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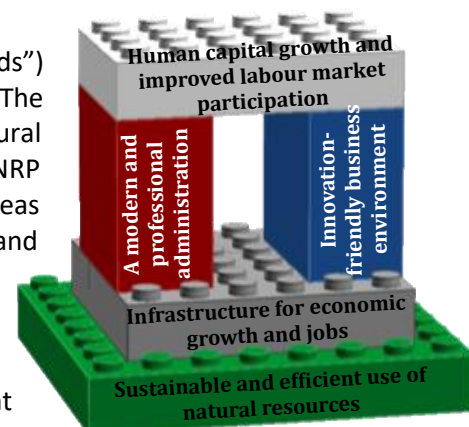
1 Arrangements to ensure alignment with the Union strategy of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

1.1 Analysis of disparities, development needs and growth potential

The National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the NRP¹) represents a set of policies aimed at overcoming the current crisis and stimulating economic growth and employment. The necessary policies have been identified based on the analysis of the most significant barriers to growth and better quality of life.

The European Structural and Investment Funds (hereinafter “the ESI Funds”) constitute an instrument for the implementation of structural policies. The coordination of individual EU Member States and integration of structural policies is ensured through the Europe 2020 strategy, which the NRP elaborates on. Their common intersection features five priority areas representing the pillars for the quality of life, sustainable growth and employment; the building of these pillars in the 2014 – 2020 programming period represents the main challenge for Slovakia.

The next part focuses on the analysis of the main barriers to progress in these priority areas and justifies the selection of the most important thematic objectives aimed at their removal.



1.1.1 Territorial concentration of investment priorities under thematic objectives

In connection with the identified development potential of individual regions in the Slovak Republic (hereinafter “SR” or “Slovakia”) and investments aimed at fostering their economic and social growth¹, the Partnership Agreement SR for the years 2014 – 2020 (hereinafter “the PA SR”) concentrates eligible contributions from the ESI Funds into those geographical territorial units which are expected to ensure the highest effectiveness of investment in addressing region-specific needs through using their local potential and resources.

From the perspective of regional approach, the strategic objective of the PA SR is to ensure the implementation of investment priorities in those areas which have the highest development potential for the given priority. The objective is to integrate investment activities so that they become the multipliers of development in a given geographical unit and its adjacent areas.

The main point of departure in designing the territorial and thematic concentration as a basis for decisions on the location of the ESI Funds-supported investment activities is the development of territory and the polycentric settlement structure defined in the national territorial planning document – 2001 Concept of the Territorial Development of Slovakia, as amended by No 1 KURS 2011² (hereinafter “CTDS”).

The PA SR concentrates, in a differentiated manner, the thematic objectives and priority areas of support into individual geographical territorial units stipulated in the national CTDS planning document. Thus, good conditions are created for eliminating regional disparities. This approach uses territorial advantages of the major development geographical units, along with the advantages of their social capital, in order to enhance their competitiveness and innovation ability and thus underpin the competitiveness and

¹ Analysis of the Development Potential of Slovak Regions and their Territorial Differences, in the context of the thematic concentration of ESI Funds in the Partnership Agreement for 2014 – 2020 programming period, <http://www.nsrr.sk/sk/programove-obdobie-2014---2020/negociacie-k-priprave-partnerskej-dohody-sr-a-op/>

² Concept of the Territorial Development of Slovakia 2001, as amended by supplemented No.1 CTDS 2011, approved by Government resolution and promulgated by Government Regulation No 528/2002 Coll., Amendments and Supplements No 1 to the CTDS, 2011, by Government Resolution No 513/2011 and promulgated by Government Regulation No 461/2011 Coll.

innovation ability of the entire regions, particularly in their broader territorial and economic contexts.

The CTDS takes on board and adjusts, in order to reflect Slovak specificities, the main EU principles of territorial development laid down in the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020.³

The CTDS defines a system of tertiary development centres, settlement core areas and development axes which, based on the principles of a polycentric concept of settlement, creates a compact settlement structure which is organically linked to the settlement systems of the neighbouring countries. This settlement structure system introduces the basic geographical territorial units which are best placed to absorb the ESI Funds-supported investments for the purpose of their thematic integration and territorial concentration in order to generate the most suitable development effects in the economic and social spheres for the maximum possible number of inhabitants.

Settlement centres are hierarchically grouped into five groups, including the cities of Bratislava and Košice, which are not included in the hierarchic groups. Settlement centres represent a basis for the polycentric concept of settlement. They are well accessible for the inhabitants of their hinterlands and thus conveniently placed to concentrate selected investment activities which also satisfy the requirements and needs of the inhabitants in their hinterland. The 'settlement core areas' represent a hierarchical system of settlement agglomerations with varying intensity of development of agglomeration and cooperation relationships between individual centres and municipalities in their hinterlands. The first- and second-level settlement core areas represent the most significant locations for the territorial concentration of thematic objectives. The first level includes agglomerations around the regional capitals and some bi-polar centres attached to them. The most developed agglomeration is the settlement core area around the city of Bratislava, which is organically interlinked with the agglomerations of the Trnava and Nitra settlement core areas. Developed agglomerations also include the settlement core areas around other regional capitals (which are, at the same time, the most significant settlement centres) and, in the case of agglomerations around the cities of Prešov and Košice, make up one compact settlement core area. According to the intensity of cooperation relationships between individual settlements, the first-level settlement core areas are internally divided into the following zones: core zone, suburban zone and other first-level settlement core areas. The core zone is a space for city development within the urban functional territory. For the purpose of concentration of development activities, are suitable also spaces designated as suburban zones and the first-level settlement core areas and, should individual activities need to be diffused, also the second-level settlement core areas. In addition to settlement centres and core areas, development axes also play an important developmental role across the entire territory of Slovakia. They represent one of the most significant elements for the distribution of development impulses in order to ensure their maximum possible spread. Development axes are a part of the balanced hierarchical settlement structure. They support settlement links among municipalities and a balanced settlement development, including rural development. They create conditions for access to infrastructure and the preservation and development of natural and cultural heritage, and they also perform various economic, social and environmental functions. Development axes thus effectively meet the requirements of sustainability and create a healthy and environmentally-suitable dwelling and working environment.⁴ Development axes are knot-strip systems of settlements with a relatively high concentration of all settlement activities. These areas are suitable for the concentration of development of transport and other technical infrastructures, as well as other economic and social activities whose role is to enhance regional competitiveness and provide for access to the required activities for the maximum possible share of inhabitants.

The CTDS has defined settlement centres particularly from the national context point of view. In addition to

³ Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 – Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions; agreed at the informal ministerial meeting of ministers responsible for spatial planning and territorial development; 19 May 2011, Gödöllő, Hungary

⁴ Concept of the Territorial Development of Slovakia 2001, as amended and supplemented by CTDS 2011, page 60

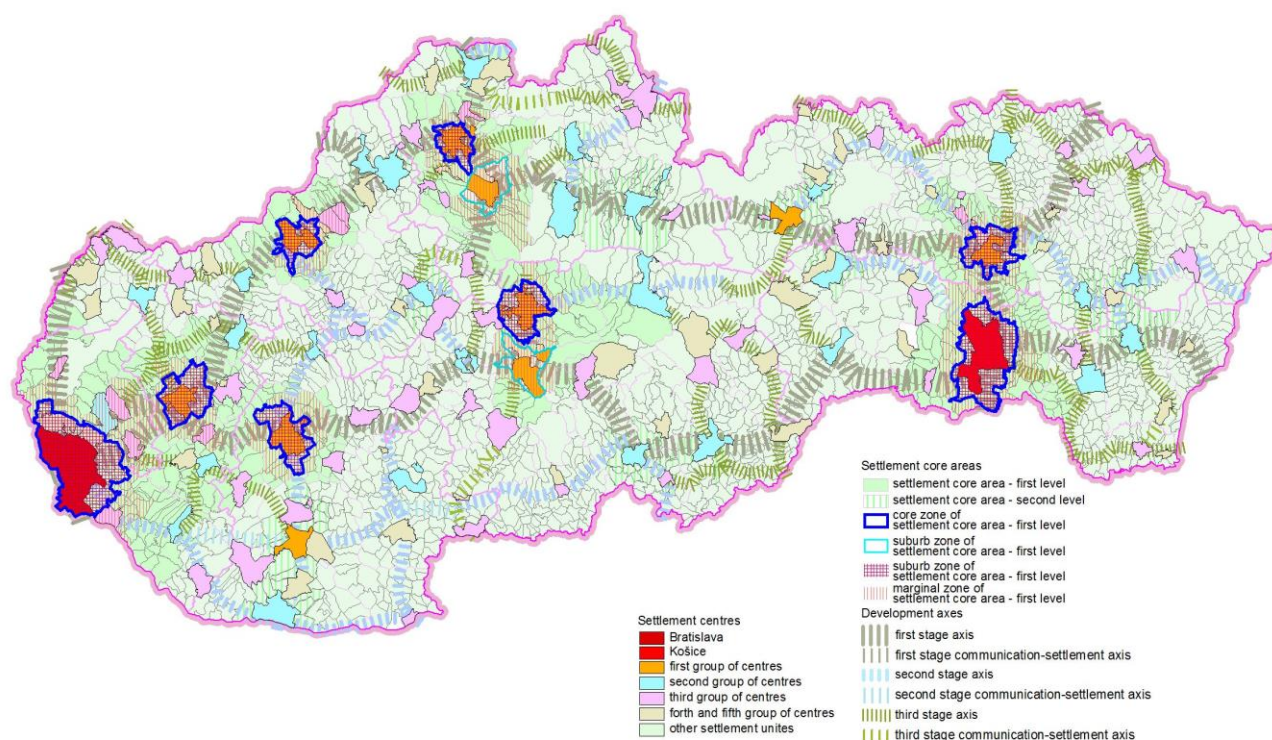
these, it will be desirable – within the implementation of integrated approaches – to define the regional and sub-regional centres. These will complement the entire system from a regional perspective and will constitute centres for the concentration of activities according to the individual thematic objectives to ensure their most effective use for the largest population possible.

The CTDS does not clearly stipulate rural areas. Most of the areas outside the CTDS-defined centres can primarily be viewed as rural areas. Rural settlements also represent a logical part of CTDS-defined agglomerations (settlement core areas) and development axes. Pursuant to the document “Analysis of the Development Potential of Slovak Regions and their Disparities Taking into Consideration the Thematic Concentration of ESI Funds in the Partnership Agreement for 2014 – 2020”⁵, which serves as a supporting document for territorial and thematic concentration and for decisions on the focus of ESI Funds, the “rural area” is defined as “other territory located outside settlement structures”. Hence the term “urban area” also encompasses villages with small populations and a relatively low density of settlement functions which, however, are immediately linked to a central municipality – a town providing a high level of services, high density of settlement functions, public transport, etc. Only detached municipalities, i.e. those without sufficient linkages to central urban areas, are considered “rural areas”.

From the perspective of the ESI Funds support, rural areas must be assessed individually and their boundaries further specified when processing integrated regional approaches for individual Slovak regions. However, this needs to be done on the basis of their affiliation to the concentration areas specified in the CTDS. For the purposes of the eligible scope of support, the definition of rural areas in the “Rural Development Plan of the SR for 2014 – 2020 (hereinafter “RDP”) may be different.

⁵ <http://www.nsr.sk/sk/programove-obdobie-2014---2020/negociacie-k-priprave-partnerskej-dohody-sr-a-op/>

Partnership Agreement SR 2014-2020 Territorial Concentration Areas



The core strategic document for the support of rural development at national level is the National Strategy for Regional Development of the SR, which defines a comprehensive and strategic approach of the state towards supporting regional development by 2030. The updated National Strategy for Regional Development⁶ is in line with other strategic documents, namely strategy Europe 2020. In the cohesion policy area, the national strategy follows on the PA SR and in the territorial development context it is coordinated with the Concept of the Territorial Development of Slovakia.

There are significant disparities in the economic performance and economic potential of individual regions and areas of Slovakia, which is also due to historical reasons. According to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic ("SOSR"), as at 31 December 2012 Slovakia had a total of 2,890 municipalities (without the boroughs of Bratislava and Košice), including three military districts. In 138 municipalities classified as urban (status of a town) live 54 % of inhabitants and 46 % of inhabitants live in other municipalities. .

