Veliu claimed that he was assaulted by security personnel of the WDG Security Company at

On September 21, the home of journalist Milaim Zekawas burned, resulting in damage estimated at approximately \$146,000

On August 2, the Association of Professional Journalists of Kosovo received a complaint from *Lajm* reporter Alban Selimi claim

In July reporters from daily *Koha Ditore* complained publicly that the Ministry of Environment had banned their access to the r

Unlike in previous years, there were no altercations reported between journalists and members of the KPS.

There were no developments in the investigation of the 2005 killing of *Bota Sot* editor Bardhyl Ajeti. A KPS investigation conti

According to election regulations, during political campaigns media must ensure fair and equitable news coverage and access

Internet Freedom

There were no UNMIK, KFOR, or PISG restrictions on access to the Internet or reports that the government monitored e-mail

Academic Freedom and Cultural Events

There were no UNMIK, KFOR, or PISG restrictions on academic freedom or cultural events.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

Freedom of Assembly

UNMIK regulations and the constitutional framework provide for freedom of assembly, and UNMIK, KFOR, and the PISG gen

According to media reports, the KPS used force to disperse demonstrations and beat demonstrators while making arrests on

Freedom of Association

UNMIK regulations and the constitutional framework provide for freedom of association, and UNMIK, KFOR, and the PISG ge

The OSCE Mission in Kosovo routinely registered political parties under UNMIK auspices, and the Ministry of Public Services

c. Freedom of Religion

UNMIK regulations and the constitutional framework provide for freedom of religion, and UNMIK and the PISG generally resp

There are no specific licensing regulations for religious groups; however, religious organizations must register as NGOs with |

Pursuant to a 2002 law requiring public education institutions to refrain from religious instruction or other activities promoting ; because they were wearing headscarves; eventually, they were allowed to resume attendance.

Protestant groups continued to report that they experienced discrimination in media access, particularly by public television st

The Islamic community continued to assert that UNMIK's denial of a radio frequency for an Islamic radio station and the natio

Societal Abuses and Discrimination

There were reports of attacks against Serbian Orthodox clergy and parishioners, along with numerous cases of vandalism of

There were no developments in a May 2006 case in which unknown attackers shot at a car driven by Serbian Orthodox pries

There were reported incidents of rock-throwing and other assaults against Serb buses and Serbian Orthodox clergy as they tr

Security concerns continued to affect the Serb community and its freedom to worship. Some Kosovo Serbs asserted that they

On March 29, an assailant identified by the KPS as Kosovo Albanian Jusuf Mulaj of Istinic/Isniq village launched a rocket grei

On July 29, in Boljotin village in Zvecan municipality, a Kosovo Albanian threatened a Serbian Orthodox nun from the Sokolic

During the year there were numerous cases of vandalism and theft directed against Serbian Orthodox Church property. Many

On January 16, Bishop Teodosije of Lipljan/Lipjan and members of the Council of Europe's Committee for Renewal of Church

On February 10, unknown perpetrators damaged the interior of the Orthodox church in Lepi village, Lipljan/Lipjan municipality

On May 30, five teenagers were arrested as they removed the lead roof of the St. Kyriaki church in Prizren. The teenagers w

On August 18, unknown individuals spray-painted graffiti inside a Serbian Orthodox Church in Gnjilane/Gjilan, which read, an

On October 26, the Council of Europe's Reconstruction Implementation Commission, which oversees the reconstruction of St sites.

A Protestant group in Mitrovica reported regular, methodical incidents of vandalism and theft at its church. The group reporte

Despite some improvement, Protestants continued to report harassment and discrimination, including verbal attacks, a lack of

Approximately 40 individuals from two families in Prizren had some Jewish roots, but there were no synagogues or Jewish in-

For a more detailed discussion, see the *2007 International Religious Freedom Report*.

d. Freedom of Movement, Internally Displaced Persons,

Protection of Refugees, and Stateless Persons

UNMIK regulations and the constitutional framework provide for freedom of movement within Kosovo, foreign travel, emigratic assistance to internally displaced persons, refugees, returning refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and other person

The police continued to assess the security situation as stable but fragile. No freedom of movement related crimes were repo

Sporadic incidents of violence and intimidation targeting minorities continued to limit freedom of movement for Kosovo Albani

