

Slovenes hold referendum on communist-era files (Update)

June 8 2014, by Ali Zerdin

A referendum in Slovenia on Sunday to decide whether sensitive personal information like sexual or religious orientation in communist-era state security files should be open to the public has failed after too few people turned out to vote.

The State Election Commission said 11.68 percent of voters cast ballots at the referendum, which is below the 20 percent threshold needed for a referendum bid to succeed. Slovenia has 1.7 million voters.

This means the parliamentary bill amendment, which was passed by the government in January, will be implemented, even though the majority of those who cast ballots voted against the law.

The small Balkan country's ruling coalition wants to restrict access to such data as a matter of privacy and human rights.

Opposition Slovene Democratic Party has delayed the bill by pushing for the referendum. It argues that extracting such data would be time-consuming and could thwart historical research in state archives.

The referendum was seen as a test of opposition strength before a July 13 snap general election.

Slovenia was one of six republics in Yugoslavia under Josip Broz Tito's Communists before the country fell apart in 1990s.

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