Regional contributions towards gross value added (%)		
Region/Year	2000	2011
Bratislava Self-governing Region	24.8	27.6
Trnava Self-governing Region	10.7	11.5
Trenčín Self-governing Region	10.6	9.7
Nitra Self-governing Region	11.5	11.4
Žilina Self-governing Region	10.5	11.0
Banská Bystrica Self-governing Region	10.2	8.6
Prešov Self-governing Region	8.9	8.8

⁶ Update of the National Strategy for Regional Development of the Slovak Republic, <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23515>

Košice Self-governing Region	12.7	11.4
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Source: SOSR

Note: The regional estimate of gross domestic product (hereinafter "GDP") is made using the production method, which links it to gross value added reflecting output and intermediate consumption. GDP is presented under the ESA methodology, i.e. not according to the permanent residence of labour but according to the principal office of the business where labour is employed.

With more than a quarter of the total, the Bratislava Self-governing Region (hereinafter "BSR") is the main contributor towards gross value added (hereinafter "GVA"). On the other end is the Prešov Self-governing Region (hereinafter "PSR") – its contribution had been declining for three years in a row (2008 to 2010), but picked up slightly in 2011 to 8.8 %, overtaking the Banská Bystrica Self-governing Region (hereinafter "BBSR").

As in other countries, the capital of Slovakia and its adjacent areas have a specific position and high economic strength. Many EU capitals and their surroundings are in a similar situation vis-à-vis other EU regions (London, Paris, Brussels, etc.). However, it is necessary to focus attention on the development in other Slovak regions and analyse the causes behind slower economic growth, as well as regional and intra-regional disparities.

Regional gross domestic product per capita (EUR, current prices)			
Region/Year	2000	2011	Change 2000/2011 (%)
Bratislava Self-governing Region (BSR)	12,530	31,533	152
Trnava Self-governing Region (TTSR)	6,075	14,291	135
Trenčín Self-governing Region (TNSR)	5,444	11,262	107
Nitra Self-governing Region (NSR)	5,011	11,435	128
Žilina Self-governing Region (ZSR)	4,729	11,040	133
Banská Bystrica Self-governing Region (BBSR)	4,799	8,955	87
Prešov Self-governing Region (PSR)	3,517	7,470	112
Košice Self-governing Region	5,185	9,898	91

Source: SO SR

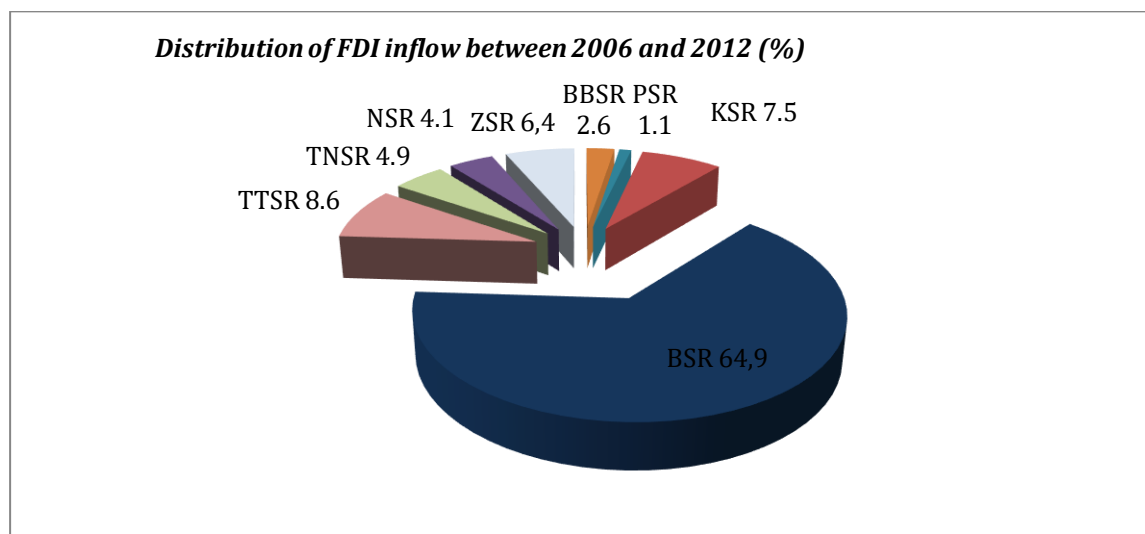
The table shows, that over the past 12 years, the highest GDP per capital growth has been in BSR, TTSR and ZSR. BBSR and KSR reported the lowest growth rates.

Regional gross domestic product per capita at PPP		
Region/Year	2011	Comparison with EU-28 average (%)
Bratislava Self-governing Region (BSR)	46,649	186
Trnava Self-governing Region (TTSR)	21,141	84
Trenčín Self-governing Region (TNSR)	16,661	66
Nitra Self-governing Region (NSR)	16,916	67
Žilina Self-governing Region (ZSR)	16,332	65
Banská Bystrica Self-governing Region (BBSR)	13,247	53
Prešov Self-governing Region (PSR)	11,051	44
Košice Self-governing Region	14,643	58

Source: Eurostat

Industrial sector is the most significant contributor towards GVA (mining and extraction, industrial manufacturing, electricity and water supply, waste). The second in line is the combined wholesale and retail trade, followed by repair of motor vehicles, transport and warehousing, and accommodation and catering services (about one quarter of the overall GVA). About 15 % is generated jointly by public administration, defence, mandatory social security, education, social services and health care. In the recent past (since 2007), the construction sector accounts for about 10 % of total GVA. The shrinking share of agriculture is due to the liberalisation of domestic market the benefit of multinational retail chains. The agricultural sector's potential is underutilized and so is the finalisation of farmers' output in the food processing sector, which impedes economic growth and keeps unemployment high in the most backward regions of central and eastern Slovakia.

In addition to these factors, the inflow of foreign investments focuses predominantly on the BSR (principal officers, etc.). The following chart illustrates the distribution of foreign direct investments in individual regions of Slovakia.



Source: National Bank of Slovakia

Overall employment in Slovakia's regions		
Region/Year	2000	2011
Bratislava Self-governing Region (BSR)	362,788	424,389
Trnava Self-governing Region (TTSR)	198,363	224,274
Trenčín Self-governing Region (TNSR)	228,606	258,476
Nitra Self-governing Region (NSR)	243,036	270,176
Žilina Self-governing Region (ZSR)	247,224	275,997
Banská Bystrica Self-governing Region (BBSR)	241,963	235,799
Prešov Self-governing Region (PSR)	243 394	245 936
Košice Self-governing Region	259 474	273 266

Source: SO SR

The highest increase in the overall employment (all sectors) between 2000 – 2011 was in the BSR (up 17 %), followed by the TTSR and TNSR (13 % in each) and ŽSR (12 %). The BBSR was the only region where employment declined (by about 2.5 %) in the same period.

Population at risk of poverty and social exclusion (%)		
Year	2008	2012
SLOVAKIA	20.6	20.5
Bratislava Self-governing Region (BSR)	13.3	16.9
Trnava Self-governing Region (TTSR)	12.5	16.5
Trenčín Self-governing Region (TNSR)	19.3	15.7
Nitra Self-governing Region (NSR)	20.6	23.0
Žilina Self-governing Region (ZSR)	17.7	20.0
Banská Bystrica Self-governing Region (BBSR)	23.3	24.3
Prešov Self-governing Region (PSR)	27.0	24.7
Košice Self-governing Region	26.6	20.6

Source: SO SR

About one fifth of Slovakia's citizens are at risk of poverty and social exclusion and the figure has remained practically the same for five years. The least at risk are those who live in the TNSR, TTSR and BSR, while those living in the PSR, BBSR and NSR are exposed to the highest risk.

The key factors of regional development in Slovakia include:

- Human resources;

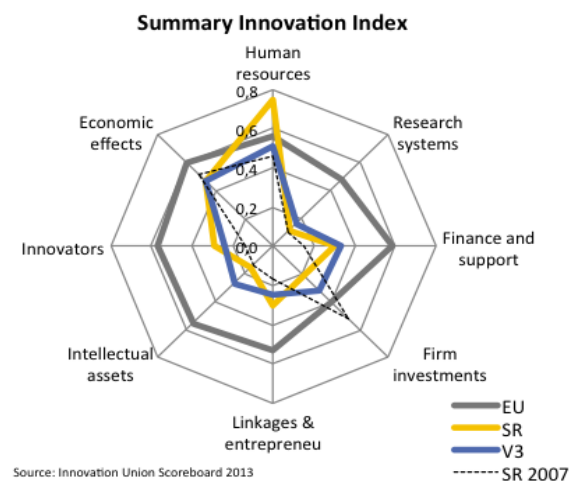
- Research, development and innovation;
- Basic infrastructure and services, based on polycentric and balanced territorial development in line with integrated development approach, taking into account the specificities of individual regions, aimed at enhancing their competitiveness.

1.1.2 Innovation-friendly business environment

Slovakia is one of the fastest growing economies in the European Union (hereinafter “EU”). Gross domestic product (hereinafter “GDP”) per capita at purchasing power parity increased from 47 % of the EU-27 average in 1995 to 75 % in 2012. The style of competition chosen by Slovakia was based on low taxes and low wage costs, rather than on investments in research and innovation (hereinafter “R&I”). This style of competition is not sustainable in the long run⁷. Slovakia belongs to the group of the so-called moderate innovators with the second lowest innovation performance within the group⁸. The extinction of the corporate R&D base has had a negative impact on the competitiveness and innovation performance of industries across Slovakia, particularly outside of the BSR⁹.

Through coordinated structural policies, the innovation environment needs to be improved in the following areas:

- Research, development and innovation (hereinafter “RD&I”) potential: Slovakia needs to significantly increase the rate of its internationalisation with particular emphasis on participation in the European Research Area (hereinafter “ERA”), interlink the education, RD&I and enhanced cooperation with the business sector, consolidate, intertwine the existing research infrastructure (e.g. research centres, scientific parks at universities, and the like) established in the 2007 – 2013 programming period, and support the activities of interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral research teams of excellence in order to maximise the value added for society and economy. It is equally necessary to ensure sufficient number of scientists, young researchers and innovators, enhance cooperation between the educational and research institutions and the business sector, and support RD&I capacities in companies and networks, including clusters and technological platforms;
- Competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (hereinafter “SMEs”) – support new business models and internationalisation of SMEs, foster entrepreneurship and improve access to financing;
- Making the full use of information and communication technology (ICT) potential – increase the involvement of companies in digital economy, introduce smart e-Government, increase the availability of broadband Internet and ICT penetration, as well as improve digital skills;
- Human resources – restructure the system of secondary and tertiary education and vocational training to be able to effectively react to labour market demand.



⁷ Source: Main Development Trends in the Slovak Economy from the Perspective of Smart Specialisation; Prognostic Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences for the needs of the Ministry of Economy of the SR and the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR

⁸ Source: European Innovation Scoreboard 2013

⁹ In a more detailed breakdown of innovation performance according to NUTS II regions in 2011, the Bratislava Self-governing Region belongs to moderate innovators with high performance (consistently since 2007, except for 2009), Western Slovakia (“WS”) and Central Slovakia (“CS”) are modest innovators with medium performance (WS in 2007 had high performance, whereas CS low) and Eastern Slovakia belongs to modest innovators with low performance (since 2007). Source: Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2012

1.1.2.1 TO1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation

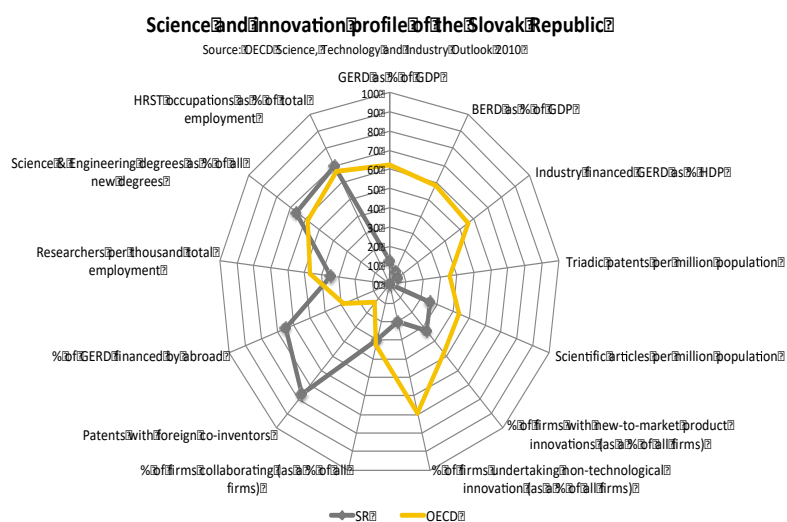
In 2011, the total expenditure on research and development (hereinafter “R&D”) represented only 0.63 %¹⁰ of GDP (EU-15: 2.12 % and V4: 1.27 %). This is mainly due to the low level of private investments in R&D. Since 2005, the contribution of the manufacturing sector towards R&D stimulation dropped from 54 % to 35 % and represented only 0.27 % of GDP in 2010¹¹. By 2020, also in line with the Europe 2020 strategy, Slovakia intends to increase the share of expenditures on RD&I to at least 1.2 % of GDP¹² in order to bring the ratio between public and private funds to 1:2. For this target to be met, it will be necessary to increase private investments in RD&I by strengthening cooperation between the research centres and businesses, as well as to consolidate and expand the existing R&I investment infrastructure through smart specialisation, adopt indirect stimulating measures of support for R&D in the business sector, and make the work in the field of research more attractive in terms of remuneration.