On June 27, KPS in Serb-majority Leposavic/Leposaviq municipality were alerted to an explosion on the road leading to the /

There were attacks during the year on buses carrying Serbs and other ethnic minorities. For example, on October 14, a bus t

To reduce the risk of attack by making Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian vehicles indistinguishable, UNMIK continued to off

There were also incidents targeting infrastructure used by minorities. On March 10, hunters found an unexploded grenade ne

There were no developments in the following cases from 2006: the June discovery of explosives under a bridge connecting tv

On January 1, UNMIK transferred responsibility for humanitarian and special transportation services for minority communities

UNMIK regulated movement in and out of Kosovo. UNMIK regulations provide that the central civil registry may issue travel d

The law prohibits forced exile, and authorities did not use it.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

According to the UNHCR, 207,000 persons from Kosovo remained displaced in Serbia and 16,500 in Montenegro as a conse supported returns, obstacles remained for Serb returnees in Kosovo.

During the year the number of minority returns remained low overall, although there was an increase in the return of Kosovo I

During the year UNMIK continued to transfer responsibilities to the Ministry of Communities and Returns. Transferred compet

Overall minority returns since 2000 stood at 17,149 by September. Kosovo Serbs comprised approximately 38 percent of retu

As of September, the government had reconstructed over 98 percent (881 of 897) of the houses damaged or destroyed in the

As of September, 37 Roma families (144 persons) remained at the lead-polluted Cesmin Lug camp for IDPs. Osterode, a me

In 2005 UNMIK began a donor funding campaign to rebuild the original Roma settlement in southern Mitrovica, destroyed in ' government-supported health clinic was opened in May.

Protection of Refugees

The laws does not provide for the granting of asylum or refugee status in accordance with the 1951 Convention relating to the

In practice UNMIK provided protection against "refoulement," the return of persons to a country where there is reason to believe

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: the Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

UNMIK regulations and the constitutional framework provide residents with the right to change their government peacefully, a

Kosovo continued to be administered under the civil authority of UNMIK. UNMIK and its chief administrator, the SRSG, establish competencies under UNSCR 1244, including security and relations with foreign governments. In 2005 a UN report noted that

Elections and Political Participation

International and domestic observers determined that the November 17 Kosovo Assembly elections generally reflected the will

Under UNMIK regulations, individuals may nominate themselves as candidates to their parties, which must hold open and transparent

There were reports of politically motivated attacks and threats against Kosovo Albanian political and institutional figures during

In February, following a decision on Kosovo's second mobile telephone tender, two unknown suspects shot at Anton Berisha, to shoot Berisha. He also admitted that the weapons used in the attack and weapons found during the police investigations were

There were no developments in the following cases from 2006: the January assault of Urosevac/Ferizaj LDK branch president

There were 38 women in the 120-seat Kosovo Assembly. Women must occupy every third spot on each political party's candidate

After the November 17 elections, there were 24 ethnic minority members in the 120-seat Kosovo Assembly, including 10 Kosovo Serb parties left empty the eight seats set aside for Kosovo Serbs. Kosovo Serbs from several political parties won the municipal level where no such provisions govern.

Government Corruption and Transparency

There was a widespread public perception of corruption in both the PISG and UNMIK. The World Bank's Worldwide Governance

The Office of the Auditor General, an independent body, reviewed financial management and accountability in the PISG, along

During the year prosecutors continued to review audit reports from 2006, which led to the resignation of then minister for return

In 2006 Kosovo Assembly President Kole Berisha ordered an audit on Assembly management under his predecessor, Nexhat

In June 2006 the KPS Financial and Corruption Crime Investigation Unit arrested Ahmet Alishani, Daci's senior advisor, on suspicion

The PISG took other steps to combat corruption. In February the newly formed Anticorruption Agency began operations. On

There were no developments in the investigation of the February 2006 assault on the independent international auditor general

In November 2006 an international prosecutor indicted former Director of the Post and Telecommunications of Kosovo (PTK) fraudulent transfer of these funds from PTK to a phantom company headquartered in Norway. Johansen remained in custody

On May 4, Pec/Peja prosecutor Gezim Kollcaku confirmed the investigation of 11 international and eight local employees of F

On May 14, a mixed panel of two international judges and one local judge convicted Teuta Vranica, a municipal court judge in

In November 2006 two finance officers at Dubrava Prison were arrested on charges of abusing their official position and falsifying