1.1.2.1.1 Consolidating and expanding the research and innovation infrastructure

The building of infrastructure and capacities aimed at developing excellence in the area of RD&I, increasing the level of private investments in R&I and fostering the development of cooperation and synergies between universities, the Slovak Academy of Sciences (hereinafter “SAS”), research organisations and the business sector, represent measures designed to eliminate the still existing “technological gap”. *(Terminological note for the English version only: Any reference in this text to universities encompasses both public and private tertiary educational establishments, including universities, academies, seminaries, colleges and institutes of technology, which offer access to at least the bachelor’s degree of education).*

Infrastructure

The ‘technological debt’ in R&D institutions began to be corrected during the 2007 – 2013 programming period when the building and modernisation of infrastructure was launched, particularly in public R&D institutions¹³. However, the efficiency of its use, given the real contribution towards the innovation process, remains very low, which is due to the absence of any effective evaluation and links to the needs of the industry. Currently, It is necessary to concentrate on enhancing the performance of the state and public R&D sector by consolidating the infrastructure supported in the 2007 – 2013 period, with particular focus on putting in place more efficient links and



¹⁰ Source: SLOVSTAT

¹¹ Source: OECD Science, Technology and Industry Outlook 2012

¹² Although the SR defined this target pursuant to Europe strategy 2020 at 1 % of GDP, the Strategy for Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation of the SR has revised it to 1.2 % of GDP

¹³ Data centres and computer centres for R&D; centres of excellence for the best and most promising workplaces with emphasis on scientific excellence and team creation; competence centres with the objective of creating a limited number of research groupings composed of academic institutions and industrial stakeholders and equipped with state-of-the-art research infrastructure; industrial research and development centres for industrial (applied) research and experimental development for direct cooperation of companies with the academic sector; university scientific parks and national research centres

cooperation with the private sector. It will be equally important to complete the RD&I infrastructure development, with particular emphasis on inhibiting further fragmentation of its technical orientation and on ensuring consistency with the RIS3 areas of specialty and with the prepared national roadmap for research infrastructure.

The uneven distribution of the R&D infrastructure, including the human resources and allocation of funds from the national budget, reflect the structure of the RD&I potential in the country. According to the Statistical Office of the SR (hereinafter “SOSR”)¹⁴, up to 54 % of all RD&I employees are employed in the BSG where investments exceed fifty percent of all R&D expenditures in the SR (54.1 %). Only 12.8 % of RD&I employees work in the Košice region, 7 % in the Žilina region, and the remaining 26.1 % in other self-governing regions (NUTS3).

Investments in the 2014 – 2020 programming period will focus on high-quality infrastructure projects in the areas identified by the RIS3 strategy¹⁵. It is necessary to develop the existing university scientific parks and research centres attached to universities and to the SAS in line with the priorities laid down in the RIS3 Strategy. It is also necessary to ensure continuous financing in the 2014–2020 programming period of the RD&I infrastructure and the R&D capacities within the BSG as a functional RD&I territory, with particular emphasis on geographically close scientific and technological platforms in Brno, Vienna and Budapest. In meeting the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy, Slovakia may tap the potential of the joint Danube Region development strategy and engage in networking within the ERA and the Centropo Region (Bratislava-Brno-Vienna), as well as within various European R&I programmes and initiatives.

The planned consolidation and completion of research infrastructure from ESI Funds will be implemented based on the prepared national roadmap for research infrastructure, with emphasis on participation in the ESFRI infrastructures.

In the agricultural sector, it is necessary to focus on enhancing its potential and introducing progressive technologies and practices in farming and food processing aimed at ensuring self-sufficiency in wholesome foodstuffs. R&I must focus on innovative solutions facilitating rational and environmentally-friendly practices in agriculture and forestry. It is necessary to foster cooperation between R&D institutions and businesses in agricultural and environmental sectors. A more efficient use of afforested areas, which cover more than a half of Slovakia’s territory, represents a particular opportunity.

R&I capacities

The R&I sector in the SR employs only 1.2 % of the total working population; however, according to an OECD report, the human potential in the field of research and technological development in the country is above the OECD average¹⁶. In spite of this, Slovakia is lagging considerably behind when it comes to the share of young scientists and researchers in the categories of below 35 and 35-44 years of age¹⁷. This is partially due to the outflow of young scientists abroad and the employment of scientists outside the R&I sector. The main reason for this development is the inappropriate structure of education and training and low attractiveness of the profession, not only in terms of remuneration, but also due to the conditions for the conduct of research activities in comparison to what the neighbouring countries and their centres and universities offer (Vienna, Brno). The situation is also affected by the absence of a joint accreditation system of R&D institutions, the SAS and other academic institutions. A joint accreditation would make the system of institutional support for all research institutions in Slovakia more transparent and objective.

International dimension

¹⁴ http://portal.statistics.sk/files/Sekcie/sek_500/Veda-a-technika/publ/rocnka_vt_2013_v_1-3.pdf

¹⁵ Document “Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Slovak Republic”, approved by Government Resolution No 665/2013, <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23039>

¹⁶ Source: OECD Science, Technology and Industry Outlook 2010, <http://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/41559370.pdf>

¹⁷ Annual data on HRST and sub-groups, by sex and age[hrst_st_ncat], Source: Eurostat

The rate of research internalisation in Slovakia, measured by the number of international scientific publications with at least one Slovak co-author published outside the EU and by the number of postgraduates from non-EU countries, remains very low. These indicators point at a considerable seclusion of Slovak R&D and a low degree of its participation in the international research context.

Slovakia belongs amongst the least active partners in international research projects of the EU¹⁸. The main reasons include insufficient synergies and complementarity of the existing national and international support tools, missing national roadmap for the building of research infrastructures, and the absence of national support. The establishment of a liaison office in Brussels (as of 1 January 2014) is expected to facilitate Slovakia's participation in the EU framework programmes and initiatives, make its R&D structures more professional, and encourage Slovakia's active participation in projects, activities and initiatives of the ERA.

In order to ensure effective implementation of innovations and take due account of the overarching needs of society, it is necessary to focus public procurement (hereinafter "PP") on supporting innovative solutions, products and services in order to create synergies with the EU programmes. The specific use of these instruments will be reflected at the implementation level in the relevant programmes of the SR.

1.1.2.1.2 Supporting investment in research, development and innovation through smart specialisation

The investments by industries into RD&I cover only about 9 % of public research and mirror the low demand for innovation. This low level, as a consequence of market disintegration in Slovakia, is one of the main reasons behind currently a low innovation performance.

The support for research and active cooperation among businesses, R&D centres and the education sector should lie in the development of products and services, transfer of technologies, innovation of processes, and the creation of information-sharing networks. This should be achieved through smart specialisation and concentration of resources into the RD&I areas stipulated by the RIS3 Strategy. At the same time, support should also focus on creating conditions for the implementation of prototypes and their verification through investments in the most promising areas, taking into account of the R&D base built in the 2007–2013 programming period. The main objective of the RIS3 Strategy is to "induce structural change of the Slovak economy towards growth based on innovation capabilities and excellence in R&I aimed at supporting sustainable growth in income, employment and the quality of life".¹⁹

From the viewpoint of global excellence and with due regard for local relevance the following priorities have been identified for the purposes of smart specialisation: areas of economic specialisation (automobile industry and mechanical engineering, consumer electronics and electrical devices, ICT products and services, iron and steel manufacturing and processing) and areas of specialisation in terms of available scientific and research capacities (material research and nanotechnologies, information-communication technologies, biotechnologies and biomedicine, agriculture and environment, including modern environmentally-friendly chemical technologies, sustainable energy²⁰ and energies)²¹. The promising areas of specialisation are defined in a similar level of detail. These areas are accompanied by the identification of key societal priorities: youth employment, social inclusion and problems of marginalised groups, population ageing and quality of life, and a more efficient use of natural resources, including emission reductions and eco-innovations.

The barriers to effective cooperation among all RD&I actors, which need to be eliminated from the

¹⁸ Source: http://www.7rp.sk/uploads/tx_main/2013/02/21/Sprava_o_ucasti_SR_7RP_01.pdf

¹⁹ Source: p. 5, RIS3 Strategy

²⁰ This will include the intensification of research and innovation in energy industries by mobilising the critical mass of activities and stakeholders in line with the SET plan

²¹ Document "Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Slovak Republic" approved by Government Resolution No. 665/2013, <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23039>, p. 53, Chapter 4 'Identification of Slovakia's Area of Specialisation for RIS3'

academic sector in the upcoming period, exist mainly as a consequence of the absence of policies, rules and tools to support cooperation between the research and industrial sectors, as well as missing platforms for the development of cooperation.

1.1.2.1.3 Territorial concentration

In order to build up the existing R&I infrastructure, the most appropriate approach in cost-benefit terms is one based on developing the existing university scientific parks and research centres attached to the universities and the SAS in line with the RIS3 priorities and on supporting the development of RD&I capacities in the business sector. The settlement centres of the two biggest and most important cities (Bratislava and Košice), to which from the perspective of the thematic objective the town of Žilina may be added, with research establishments and conditions for education, training and cooperation among RD&I facilities in place, along with the necessary social fabric, offer the best conditions for its development. In terms of industrial RD&I capacities in enterprises, it is appropriate to come out from the existing structure of industry in Slovakia. In order to further develop the thematic objective activities supported by the ESI Funds (actors of technological research and development, building capacities of excellence, demonstration and education centres, etc.) it is appropriate to locate them also in other regional capitals and settlement centres of the 1st and 2nd group according to the CTDS, in a differentiated manner according to the specificities of concrete locations and the possibilities for the most efficient practical application of the research results. Around the regional capitals, surrounded by the most significant functional agglomerations, these activities can also be developed in the inner urban and suburban zones of the first-level settlement core areas. The core zones also represent urban functional areas.

The areas with the biggest potential for the implementation of key actions for the EAFRD, including cooperation between the agricultural, food and forestry sectors and other stakeholders, include the settlement centres of the 1st and 2nd group according to the localisation of the existing capacities in the sector of agriculture, food industry and forestry. These centres represent suitable territories also from the viewpoint of creating groups and networks, introducing and using advisory services, and setting up operational groups linking farmers and researchers. Depending on the local conditions for the localisation of these facilities, also suburban zones and first-level settlement core areas are suitable in terms of agglomeration effects.

1.1.2.2 TO2: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of ICTs

The sectors of digital economy (hereinafter “DE”) offer sufficient number of available²² and best paid jobs²³. The use of ICTs substantially enhances labour productivity at workplaces, as well as mobility and leisure-time quality. The Europe 2020 strategy credits the ICT of a 50-percent share in the EU economic growth for the past 15 years and considers the DE²⁴ the main driving force of the European economic recovery.

In the 1st half of 2012, the DE sectors in Slovakia employed 56,000 persons (2.5 % of total employment in the SR), of which more than two thirds work for the SMEs. The share of the DE in GDP (expressed as gross value added) reached 4.7 %, leaving behind such sectors as agriculture and banking, and reaching the retail-trade sector level²⁵.

In the past years, Slovakia belongs to the group of leaders in terms of the GDP growth dynamics driven by

²² The most sought-after professions on the market include IT analysts, IT architects, IT consultants, IT managers, IT project managers, IT testers, IT technical specialists; other jobs requiring IT skills in high demand include graphic designers, operators, administrative personnel, clerks, and assistants; source: http://www.profesia.sk/praca/?roll_by=position_id

²³ The average 2012 monthly wage in the “Information & Communication” sector reached EUR 1,743, which is the highest in the non-financial sectors of the economy; source: <http://portal.statistics.sk/showdoc.do?docid=44084>

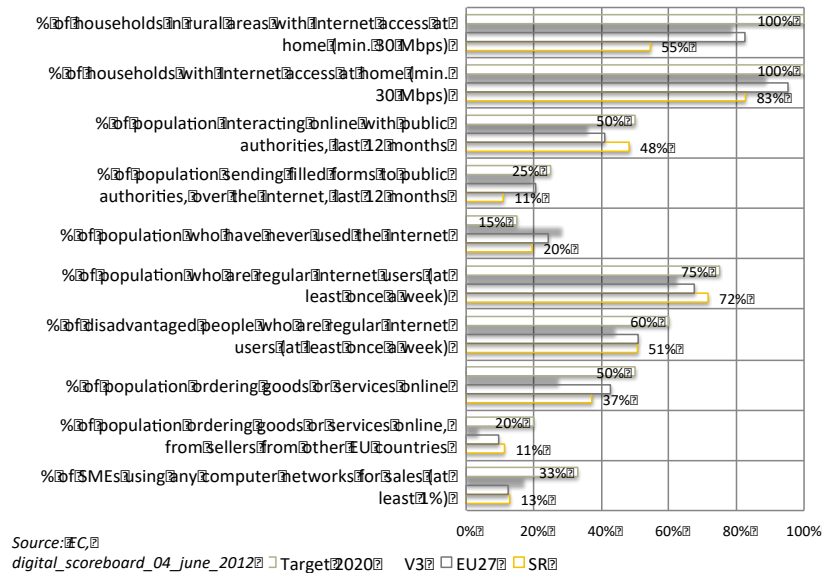
²⁴ According to the sectorial classification of economic activities, sections J – Information and communication: 58 Publishing activities, 59 Production of films, video records and television programmes, preparation and publication of sound recordings, 60 Activities for radio and television broadcasting, 61 Telecommunications, 62 Computer programming, consultancy and related services, 63 Information services

²⁵ Source: <http://portal.statistics.sk/showdoc.do?docid=5657>

the DE sectors and is the fastest growing exporter of ICT services²⁶. The DE in the SR is expected to growth by 12 % p.a. At the same time, private consumption and the export of ICT services and software are expected to be the main drivers of growth. The net export of ICT services and software should be the main growth factor, with its contribution reaching 51 %²⁷.

Nevertheless, the SR still lags behind the countries with the most advanced DE²⁸ (U.S., Norway, Singapore), as well as its EU neighbours (Czech Republic, Austria) in a number of parameters²⁹, such as low level of broadband penetration, particularly in rural areas, relatively low engagement of public administration and companies in the delivery of online services, low penetration of digital technologies, and low level of R&D investments. Slovakia suffers from a considerable deficit of graduates with the necessary ICT skills who are in the highest demand on the labour market based on the employers' interest indicator³⁰.

Digital Agenda Scoreboard 2012



The standard of e-Government in the SR is currently very low. All government institutions and almost all territorial self-government institutions are online and provide information services to the public through their websites. Requests from the public can be handled by institutions electronically only where the relevant legislation does not require documents in paper form. Some institutions also provide online electronic services through web-based applications or an electronic registry for filing documents (e.g. the inland revenue service, customs administration, land registry, the Public Health Authority).

The main problems in the area of computerisation include inadequate preparation of legislation (in particular, specialised procedural laws), insufficient coordination of projects and a lack of ability to implement them, non-compliance with relevant standards and a lack of analyses necessary to implement projects in the area of informatisation, as well as the 2011 – 2012 interruption in the 'informatisation of society' programme, which resulted in a two-year delay.

Public administration is currently undergoing transformation focusing on computerisation of the government and self-government. This process will result in the provision of core electronic services and technical components that constitute the prerequisites for a fundamental change in public administration processes and full organisational interoperability and administrative cooperation at the national and European levels.

Despite the progress made in the introduction of e-Government services and creation of a legislative framework³¹, some barriers at the national and European levels continue to exist, especially in the areas of

²⁶ OECD Factbook 2011: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics - ISBN 978-92-64-11150-9 - OECD 2011

²⁷ Source: Online Chance for Slovakia, BCG, Google, 2012

²⁸ Source: Global Innovation Index 2012, BCG e-intensity 2011

²⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard/slovakia>

³⁰ Interest of employers and university graduates, ARRA and www.profesia.sk

³¹ Act No 305/2013 Coll. on e-Government

semantic, organisational, legislative and technical interoperability.

1.1.2.2.1 Semantic interoperability

Public data, i.e. all information that public authorities in the EU produce, process or purchase, represent one of the key sources of smart growth.

Certain partial results have been achieved at the EU level, creating an implementation framework at the national level³². From the viewpoint of the data domain for the pan-European digital single market architecture, the biggest challenge represents transition to a new paradigm for data storage and management. For this purpose, the key pan-European platform is the “open data” initiative based on the relevant EU Directive³³ and the ISA programme³⁴. The open-data issue will also be addressed by the new Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) which, among other things, will support the implementation of the data (Open Data Digital Service Infrastructure), including the pan-European open data portal, in keeping with the steps taken so far³⁵.

The SR is among countries with the lowest level of openness in terms of availability of public data, including reference data administered in public administration registers³⁶, which are needed for the exercise of public authority. Lacking quality in the current standard and openness of public data is evident from the level of sophistication of e- Government services³⁷ in Slovakia. The problem is that electronic services require the availability of reference registers, which do not exist, and some basic registers (register of legal entities, natural persons, spatial information) are only in the implementation phase under the Operational Programme “Informatisation of Society” (hereinafter “OPIS”) and their availability is envisaged for 2015. Despite the fact that sufficient amount of data is available to public administration in the SR, administration is unable to use them effectively, in particular due to technical and legal reasons.

1.1.2.2.2 Organisational interoperability

According to the hitherto assessment of the progress made in the transposition of single market rules, Slovakia reached a transposition deficit rate of 0.3 %, which places it below the current 1 % target, as well as below the proposed 0.5 % target for the next period (the EU average is a deficit of 0.6 %). In terms of the practical implementation of specific systems and data exchanges in 2011, none of the basic applications in the area of Points of Single Contact (PSC), Your Europe – Citizens (taxes, residence, vehicles)³⁸ were provided in the SR.

Slovakia lags behind in both creating single digital market and in providing useful e-Government services. The maturity of applications and electronic services in Slovakia is documented by the European Commission (hereinafter the “EC”) ³⁹ and United Nations⁴⁰ surveys which show that in 2012 Slovakia ranked 4th worst

³² Adoption of the Directive on the re-use of public sector information, launching of sectorial policy initiatives: Access to environmental information and the INSPIRE Regulation, the action plan for the deployment of intelligent transport systems, open access to scientific information, cultural heritage digitisation policies; implementation of programmes in the field of research, development and innovation focusing on the use of semantic technologies for the harmonisation of services and better use of data at the national and European levels: The Linked Open Data (LOD2), OpenAIRE project and, last but not least, the ISA SEMIC.EU activity

³³ Directive 2013/37/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013, amending Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information

³⁴ Source: Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations (ISA)

³⁵ Adoption of the Directive on the re-use of public sector information, launching of sectorial policy initiatives: Access to environmental information and the INSPIRE Regulation, the action plan for the deployment of intelligent transport systems, open access to scientific information, cultural heritage digitisation policy; implementation of programmes in the field of research, development and innovation focusing on the use of semantic technologies for the harmonisation of services and better use of data at the national and European levels: The Linked Open Data (LOD2), OpenAIRE project and, last but not least, the ISA SEMIC.EU activity

³⁶ Source: The State of Open Data, http://www2012.wwwconference.org/proceedings/nocompanion/wwwwebosci2012_braunschweig.pdf

³⁷ Source: Digital Agenda Scoreboard

³⁸ Source: Making the Single Market deliver, Annual governance check-up 2011

³⁹ Source: Digitizing Public Services in Europe, 9th Benchmark Measurement

⁴⁰ Source: United Nations eGovernment Survey 2012

among EU countries in the evaluation of e-Government maturity, the most lagging (50 % level) areas being online services and telecommunications infrastructure. The SR is at a relatively high level in terms of human capital, which is given, in particular, by the population's above-average digital literacy and demand for electronic services. Public administration, as the source of the regulatory environment and standards and key provider of electronic services, falls far behind the real needs of the economy and the developments in the neighbouring countries. Significant progress in legislation and investment in e-Government in recent years have been slow to translate into more effective public administration and growth of the digital economy.

1.1.2.2.3 Technical interoperability

A predominant characteristic of the technological environment of public administration in the SR is fragmentation and a departmental approach to the development of ICT infrastructure and services, which is reflected in the high cost of IT⁴¹. This situation continues to persist and OPIS projects in their current form aggravate the situation even further. On the other hand, there are tendencies towards shared use of ICT at an interdepartmental level⁴². The 'central licensing agreements' are being concluded in order to make public spending more efficient, make the register of licences more transparent and facilitate the transfer of licences among individual ministries.

"Cloud computing" could be put simply as the storage, processing and use of data on remote computers available over the Internet. At request, users can use an almost unlimited computing capacity, they do not have to make large capital investments to meet their needs and can obtain data anywhere using an Internet connection. Cloud computing has the potential to reduce the cost of information technology (IT) significantly and enable the development of many new services. The adoption of credible cloud-based solutions by contracting authorities could encourage SMEs to adopt these solutions, too.

1.1.2.2.4 Low Internet penetration

Not only in the EU context, but also within the OECD, the SR is one of the countries with the lowest penetration of broadband Internet³³.

All standard⁴³ technologies for the provision of broadband Internet are available in Slovakia, with xDSL having a dominant share (on the retail market) at 39.7 % of the total number of subscriptions, followed by WiFi with 23.6 %. The growth in broadband subscriptions is connected with a boom in the segment of small local providers. Although it confirms growing interest in the broadband access in sparsely populated areas, it is mainly a reflection of the insufficiently developed fixed broadband access infrastructure in these areas⁴⁴.

The main reason behind the low Internet penetration in rural areas and the high share of next-generation networks is the absence of an effective competition in the sector⁴⁵. Rural areas, mountainous areas and economically weak regions, the so-called "white spots", particularly the self-governing regions of Banská Bystrica, Košice and Prešov, remain on the margins of providers' interest. Hence the investments should primarily focus on developing regional networks that allow the connection of these white spots to the developed national backbone networks.

⁴¹According to data from the Ministry of Finance, Government expenditure on ICT in 2009 was as follows: EUR 251.6 million; 2010: EUR 336.8 million; 2011: EUR 327.2 million

⁴²The municipalities data centre project (DCOM) or the DataCentre of the Ministry of Finance could be mentioned as examples

⁴³xDSL, FTTX, fixed wireless broadband access, broadband access via coaxial cable network, mobile broadband access, access via rented circuits, PLC, satellite

⁴⁴ANALYSIS of the relevant wholesale market No. 5, Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the SR, 2012

⁴⁵Decision No 146/OER/2013 of 28 February 2013 of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the SR

1.1.2.2.5 Low engagement of companies in the DE

Compared with the year before, the number of online buyers in 2013 increased by 12 % and is the highest in the Central and Eastern Europe - CEE (37 %), yet accounts for only about 50 % of all Internet users. However, support for the introduction of e-Commerce services, including focused digital marketing, would accelerate the growth in the number of online buyers (transparency, professional online services, warranties, etc.). This is also connected to the support for infrastructure (hardware, software, telecom networks, etc.)

Many companies, being aware of the importance of the Internet, have their own websites and offer online sales or orders (20 % provide B2C online services). However, they remain very passive when it comes to their own online purchases. Only 19.6 % used B2B online services in 2013 and 14 % in 2012, which is the lowest in the EU. The e-Commerce accounted for only 13 % of the SMEs' turnover in 2011. Slovak companies have a huge potential to convert the remaining 50 % of Internet users into online buyers. This will require a more efficient use of the possibilities offered by digital marketing and new technologies, as well as a better quality of e-Commerce services⁴⁶.