During July and August, trial commenced in the case of Sanije Gashi, accused of misappropriating \$70,000 (48,000 euros) in

No law provides for access to official UNMIK documents. The law provides for access to official PISG documents but does not within the required 15-day window, journalists complained that allowing 15 days effectively meant they could never obtain official

During the year the media complained regularly about lack of access to official documents, even though such access was required

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human

A wide variety of domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restriction, investigating

An Ombudsperson Institution was responsible for investigating allegations of government abuses of international human rights, employment-related disputes, and impunity. Former Deputy Ombudsperson Hilmi Jashari continued to serve as acting head of

UNMIK, KFOR, and the PISG generally cooperated with the ICTY. In 2005 the ICTY indicted then-prime minister Ramush H

Section 5 Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons

UNMIK and PISG regulations specifically prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, gender, ethnic origin, disability, or language

Women

UNMIK regulations criminalize rape; however, spousal rape is not specifically addressed. Under the provisional criminal code

Rape was significantly underreported due to the cultural stigma attached to victims and their families. According to the Ministry

Domestic violence against women, including spousal abuse, remained a serious and persistent problem. UNMIK regulations

As with rape, domestic violence remained a significant problem that was underreported. In July the OSCE issued

The KPS reported that 53 victims of domestic violence were housed in shelters during the year. The Center for Protection of Women

There were no governmental agencies dedicated solely to dealing with family violence. The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

During the year a 24-hour anonymous hot line for reporting domestic abuse operated in Pristina, Gnjilane/Gjilan, Pec/Peja, and Pr

The KPS training school offered special courses on domestic violence and rape in its curriculum. There were no reports that

The law prohibits prostitution, but prostitution remained prevalent. The UNMIK police prostitution investigation unit investigated

There was no specific law against sexual harassment, which was a common problem. Social awareness of sexual harassment

Women have the same legal rights as men but traditionally have a lower social status, which affected their treatment within the

Traditional social attitudes toward women resulted in discrimination. In some rural areas, women often had little ability to make

Children

UNMIK and the PISG were generally committed to the welfare and rights of children.

UNMIK regulations require children between the ages of six and 15 to enroll in compulsory education. Compulsory education

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that the lack of facilities for minority education in parts of Kosovo made it difficult

UNICEF estimated that less than 75 percent of children who completed compulsory basic education enrolled in secondary school

According to UNICEF, an estimated 40 percent of the population was under the age of 18, with 33 percent under 15. Less than 10 percent of the population was employed. UNMIK regulations require equal conditions for school children and provide the right to native-language public education through

Romani, Ashkali, and Egyptian children attended mixed schools with Kosovo Albanian children but reportedly faced intimidation and discrimination in the language, but those outside such areas received instruction in the Albanian language.

A 2006 study by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education on the prevalence of violence in schools found that violence against children occurred in 12 percent of schools, 12 percent said the school was the scene of violent events, and 12 percent mentioned the home. Thirty-seven percent of older children

Children without parents were housed in various residential placements including extended family care, foster care, and community-based care.

During the year the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare operated 31 social welfare centers that assisted 1,253 orphans and other vulnerable children.

Child marriage was reported to occur, particularly in the ethnic Romani, Ashkali, Egyptian, and Albanian communities. UNMIK

Trafficking in Persons

UNMIK regulations and the provisional criminal and criminal procedure codes criminalize trafficking in persons; however, trafficking in persons

Kosovo was a source, transit, and destination point for trafficked persons, and internal trafficking was a growing problem. Victims of trafficking during the year were returned to their countries of origin on a voluntary basis.

According to the KPS and the IOM, trafficking in persons was an increasing problem. IOM records indicated that roughly 73 percent of victims reported the crimes to the police. Cultural taboos and the threat of social discrimination caused most internally trafficked victims

Trafficking victims were exploited primarily in the sex industry, mostly in brothels and nightclubs but increasingly in private residences.

UNMIK reported that traffickers often worked as part of a coordinated effort between Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian organized crime groups.

Methods of trafficking continued to increase in sophistication. In reaction to an aggressive eradication campaign by local and international law enforcement

The IOM reported that of the 569 mainly international victims it assisted since 1999, 74 percent fell prey to traffickers after arriving in Kosovo.