1.1.2.2.6 Territorial concentration

The actions involving e-Government will be implemented in the Bratislava settlement centre, which is the seat of the central government bodies responsible for the development of electronic services for citizens and entrepreneurs and the development of e-Government, with the results of these projects available in the entire territory of Slovakia. The actions concerning local governments will focus on settlement centres, settlement core area and development axes. The actions supported by the ERDF (implemented mainly through national projects) concerning the development of broadband Internet will be located in the white and grey spots with insufficient broadband coverage.

The actions supported by the EAFRD focusing on better accessibility, use and quality of ICT in rural areas in order to make them available to all, should be concentrated into centres in other territories, located mainly on development axes according to the CTDS. The actions concerning the development of broadband Internet will be located in the white spots (up to 500 inhabitants) with insufficient broadband coverage.

1.1.2.3 TO3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, of the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)

The evaluation of competitiveness of individual euro area countries⁴⁷ and its development in 1999 – 2010 shows a widening gap in the case of Slovakia between the costs and productivity of the so-called traded (in terms of foreign trade) and non-traded sectors of the economy. This dichotomy is due to the dramatic decline in the systemic competitiveness of the SMEs sector as a consequence of:

- a) Loss of SMEs innovation potential due insufficient cooperation, missing development of skills and a low degree of adoption/introduction of innovations and new trends;
- b) Limited possibilities for SMEs financing, particularly in the small-sized categories (micro- and small enterprises) under the influence of conservative attitudes on the part of traditional commercial lenders (banks) and the absence of alternative forms of financing;
- c) Insufficient motivation of the population to start up business activity and the prevailing perception of 'doing business' as a necessity and not as an opportunity;
- d) Lacking motivation/courage of SMEs to expand lines of business beyond conventional products and services;

⁴⁶ Source: Online Chance for Slovakia, BCG, Google, 2012

⁴⁷ Competitiveness and External Imbalances Within the Euro Area" (Occasional Paper Series, No. 139, December 2012, ECB)

e) Loss of economic activity in a large segment of SMEs under the influence of the global economic downturn, obstacles in the business environment and their slump in the category of micro-enterprises.

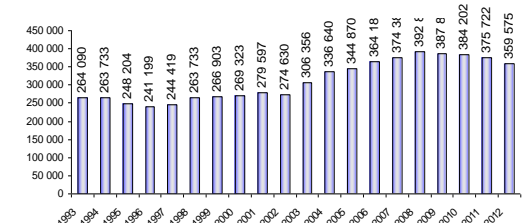
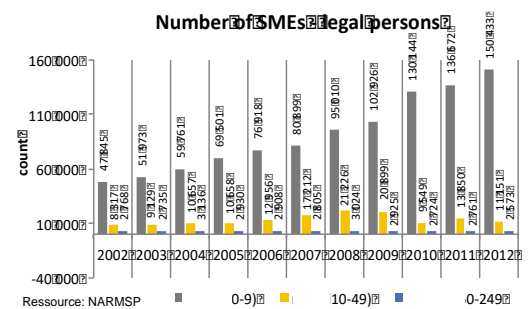
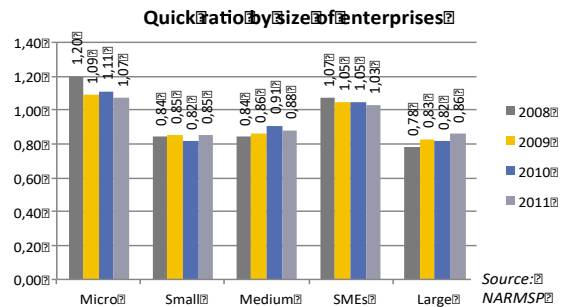
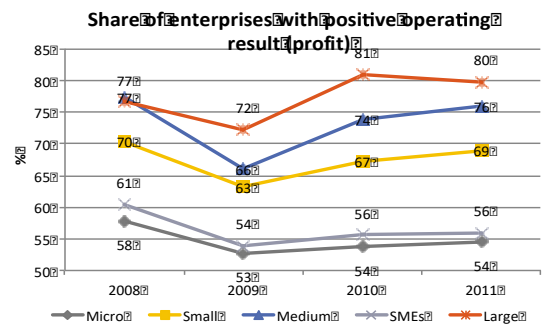
1.1.2.3.1 Insufficient competitiveness of SME business models

Slovak economy is dependent on the economic performance of large multi-national corporations (hereinafter “MNC”) operating in the sectors of export-oriented processing industry. Despite the fact that a large portion of SMEs is successfully integrated in the supply chains of MNCs, many SMEs, particularly in the sectors other than processing industry where most SMEs operate, grapple with numerous problems resulting from the loss of target markets as a consequence of the disruption of organic links to specialised innovation processes and systemically trained human capital. The situation got very complicated in 2008 when, under the influence of the global economic crisis, the economic condition and viability of SMEs deteriorated. As open as Slovakia’s economy is, SMEs find it very difficult to make it on international markets which, in combination with the low absorption capacity of the domestic market, impairs the sustainability of their business and reduces their survival rate. The existing tools for SME support do not seem to be effective enough to underpin their business activities and foster innovation and cooperation with the academic sector.

As a consequence of the external economic impacts and low competitiveness, the profitability of SMEs has been recently declining⁴⁸. Secondary insolvency remains a significant problem in the SR. Taking into account the 2nd grade liquidity indicator⁴⁹, SMEs in 2011⁵⁰ reported a considerable slump in the payment of short-term liabilities.

In addition to the global impacts of the crisis and declining demand, one of the key problems connected with the low competitiveness of SMEs in Slovakia lies in their low innovation activity due to barriers to SME development⁵¹ and low systemic support of SMEs as a consequence of the insufficient application of the SBA principles.

Most beginning SMEs are not aware of the need to innovate in order to remain competitive⁵², which is why



⁴⁸ The average profit among SMEs between 2008 and 2011 declined by almost 1/3. Only 56 % of SMEs (legal persons) report profit; this percentage is even lower in the category of micro-enterprises.

⁴⁹ The ratio between current assets and total short-term assets

⁵⁰ Latest available data

⁵¹ The analyses carried out in January-February 2013 identified the major barriers to SME development in connection with innovation as follows: undercapitalisation of SMEs, high indebtedness, late payments – secondary insolvency, lack of funds for the development/expansion of business activities, very high costs of innovation, development of skills and increase in value added, missing systemic tools for the transfer of know-how between large transnational corporations and their domestic suppliers, high administrative burden, lack of consultancy for beginning entrepreneurs, insufficient support and promotion of entrepreneurship at schools, insufficient support from public programmes, absence of motivation to introduce energy-efficiency and eco-innovation measures, missing systemic support for SME internationalisation.

⁵² Source: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2012, carried out in July-August 2012

many of them leave the market or change their line of business once their products cease to be “new”. The SR belongs to the countries with the above-average numbers of set up and wound up enterprises and, at the same time, to the countries with the lowest survival rate of the newly set up enterprises⁵³. According to a survey, more than 4/5 of companies invested in the research and innovation activities less than 10 % of their annual turnover.⁵⁴

One of the consequences of the isolation of SMEs, not only from the actual R&D but also from other competitive or complementary enterprises, is that Slovakia is lagging behind in the development of innovation clusters. SME competitiveness is also negatively affected by the low quality of graduates needed to fill in the posts in the sectors with high value added and by a mismatch between the supply of qualifications and what the private sector actually requires. The SR is ranked in the metric “Availability of Scientists and Engineers” on the 74th place. There is still unused potential in the area of business internationalisation, with the share of SMEs in foreign trade reaching only 30 % and in trade with countries outside the EU only 20 %⁵⁵.

1.1.2.3.2 Insufficient conditions for entrepreneurship

SMEs are currently affected by the ongoing economic crisis and, in parallel, by changes in the business environment. The available forms of support from public funds usually do not reflect the actual needs of SMEs. This, on the one hand, is causing the deadweight effect which is felt in a number of implemented support measures and, on the other hand, widens the gap in financing and foils the transfer of know-how, competencies and innovation in a large segment of SMEs, particularly in the category of micro-enterprises which make up 96.7 % of all enterprises⁵⁶. Many companies fall from the bigger size categories into the category of micro-enterprises (number of enterprises with over 9 employees between 2008 and 2012 declined by 51 %). Due to these existential problems, SMEs have only a limited room for expansion, introduction of new lines of business, innovation, and the creation of new jobs.

The firms which particularly contribute towards the creation of new jobs are small *debut* enterprises which introduce innovative products and services, mostly on the basis of technologies and creativity, with a potential and ambition to compete on foreign markets⁵⁷. The SMEs which are able to compete internationally emerge from the sectors of high-tech production⁵⁸ and knowledge-intensive services⁵⁹. Among them, SMEs represent 3 % of companies and 0.8 % of sole traders in the manufacturing sector (high-tech sectors) and 35.1 % of companies and 27.1 % of sole trades in the services sector (sectors with knowledge-intensive services). These percentages have remained constant in the past years, with only a slight increase in the area of knowledge-intensive services.

⁵³ According to Eurostat data, 74.9 % of businesses remain active after first year of their incorporation. After the fifth year of incorporation, only 44.4 % of businesses remain active, compared to the EU average of more than 50 %.

⁵⁴ Evaluation of the application of SBA principles, January and February 2013

⁵⁵ Source: Position of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Slovakia's Foreign Trade in 2011, NADSME

⁵⁶ Register of organisations of the Statistical Office of the SR, as of 30 September 2013

⁵⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/performance-review/files/supporting-documents/2012/do-smes-create-more-and-better-jobs_en.pdf

⁵⁸ Include the production of pharmaceutical products and preparation, manufacturing of computer, electronic and optic products and manufacturing of aircrafts, space shuttles and similar products

⁵⁹ Include inland water transport, airborne transport, publishing activities, production of films and video recordings, preparation and publication of sound recordings, activities for radio and television broadcasting, telecommunications, computer programming, consultancy and related services, information services, financial services, insurance, reinsurance and social security (except for mandatory social insurance), ancillary activities in financial and insurance services, legal and accounting services, corporate management, management consultancy, services of architects and engineers, technical testing and analyses, scientific research and development, advertising and market research, other professional, scientific and technical activities, veterinary activities, intermediation of work, security and search services, public administration and defence; mandatory social security, education, healthcare sector, residential care, social work without accommodation, creative, artistic and entertainment activities, activities of libraries, archives, museums and other cultural establishments, gambling and betting activities, sporting, leisure and recreational activities

1.1.2.3.3 Insufficient access to financing

Apart from the insufficient quality of management, the existing tools of support on the basis of direct subsidies have shown to be economically inefficient⁶⁰ with only limited effects. According to a survey, more than a half of SMEs (53 %) consider the possibilities to obtain financing for their business from support programmes as insufficient⁶¹. The management of support is organisationally fragmented across different ministries and various organisations falling under the ambit of the same central government authority⁶². Publicly supported instruments based on a revolving investment principle practically do not exist⁶³.

Compared to the other countries in the region, the availability of capital for the start-up and development of innovative business in the SR is deep below the actual need.

Bank loans, as a dominant form of commercial financing, are used only by 16.5 % of SMEs⁶⁴. The SR has one of the lowest levels of development and venture capital in Europe. Equity investments represent only 0.022 % of GDP; the EU average is 0.31 % of GDP. This means that Slovakia has a potential for about a fivefold increase in equity investments.

The JEREMIE initiative was rolled out only in 2013⁶⁵. According to preliminary estimates and based on the current setup of support instruments, an allocation of EUR 100 million will, in the first round, lead to the additional funding for SMEs in the amount of EUR 306.6 million. According to the market-gap analysis⁶⁶, the annual SMEs absorption potential for the loan instrument implemented in Slovakia represents EUR 865 million.

Practical experience from the already implemented programmes indicates that for SMEs, particularly in the initial stages of their existence when they lack sufficient practical experience, apart from financing itself the SMEs need support in the form of specialised advisory and consulting services. In 2001 – 2008, 16 business and technological incubators and one training incubator (so-called 'virtual') were built in various regions of Slovakia from EU funds, national budget and other sources of funding. Since the financing of their operating costs has stopped, most incubators are no longer able to provide support services for beginning enterprises. A model which appears more suitable entails the creation of one-stop-shop type of centres which will provide enterprises with combined services (information, consulting, financing, contacts, premises, equipment, administrative and organisational services) designed for broad business community, with particular focus on long-term support for both the beginning and existing SMEs. The centres will cooperate with partners in the academic sector, using the existing infrastructure (e.g., scientific-technological parks, universities, the SAS and research organisations, etc.). The objective is to create synergies among the business, academic and R&D sectors.⁶⁷ The centres will operate in partnership with regional institutions (e.g. regional governments, etc.). In contrast to the partially built incubators which focus on supporting a narrowly defined group of incubator companies, the centres (and within them the incubators) will exist as part of the one-stop-shop concept within a single interconnected structure. This

⁶⁰ Position of the Commission Services on the development of the Partnership Agreement and programmes in Slovakia for the period 2014 – 2020

⁶¹ Almost two thirds (63 %) of entrepreneurs responded that they had neither applied nor were they interested to use public support programmes in the future. Approximately 9 out of 10 (89 %) entrepreneurs did not even attempt to obtain funds from support programmes for the implementation of their innovation activities.

⁶² For example, the Ministry of Economy has three agencies explicitly dealing with support to SMEs: NADSME, Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency and SARIO. Even though their coordination, as well as coordination with other agencies for SME support operating under other ministries (e.g. Ministry of Education and its agencies APVV and ASFEU) is not very active, the coordination of their activities has recently largely improved in the phase of attracting investments.

⁶³ The only exception being the Innovation and Technologies Fund launched recently by the NADSME

⁶⁴ Share in the total number of SMEs keeping double-entry accounting, data for 2011 (Source: Register of Financial Statements)

⁶⁵ JEREMIE - Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises

⁶⁶ Source: NADSME – Market Gap Analysis performed in Q4/2012

⁶⁷ The term “research institutions” encompasses all research institutions outside state-aid schemes (includes public and state-owned research institutions, universities, non-profit/non-government research and development organisations), and the term “academic institutions” includes universities and the SAS.

concept represents a more comprehensive and economically more sustainable model which has the ambition to cater for the complex needs of SME development in Slovakia, with particular emphasis on innovative SMEs⁶⁸.

1.1.2.3.3.1 Low competitiveness of agriculture

Agriculture is one of the riskiest production sectors. The high degree of risk is due to the biological nature of primary production, as well as the climate change impact, increased volatility of precipitations, higher frequency of droughts and torrential rains, including increased occurrence of natural disasters. The risks in agriculture are positively influenced by the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (“CAP”) which, in spite of supporting liberalisation of global trade, represents a significant stabilising factor in relation to both the volatility of global prices of agricultural commodities and the exposure of farmers to competition.

Slovak agriculture is characterised by a dual production structure – 82 % of holdings (mostly family-type of farms) farm 5 % of agricultural land, while the remaining 18 % of holdings farm 95 % of land. The farm structure is characterised by large corporations (cooperatives and agricultural holdings)⁶⁹.

The analysis performed in between two farm censuses (SO SR – for the years 2001 and 2010) confirmed the still-present spatial dispersion of agricultural holdings and a growing importance of small family farms (mainly in the less productive areas of Slovakia) which have a considerable potential, particularly when it comes to lower production costs. Low investment activity and insufficient support for investments in these small holdings are on the negative side of the coin.

The structural indicators of Slovak agricultural sector differ considerably from most EU Member States. The average size of the agricultural holding in the SR is several times higher than in the most EU Member States (1215 ha – in the case of holdings with more than 100ha⁷⁰). The economically significant segment of the agricultural sector in Slovakia is of a large-scale nature, most farming land is rented (more than 90 % of all used agricultural land was rented) and diversification of activities outside the sector is relatively low. The total agricultural output in Slovakia has for long been stagnating and lagging behind. This is reflected in low added value, in low revenues per hectare of agricultural land, and in orientation of production towards low-value-added commodities (cereals, oil seeds). The structure of production is gradually changing and the share of animal production in total agricultural production is declining considerably. The structure of plant production is also changing; the size of land under labour-intensive crops, which demand quality work, process management and marketing (vegetables, fruit, hop), is decreasing.⁷¹ The imbalances between individual components of the supply chain and the insufficient integration of primary producers into the food vertical represent a serious problem. These facts are reflected in price disparities, agricultural production (SK compared to EU-27) and in the structure of agricultural foreign trade. The share of higher value-added products in total agricultural exports continues to decline while the share of basic agricultural raw material with low added value is rising⁷². While in 2002 agricultural raw materials accounted for only about 25.0 % of total exports in value terms, their share in 2011 reached 34.8 %.

Given the current situation in the agricultural sector, it is necessary to support the production of labour-intensive commodities with higher value added and, at the same time, enhance Slovakia’s food self-

⁶⁸ The system of incubators’ development will be based on a uniform concept reflecting the needs and the sectoral orientation of the future national network of incubators in all areas.

⁶⁹ In 2010, the agricultural sector reported 24,463 holdings, of which 16,179 were non-registered natural persons, 584 cooperatives, 6,008 registered natural persons (self-employed farmers) and the rest were legal persons. Average farm size increased from 28.1 ha of agricultural land in 2007 to 77.5 ha. The increase is attributable, in particular, to a 20-percent reduction in the number of non-registered natural persons (production for their own consumption), which represent a marginal form of land farming.

⁷⁰ Source: MARD SR – Research Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics, Information Newsletters

⁷¹ The pre-2011 development, compared with the reference year of 2002, reflected a decline in vegetable growing areas by 9.65 %. The areas of orchards shrink annually by 250 -300 ha. Compared to 2002, the total area of hops declined by 23.5 %.

⁷² In the category of commodities belonging to the verticals of meat, milk, cereals and oil seeds, between 2002 and 2012 Slovakia was internationally competitive only in live beef cattle, sheep meat, liquid milk, bird eggs, wheat, barley, wheat flour, rape and sunflower.

sufficiency. Specialised plant production (growing of fruit, vegetables, wine) and animal production (including aquaculture) has a potential of generating new jobs in rural areas also for the less qualified labour. It is necessary to strengthen the integration of primary production into the food chain, improve the quality of processing, support the sale of domestic agricultural products and foodstuffs, and develop the potential of small agricultural holdings. The need to support these activities is in line with the objectives of Commission Communication COM(2012)60 concerning the development of organic farming.

One of the important factors affecting the profitability of agricultural production is the insufficient/excessive precipitation and weather extremes which come as a consequence of the climate change. The use of irrigation has a direct impact on the competitiveness of the primary agricultural production due to the intensification effect. However, the use of irrigation has been declining in recent years and the consumption of irrigation water spans from 6 to 14 million m³, even though Slovakia's hydrological deficits in the past easily consumed up to 300 million m³ per year. On the other hand, the climate change brings about, more frequently than ever before, floods and waterlogged land, destroying a part of the harvest and impairing the quality of soil. The measures taken to ensure regulated drainage of the excessive water from agricultural soil have a positive impact on the prevention of damages caused by the extremes in precipitation.

The agricultural sector is dominated by enterprises with older management, between 45 and 64 years of age (55.31 %), and the agricultural population as a whole have begun to age considerably. The deteriorating age structure has a significant impact on the stagnation or decline in the capacity of the sector to absorb the latest know-how and innovate. The number of workers with primary education has plummeted and the share of qualified labour increased⁷³. Specialised human resources (advisors) are essential; it is therefore necessary to support, in a systemic manner, the training and certification of advisors, develop high-quality and elaborate content of advisory and training, including specialised advisory for new farmers.

One of the weaknesses of the agricultural sector is the insufficiently developed land market due to the historically given extreme fragmentation of land ownership⁷⁴. The consolidation of land ownership represents the main and the only comprehensive instrument to address the problem of fragmentation. The positive effects of the already completed land consolidation projects include, in particular, significant reduction in the fragmentation of land ownership with consolidated land plots becoming effectively tradable on the land market; consolidated land plots provide a basis for independent farming and/or establishment and development of small farms, are more easily accessible from public or communal roads, and facilitate the implementation of various landscape intervention measures of environmental, anti-flood and anti-erosion nature.

1.1.2.3.4 Low competitiveness of food industry

Food industry is a downstream sector to animal production (including aquaculture) and plant production, which increases value added, contributes towards the regional creation of direct and knock-on jobs, and has a direct link to food self-sufficiency.

Food industry is not competitive in a number of production branches⁷⁵. It suffers from insufficient specialisation and innovation, low cooperation and a lack of transparency within the agrarian sector; some of its production branches have not yet gone through the process of restructuring. At the same time, the

⁷³ In 1989, one in two agricultural workers was not qualified; in 2011, only one in ten agricultural workers was not qualified.

⁷⁴ From the total number of 3,559 cadastral areas in Slovakia, the consolidation of land titles has not started in 3,141. The average number of owners per parcel before land title consolidation is 10.45 and will drop to 5 with consolidation completed. In terms of access to land parcels, 22 % of land parcels are accessible before the land title consolidation, compared to 100 % after consolidation, which is an increase by 78 %.

⁷⁵ The costs of procuring raw materials from domestic production exceed revenues from the sale of produced foodstuffs on domestic and foreign markets. Also, it is unable to offset the shortfall in revenues of primary producers caused by lower support merely through price for production, which is, moreover, relatively highly volatile. In a number of branches, the sector is confronted with the resale of Slovak agricultural products, which often forces food processors to buy raw materials abroad.

industry has considerable overcapacities. In the category of main products, less than 60 % of production capacities are used⁷⁶. Food production has been stagnating⁷⁷ since 2002 and the share of Slovak products in retail networks declined substantially⁷⁸. One of the reasons is the pressure exerted on processors to reduce their prices, as well as the rising imports of competing foodstuffs. The share of substitutable commodities in the total agricultural import continues to increase. In 2010, households spent 51.6 % of their budgets on imported products which can also be produced in Slovakia.

1.1.2.3.5 Low competitiveness of aquaculture and fish processing

Most of the 81 registered enterprises active in freshwater aquaculture are SMEs and focus on the production of marketable fish (mainly carp and trout), which is susceptible to seasonal demand. The current capacities for the processing of the products of fishing and aquaculture are, in view of the quantity of fish supply and demand, sufficient. In 2011, the utilisation of processing capacities in Slovakia reached 30 % for freshwater fish processing and 21 % for marine fish processing⁷⁹. The barriers to the potential growth of the fisheries sector include poor technical condition of aquacultural facilities with content of sediments, low rates or return on investment, low level of innovation, narrow product line and a low fish consumption per capita in Slovakia⁸⁰. The main challenge for the fishery sector in Slovakia is to cover the entire supply chain by innovative products and environment-friendly production processes which are able to compete with cheap imports from third countries.

1.1.2.3.6 Territorial concentration

Although the SME-type of business is suitable practically for all territorial geographic units, the activities for SME development should be supported in a differentiated manner with the objective of ensuring their most efficient and broadest possible application. The ERDF actions comprising investments in entrepreneurship including the provision of start-up capital, guarantees and mezzanine financing, investment in commercial exploitation of new ideas and research results should be concentrated primarily into first- and second-level centres, including the cities of Bratislava and Košice, the first- and second-level settlement areas, as well as in centres in other territories, located mainly on development access according to the CTDS. These are the primary areas for the actions concerning the setting up of businesses and the provision of business advisory services, in particular in the areas of business start-up and enhancement of business skills, development of new business models, including new value chains and marketing organisation, in particular to facilitate internationalisation and development of SMEs in emerging areas linked to European and regional challenges.

The key measures for the EAFRD include the restructuring of farms, diversification of agricultural production and support for agri-food production with higher added value, including local production and short supply chains, innovation in the area of processing and placement of high-quality products on the market. Furthermore the generational renewal in the agricultural sector is included, especially through business start-up aid for young farmers, support for small agricultural holdings, integration of primary producers into the food chain, farm risk management through a range of tools. The key EMFF measures include business development, business skills and entrepreneurship in fisheries and aquaculture in order to enhance their competitiveness, viability and sustainability. These measures also concern the introduction or development of new or improved products, processes, technologies and management and organisation systems across all levels of the supply chain in the fishery and aquaculture sectors, and improvement of

⁷⁶ Information on the Utilisation of Food Industry Capacities in 2011 <http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-158762?prefixFile=m>

⁷⁷ Industrial production index (production of foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco products) spans from 93.7 (2003) to 106.5 (2011)

⁷⁸ The share of Slovak poultry industry products fell by more than 50 p.p. and the share of the meat and dairy industry products fell by about 40 p.p. The share of Slovak milling and fat-processing industries fell by one third.