Under the provisional criminal code, trafficking is punishable by a maximum of 20 years' imprisonment. Engaging in trafficking in persons, including sex with a minor known to be a trafficking victim carries penalties of two to 10 years' imprisonment. Facilitating prostitution is punishable by up to 10 years' imprisonment unless the "prostitute" is a victim of trafficking.

In May 2006 responsibility for counter-trafficking activities was transferred from UNMIK to the KPS; during the year the KPS provided shelter, accommodation, counseling, and professional training for return and social reintegration. At least one shelter provided medical and psychological services.

Factors that contributed to a low number of prosecutions included the increasing sophistication of organized crime to avoid detection and the

UNMIK regulations provide a defense for trafficking victims against criminal charges of prostitution, illegal entry, presence, or other offenses.

The IOM and the KPS reported that trafficked persons often had work contracts that enabled them to enter Kosovo legally and work in the

The KPS shared responsibility for combating trafficking with UNMIK, border police, the OSCE, the Office of Good Governance, and the media. Increased awareness of the problem, a competition for the best reporting on trafficking, and producing the antitrafficking film *Recruitment*

The IOM assisted 31 victims of trafficking during the year, 23 of whom were from Kosovo. More than half of the victims from Kosovo were between the ages of 18 and 25. IOM figures indicated that nearly 82 percent of Kosovo victims were internally trafficked, while approximately 18 percent were

The overall number of trafficking cases involving minors increased from 2006. While one of the foreign victims of trafficking (high school grade); 45 percent had finished elementary school (ninth grade); 8 percent had completed secondary education (high school)

There was anecdotal evidence during the year that a complex set of financial relationships and kinship ties existed between p

There were a number of arrests and police actions against traffickers during the year. For example, in January, KPS arrested shelter. Suka and Suka 1 were closed.

In March five Kosovo Albanian men were arrested for trafficking women out of a private residence in Gnjilane/Gjilan, and one

On June 22, the KPS conducted a covert operation at a cafe in Kosovo Polje/Fushe Kosova, which resulted in the arrest of or

International and local NGOs funded by foreign donors were the main source of assistance to trafficking victims. Local NGOs ran a semi-independent group housing unit for minors who were victims of trafficking and domestic violence. Some domestic

Persons with Disabilities

Several UNMIK regulations prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment, education, access to health services. According to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, there were 14,000-15,000 children with disabilities

There were no special legal protections for children with disabilities, as the Council on Economy and Finances claimed that it however, it was not enforced and rarely available in practice.

According to the NGO Mental Disability Rights International (MDRI), patients with mental disabilities continued to be detained reported an estimated 50,000 people with mental disabilities living outside institutions. According to MDRI, such persons lived

In April 2006 the prime minister established the National Council on Disabled People as an advisory organization to governm

By year's end neither UNMIK nor the PISG had filed criminal charges or taken other legal action in response to a 2002 report Stimlje/Shtimlje were Serbs and other minorities. MDRI also reported that new patients were being admitted to the facility des

The ministries of education, health, social welfare, and public services were responsible for protecting the rights of persons w

A 2004 MDRI report stated that institutional care of persons with mental disabilities left them isolated, arbitrarily detained, and for persons with mental disabilities and employment opportunities for persons with mental disabilities were limited. The Council

National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities

Official and societal discrimination persisted against ethnic Serb, Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities with respect to e levels of the government; members of minorities occupied 10.4 percent of government jobs despite a PISG target of more tha

On July 20, the human rights ombudsperson issued a report that concluded ethnic discrimination was a prevalent and consta

Through September, UNMIK police reported 457 cases of interethnic crime; 342 involved Serbs as victims or suspects. Acco

There were multiple reports of violence against Kosovo Serbs during the year, which was usually investigated by the internati

On February 2, a Kosovo Serb woman was found behind a cafe in Mitrovica with a stab wound to her stomach. Police questic

On June 12, a Kosovo Albanian teen assaulted an elderly Kosovo Serb woman in the hallway of their dwelling in Pristina. The

On September 4, an elderly Serb woman, Vucica Mikic, was attacked by three stone-throwing Albanian teenagers in her hom

There were developments in previously reported cases involving attacks on Kosovo Serbs.

On June 25, the presiding juvenile judge ordered a psychological evaluation of the 16-year-old Kosovo Albanian male, "AD," Mitrovica District Court found that AD suffers from a permanent mental disorder and was therefore incompetent to stand trial.