⁷⁹ Source: Draft Operational Programme: Fisheries SR 2014 - 2020

⁸⁰ Source: Statistical Office of the SR; in 2011, consumption of fish per capita reached 4.7 kg/year

market organisation in the fishery and aquaculture sectors. These measures need to be applied in the entire territory of the SR.

1.1.3 Infrastructure for economic growth and employment

The SR has an incomplete and technically obsolete quality infrastructure of insufficient quality, which has negative impacts on the economy, on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and on the insufficient increase of energy efficiency/share of renewable sources. It represents a barrier to mobility and impairs the attractiveness of the territory. The objective is to contribute towards the homogenisation of the Trans-European Transport Networks (hereinafter “TEN-T”), smooth functioning of the internal market and fostering the economic, social and territorial cohesion. For this reason, the problems existing in the areas outlined below need to be addressed in the following period:

- removing key bottlenecks in the priority sections of transport network;
- ensuring accessible, high-quality and maintainable network infrastructure in the whole territory of Slovakia.

1.1.3.1 TO7: Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

The identification of barriers to the development of public transport services and the measures for their elimination is based on detailed sectoral analyses of individual transport modes, on the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020⁸¹, Strategy for the Development of Passenger and Non-motorised Transport in Slovakia until 2020⁸² and Strategic Plan for the Maintenance of the 2nd and 3rd Class Roads. The key problems which need to be eliminated in the forthcoming period include: lack of quality road infrastructure, low quality of the railway transport infrastructure, low quality of infrastructure – intermodal transport terminals, low quality of the inland water transport infrastructure, inefficient public transport services, non-functioning integrated transport, and non-developed infrastructure for non-motorised transport. Under TO7, cumulative investments from the Cohesion Fund and the CEF instrument will focus primarily on sustainable transport (mainly railways and rail-based transport). Within the TEN-T network, it is essential to continue building the missing sections of motorways and expressways, upgrading the railway corridors and supporting the development of inland waterway transport. Priority will be given particularly to those sections which constitute a part of the TEN-T core network and those that will improve the interconnection of Slovakia’s transport network with the networks of the neighbouring countries. Specific attention also needs to be paid to the modernisation of customs border crossing⁸² in order to enhance the permeability of the flows of goods through customs border crossings on the external EU border with Ukraine. The sustainability of investments, i.e. operability of the transport infrastructure and the related structures, needs to be ensured through the adoption of systemic changes and development of an optimal and realistic plan for the financing of cyclical maintenance and repair. Slovakia will be actively seeking funds to cover the adequate maintenance and repair of the transport infrastructure, especially through projects co-financed from ESI Funds.

1.1.3.1.1 Inaccessible high-quality road infrastructure

The progress achieved in the development of road infrastructure lags behind the dynamics of economic development and the growing demand for transport services. On most of the routes, including the TEN-T, the growing demand for mobility is satisfied predominately through transport on 1st class roads, many of which no longer meet the capacity, safety and, as a consequence of constant overloading, also quality requirements. The core part of the road network, the 1st class roads (3,312 km), carries almost 44 % of all

⁸¹ Source: <http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132>

⁸² Pursuant to the Strategy for Modernisation of Customs Border Crossings and Customs Capacity Building for 2014 – 2020

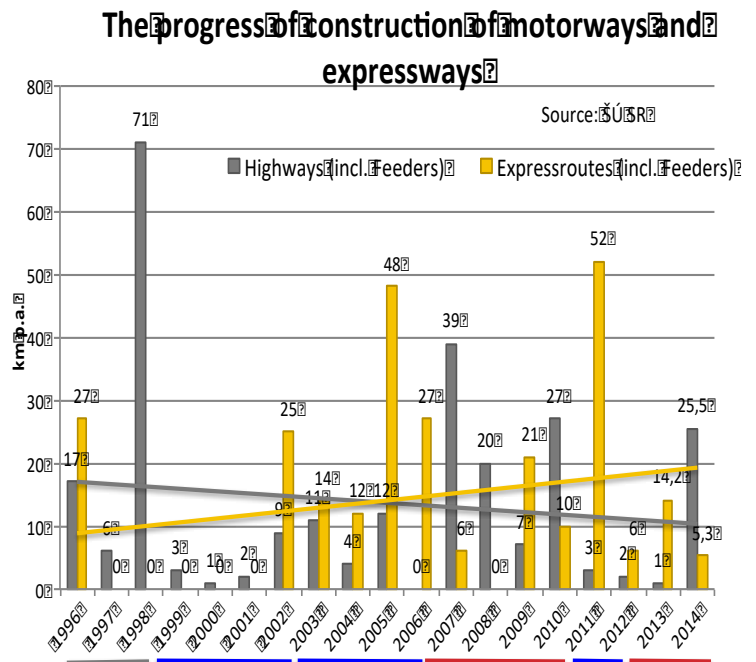
transport traffic. This is approximately 21 % more than traffic on motorways (419 km + 13 km motorway feeders) and expressways (234 km + 14 km expressway feeders). The 2nd class (3,637 km) and 3rd class (10,415 km) roads carry 20 % and 13 % transport traffic, respectively⁸³.

The pace of the motorway and expressway construction has been slow in the long-term period with a view to Slovakia's economic needs⁸⁴ and its international commitments. The problem with the construction of motorways and expressways lies in the lack of construction continuity and its high susceptibility to political cycles⁸⁵, insufficient project preparation, lengthy preparatory process due to land ownership clearance requirements, incomplete project documentation, delays in decisions issued under the Building Code, and insufficient financial coverage⁸⁶. The deadlines for the construction of individual sections are currently delayed due to lengthy processes of public procurement and problems with settling land ownership titles.

The limited funds, earmarked for 1st class roads, are mostly spent to eliminate critical bottlenecks, reconstruct bridges in serious disrepair, remove landslides, remedy damages caused by flooding and, to a very limited degree, also for comprehensive rehabilitation of road surfaces, homogenisation of routes and for the planned elimination of frequent accident spots⁸⁷. Given the absence of a continuous maintenance cycle, only the sections in the worst state of disrepair are fixed; their year-on-year increase is higher than the length of rehabilitated road sections. Unless the system of financing for the maintenance and repair of 1st class roads changes, almost 70 % of roads will be in inadequate condition by 2017.

Given the length of the road network⁸⁸, the self-governing regions as owners and managers of the 2nd and 3rd class roads do not have sufficient funds to provide for their upgrading, maintenance and development; as a consequence, these roads have been in inadequate structural and technical condition. This particularly affects the roads that fulfil the function of core road infrastructure (i.e., 1st class roads), interconnections of the secondary and tertiary knots with direct connection to the road infrastructure of the TEN-T network. The quality of the 2nd and 3rd class roads has an immediate impact on the level of services of the suburban and urban bus transport which, in many cases, represents the only transport option for many groups of the population, particularly those commuting to work, schools, authorities, healthcare facilities and the like.

The road network is not sufficiently equipped with traffic-monitoring technologies and smart transport



⁸³ Data from the latest national census of road transport, which is done once every five years. The latest census took place in 2010; the next one is coming up in 2015. Slovak Road Administration, <http://www.cdb.sk/sk/Vystupy-CDB/Statisticke-prehlady/Dizky-cestnych-komunikacii.alej>

⁸⁴ Expected Transport Development by 2020 – a study by VÚD a.s. Žilina, September 2007

⁸⁵ Chart. Pace of Motorway and Expressway Construction

⁸⁶ Source: Strategy of Transport Development in Slovakia until 2020

⁸⁷ One of the contributions towards reducing road accidents is Directive 2008/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on Road Infrastructure Safety Management. In line with this Directive, Slovakia adopted procedures which should significantly improve the safety of road infrastructure (cf. Act No. 249/2011 on Road Safety Management, as amended, and Decree No. 251/2011 laying down details concerning the management of road infrastructure and Decree No. 135/2012 laying down details concerning the training, testing and performance of the function of road safety auditors and on the listing in the register of road safety auditors and on the listing in the register of training institutions accredited for road safety management training)

⁸⁸ In 2012, the length of 2nd Class roads reached 3,637 km and 3rd Class roads 10,415 km

management systems designed to increase the safety and smoothness of the traffic and make the utilisation of road infrastructure more efficient.

1.1.3.1.2 Low quality of rail transport infrastructure

The technical condition of most infrastructural facilities is unsatisfactory, mainly due to chronic underfunding; as a consequence, standard maintenance keeps on being postponed and the future cost of restoring sustainable condition continue to rise.

The total construction length of railway lines reaches 3,631 km, of which under 44 % are electrified (1,586 km). The construction length of rails is 6,895 km. The Railways of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter "ŽSR") manages more than 3,600 buildings related to railway operation. The highest investment priority is to upgrade those railway lines which are included in Pan-European Corridors number IV, V and VI, which are a part of the "TEN-T" so that they meet the AGC, AGTC parameters⁸⁹, and ensure the interoperability of railway lines.

The currently implemented investment programme covers less than 5 % of the construction length of the railway lines in operation. Since the establishment of independent Slovakia, all other modernisation efforts have covered less than additional 10 % of railway lines⁹⁰. The unsuitable condition of railway infrastructure, with numerous temporary track-speed restrictions, the high number of unprotected railroad crossings, persisting problems with electromagnetic compatibility, inflexible organisation of operations and unsuitable condition of railway stations, prevents the railway transport from effectively competing on the transport market.

The upgrading of the rail infrastructure and rolling stock is determined by the needs of the market (service on individual railway sections, utilisation of line capacities, transport flows). The lines making up the prospective railway system of the SR are identified in the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020. Investment activities focusing on the modernisation of the railway infrastructure and rolling stock, as well as the legislative-organisation changes, e.g. reduction in the fee for the use of the rail transport road in effect as of 1 January 2011, focus on enhancing the competitiveness of rail transport and belong among the priorities of financing in the rail transport financing. The interventions in railway transport will also focus on introducing the ERTMS system aimed at achieving fully interoperable railway system and removing the existing technical barriers, ensuring full utilisation of the technical parameters of railway lines and, ultimately, making the railway transport more competitive.

1.1.3.1.3 Low quality of inland water transport infrastructure

Inland water transport is operated on the Danube river (marked as E-80 according to AGN agreement), which is a part of the core network TEN-T Rhine-Danube. This river route will provide for connection to the ports in the North and Black Seas and connection to the network of West-European river routes.

The low competitiveness of the inland water transport is due, among other things, to the low number of navigable river flows in the Slovak territory and the limited navigability of the Danube allowing for an average vessel draught of 190 cm for 60 % of the year-round navigation operation.

In order to improve the navigability of water flows, it is necessary to improve the navigation parameters of water routes in the Slovak section of Danube SAP – Štúrovo, in the section between Bratislava and the mouth of the Morava river, and improve the operational reliability of the lock chambers at the Gabčíkovo dam. In the medium- to long-term horizon, the Rhine – Danube core network corridor will have to provide

⁸⁹ European Agreement on Main European Railway Lines, European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations

⁹⁰ Including, in particular, the electrification of the sections Šurany - Zvolen – Banská Bystrica, Čadca – Skalité – Zwardoň and Prešov – Plaveč, restoration of the Kittsee and Lupkóv border crossings, modernisation of the stations of Bratislava -Petržalka and Čadca, construction of a container terminal in Dobra pri Čiernej nad Tisou, and installation of a remote control system on certain important local rail lines.

for the navigation of vessels with a draught of at least 250 cm all year round by implementing appropriate measures of efficient maintenance of the navigation route. These measures should also contribute towards minimising the climate change impacts and the related negative phenomena (floods). Feasibility studies will be prepared for the purposes of inland waterway transport activities. Further activities, such as the preparation of detailed project documentation, will only be possible subject to compliance with the relevant EU legislation, mainly the Habitats Directive and the Framework Water Directive, provided that the analysis of available options identifies an environmentally suitable solution.

The completion of the infrastructure of waterways and ports will be accompanied by the introduction of new technologies for the management of shipping and port operations. Introduction of the River Information Systems (hereinafter "RIS") will enhance the utilisation of infrastructure capacities, optimise the use of existing infrastructures, increase the safety and reduce negative impacts on the environment.