On June 7, an international judge began considering the indictment of Sabri Haziri, accused of assisting in planting a bomb o

During the year there were no developments in the following 2006 cases: the March stabbing of a Kosovo Serb youth by two

There were no developments in the following 2005 cases: the bombing of Kosovo Serb leader Oliver Ivanovic's official vehicle

During the year there were regular reports of Kosovo Albanians destroying private property belonging to Kosovo Serbs; some in their favor from the Kosovo Property Agency were not able to access their property in Klina without assistance from the int

In some cases Kosovo Serb property was reportedly sold by persons falsely claiming to be their attorneys and presenting for

The northern municipalities of Zvecan, Mitrovica, Zubin Potok, and Leposavic/Leposaviq unanimously decided to suspend the

There were numerous reports of stone throwing directed at vehicles carrying Serbs during the year. KPS assumed responsibi

There were new developments in the cases of several persons detained on suspicion of organizing or leading the 2004 riots. Skender Islami, Mustafa Islami, and Ramadan Islami, who remained in detention on remand. Proceedings against the remain

On June 15, a mixed panel of the Prizren District Court, composed of two international judges and one local judge, convicted March 2004 her house was attacked and later burned, with estimated damages of \$248,000 (170,000 euros). A relative of the

In December 2006 police arrested Zlyhaje Avdullahu for crimes committed in March 2004 in Kosovo Polje/Fushe Kosova. Av

On August 21, a March 2004-related trial began in the Pristina district court before a panel composed of three international ju

There were reports of politically motivated violence against non-Serb minorities during the year.

On January 8, two Kosovo Albanian males assaulted a Kosovo Egyptian male in Pec/Peja; the victim was hospitalized with s

On May 15, a Kosovo Bosniak reported being assaulted by a Kosovo Albanian in Prizren. He was hospitalized with serious in

There were no updates in the following cases from 2006: the August assault of Kosovo Montenegrin IDP Vuko Danilovic by a

Roma were subject to pervasive social and economic discrimination; often lacked access to basic hygiene, medical care, and

Kosovo Bosniak leaders complained that thousands of their community members left Kosovo because of discrimination and l

On May 21, the government announced the formation of the Commission of Languages, composed of representatives from g

Other Societal Abuses and Discrimination

The law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation; however, there were reports of violence and discrimination direc

Traditional societal attitudes about homosexuality intimidated most gays and lesbians into concealing their sexual orientation.

On May 18, following a celebration of the International Day Against Homophobia outside Pristina, four males, three wearing d

The Center for Social Emancipation, a local NGO promoting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights, stated that there v

There were no updates in the March 2006 assault case involving unknown assailants who severely beat two men they obser

There were no reports of discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS.

Section 6 Worker Rights

a. Right of Association

UNMIK regulations allow workers to form and join unions of their choice without previous authorization or excessive requirem

The only significant unions were the Association of Independent Trade Unions of Kosovo (BSPK), and the Confederation of F

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

UNMIK regulations allow unions to conduct their activities without interference, and UNMIK protected this right in practice. UN

There are no export processing zones.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

UNMIK regulations prohibit forced or compulsory labor, including by children; however, there were reports that women and ch

d. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment

UNMIK regulations and policies prohibit exploitation of children in the workplace, including a prohibition of forced or compulsc

UNMIK regulations set the minimum age for employment at age 16 and at age 18 for any work likely to jeopardize the health,

In rural areas younger children typically worked to assist their families. Urban children often worked in a variety of unofficial re violations during the year, including child labor.

The Ministry for Labor and Social Welfare, in cooperation with UNMIK, coordinated child protection policies, and the ministry's

e. Acceptable Work Conditions

Although UNMIK regulations provide for a minimum wage, one has not been adopted. While many international agencies anc

UNMIK regulations provide for a standard 40-hour workweek; require rest periods; limit the number of regular hours worked t

BSPK reported serious labor violations during the year, including lack of a standard work week and compulsory and unpaid o and/or physical retaliation. According to union officials, workers in the public sector commonly faced similar mistreatment, incl

A labor inspectorate within the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare is responsible for enforcing labor standards. However, th

*The report on Serbia is divided into two sections; the first addresses the human rights situations in Serbia and the second ac