1.1.3.1.4 Low quality of intermodal transport infrastructure

The intermodal transport in the SR has the highest potential for development in the road-rail system. The highest number of terminals is located in Western Slovakia. The terminals in operation are: Bratislava – Central Freight Transport Station, Bratislava Pálenisko, Dunajská Streda and Sládkovičovo. In Eastern Slovakia, the terminals are attached to the railway stations of Košice, Veľká Ida and Dobrá pri Čiernej nad Tisou. In other parts of the SR, the only operational terminal is in Žilina, with the construction of another one in its vicinity under planning. There is currently no intermodal terminal in the central part of Slovakia. Seven of the existing terminals are bimodal (road-rail) and only one terminal, Pálenisko, is trimodal (road-rail-inland waterway). The SR completely misses a segment of continental combined transport.

The priority in the development of intermodal transport infrastructure is to develop the core network of public terminals in line with the parameters of the AGTC Agreement. Most terminals are obsolete in structural and technological terms and do not meet all AGTS requirements, particularly as regards the minimum siding length⁹¹ and the handling equipment for the transfer or loading units. None of the existing terminals, currently run solely by private combined-transport operators, provides non-discriminatory access to terminal services in line with the conditions of the EU law.

1.1.3.1.5 Inefficient services in public passenger transport and non-functioning integrated transport

The absence of functional integrated transport systems (hereinafter "ITS") represents the most significant weakness of the public passenger transport in the SR. The mutual coherence and coordination between individual modes of transport is not ensured. Also, there are absenting high-quality local public transport schemes with traffic and fare integration of all municipal and regional public passenger transport sub-systems.

Rail transport is on a slow but steady decline in the provision of transport services; however, due to high fixed costs of rail transportation, the overall costs are not dropping⁹².

Bus transport sector suffers from unsuitable organisation, poor condition of bus stops and stations, insufficient range of additional services and the absence of infrastructure. On the other hand, upgraded vehicle fleet is one of the strengths of several regions.

As regards urban public transport, trams are operated in two cities, Bratislava and Košice. Trolleybuses are operated in Bratislava, Košice, Prešov, Žilina and Banská Bystrica, with bus transport covering the remaining

⁹¹ Many terminals are equipped only with lines of up to 300 metres. It means that block trains must be divided and each part of the train then has to be reloaded separately, which results in non-productive additional loading operations.

⁹² 974 trains, i.e. 56 %, have occupancy rates below 50 % of the maximum capacity. Occupancy rates below 25 % apply to 388 trains, about one quarter of all trains. 102 trains are utilised at less than one tenth of their capacity. 169 trains (9.8 %) have occupancy rates exceeding 80 % of their capacity and only 53 trains (3 %) are considered fully utilised, with average occupancy rates above 100 % of the maximum capacity Source: INESS Policy Note 4/2012

services. The most significant problems faced by urban public transport include insufficient funding of urban transport companies and the ensuing poor condition of rails and overhead lines for trolleybuses, traction substations, obsolete vehicle fleet, insufficient share of low floor vehicles, insufficient quality standards and transport schemes and the absence of lanes restricted to urban public transport and intelligent transport systems. Due to high PM and NOx emissions, the obsolescence of public transport busses plays its role in unsatisfactory quality of the air, in particular in cities with air quality management.

At the local government level, Slovakia is preparing transport master plans of the most important urban agglomerations to ensure the greening and sustainability of urban transport. In preparing the transport master plans, the focus will also be on linking sustainable urban mobility plans with the existing air quality and noise programmes and plans⁹³.

1.1.3.1.6 Non-motorised transport

So far, non-motorised modes of transportation, such as bicycle and pedestrian transport, received little attention in the SR. Based on the National Strategy for the Development of Cycle Transport and Cycle Tourism in the Slovak Republic⁹⁴, the support for the development of this type of transport is necessary in particular due to economic, environmental, health and social reasons. Even though cycle tourism routes exceed 10,000 kilometres in length – utilising, for the most part, the existing road network – the use of bicycles for regular transport is far from reaching its potential. The length of cycle routes in municipalities is insufficient, accounting for only several kilometres (or several tens of kilometres), and the individual routes are often fragmented. In non-motorised transport, the priority will be given to support for the construction of cycle routes and supplementary infrastructure to promote a wider use of non-motorised transport in urban areas, support for ensuring intermodality (interconnection of PPT, motorised private transport and cycle transport) in transport hubs (Park&Ride facilities, shelters for bicycles), support for constructing the elements and zones for alleviating the traffic, as well as separating motorised transport from non-motorised transport in a safe manner, particularly in built-up and non built-up areas, with a focus on roads with a high proportion of vulnerable road users.

1.1.3.1.7 Territorial concentration

The implementation of activities for the development of sustainable transport is territorially concentrated into several spatial geographical units depending on their significance and functionality. The objective is to build infrastructure transport systems with their operation optimised for the relevant functional units and contributing to sustainable urban development. The principles for the allocation of funds and the implementation of integrated activities of sustainable urban development will be respected in the basic national spatial planning policies (see also chapter 3.1.3). Projects and solutions with a decisive and systemic impact on the functioning of PPT will be supported from the EU's Cohesion Fund, with relevant measures being implemented in the entire territory of the SR. Urban functional areas, settlement centres of the 1st and 2nd group, suburban zones of the first-level settlement core areas and, based on local circumstances, in the territories of the first-level and second-level settlement core areas have the best prerequisites for the absorption of supported ERDF investments on measures into integrated, sustainable and available urban mobility in cities, urban regions and metropolitan areas. Conducted measures will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in particular through sustainable urban transport plans, including

⁹³ Slovakia is preparing a harmonising document which will address horizontal policies in the areas of, for instance, agriculture, transport, energy and the environment

⁹⁴ In accordance with the document entitled "National Strategy for the Development of Cycle Transport and Cycle Tourism in the Slovak Republic", approved by Government Resolution No 223/2013 of 7 May 2013

<http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=22396> and the document entitled "Permanent financial mechanism for the implementation of the National Strategy for the Development of Cycle Transport and Cycle Tourism in the Slovak Republic" approved by Government Resolution No. 27/2014 of 15 January 2014 <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23109>

simplified use of public transport. A working group will be established in order to ensure synergies and complementarity between the EU funds. One of its key tasks will be to harmonise the agendas of the respective programmes in terms of their content and time schedule⁹⁵. Some of the activities supported from the ERDF will be implemented in the territory of urban functional areas defined for the sustainable urban development measures through integrated territorial investments.

The CF measures will be implemented in the entire territory of the SR. Urban functional areas, settlement centres of the 1st and 2nd group, suburban zones of the first-level settlement core areas and, based on local circumstances, in the territories of the first-level and second-level settlement core areas have the best prerequisites for the absorption of supported ERDF investments on measures into integrated, sustainable and available urban mobility in cities, urban regions and metropolitan. Conducted measures will help reducing greenhouse gas emissions, in particular through sustainable urban transport plans, including simplified use of public transport.

1.1.4 Human capital growth and improved labour market participation

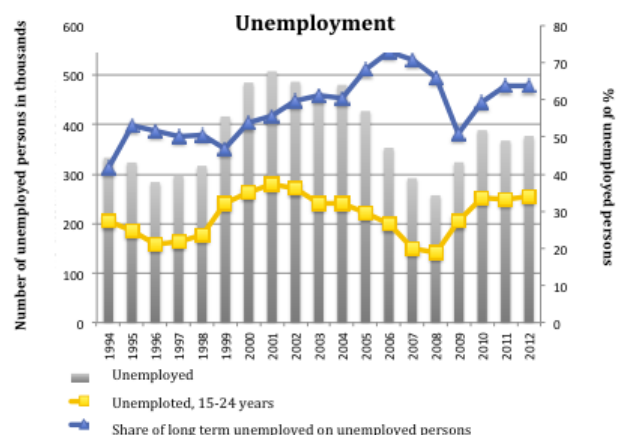
Due to the economic crisis, the problems of unemployment, poverty, social exclusion or overall deterioration in the standard of living of the Slovak population are continuously worsening. People with insufficient skills and qualifications represent the most vulnerable group in the labour market and pose the biggest obstacle to sustainable development of the SR. The quality of training and education is not on par with actual labour market needs and falls short of producing skilled workforce, such that would allow students to land a job immediately after graduating from school.

The key challenges for Slovakia in the years ahead are as follows: restructuring the education system with a view to increasing employment and labour mobility, activating people at risk of poverty and social exclusion to ensure their inclusion, de-institutionalisation of social services, as well as social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, support for active and healthy ageing including long-term care⁹⁶, and integration of marginalised Roma communities (MRC). Furthermore, care for children below three years (i.e., reconciliation of work and family life) and the availability of early-childhood education represent another challenge.

1.1.4.1 TO8: Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility

Employment and labour mobility are marked by strong regional, social, cultural and generational specificities which have been deeply entrenched in society already since the period preceding 1989.

As far as huge regional disparities in unemployment, long-term unemployment and poverty rate are concerned, the development and functioning of a socially oriented economy should be encouraged (not only by the government). At present, there are large groups of the population which are literally cut off from the labour market, and this unfavourable trend will likely to continue in the future without the involvement of communities and the development of an inclusive market⁹⁷. It is necessary to continue the social dialogue activities in making decisions on



⁹⁵ For the purposes of the PA SR, the term “programme” covers all operational programmes of the SR, including the Rural Development Programme of the SR

⁹⁶ The National Active Ageing Plan for 2014 – 2020, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

⁹⁷ Source: <http://www.iz.sk/sk/projekty/inkluzivny-rast>

solutions to the current economic and social problems of society and the building of administrative capacities in the areas of social dialogue, business environment and employment support.

The key problems of the labour market which are to be faced by Slovakia in the years ahead include: high unemployment rate and low employment rate (in particular as regards women, older and low-skilled workers), long-term unemployment rate, youth unemployment, ineffective active labour market policy and low domestic labour mobility.

It is necessary to strengthen the role of agriculture in rural employment by preserving/enlarging the sector with higher demand on the volume and quality of human labour. At the same time, it is also necessary to encourage investment in non-agricultural activities in rural areas and diversification of agriculture, forestry and aquaculture enterprises.

1.1.4.1.1 High unemployment rate and low employment rate

Imbalances in Slovakia's labour market manifest themselves through the job vacancy rate, which is below the EU average. In 2012, there were only eight vacancies per 1,000 jobs on average in Slovakia. The EU average was 15 vacancies, which means that the job vacancy rate was 1.5 %⁹⁸ in 2012.

As for people aged 20 to 64, employment level is also below the EU average and has been hovering around 65.0 % for the past few years. Slovakia's national target under the Europe 2020 Strategy is to raise employment to 72 %. The employment rate of older people (aged 55 to 64) and the employment rate of women aged 20 to 64⁹⁹ are also below the EU average. The employability of older people is affected by several factors, such as insufficient access to lifelong learning or the absence of an education consultancy system for employed adults, which specifically applies to older people. The employment rate of low-skilled workers (ISCED 0-2) in Slovakia (29.5 % in 2012) is the lowest in the EU. In 2012 it was only at 57 % of the level seen in the EU¹⁰⁰. In terms of employment, significant differences between men and women are influenced by the impact of parenthood because children aged 6 years and less considerably reduce the employment rate of women, but their impact on the employment rate of men is minimal (the employment rate of women aged 25-49 with a child below 6 years of age is lower than 40 %, whereas the employment rate of men in the same age category and at the same stage of parenthood is more than 83 %). Insufficient care services for children are also contributing to the growing unemployment and weaker economic independence of women. The availability of kindergartens have been decreasing every year since 2006 and the use of childcare facilities for children below 3 years of age is among the lowest in the EU.

In 2012, Slovakia's unemployment rate (14 %) was the sixth highest and the long-term unemployment rate (9.4 %) was the fourth highest in the EU.¹⁰¹ The inactivity rate of young people¹⁰² was 13.8 % in 2012, which was slightly above the EU average (13.1 %), however, when compared with the V4 countries, it was less than the rate seen in Hungary (14.7 %) and more than that of Poland (11.8 %) and the Czech Republic (8.9 %)¹⁰³. The unemployment rate of older people stood at 11.1 % in 2012, below the total unemployment rate (14 %). The unemployment rate of low-skilled workers (44.7 %) was more than triple the total unemployment rate.

⁹⁸In terms of individual industries, the lowest job vacancy rate was registered in administration services and education (0.2 % in 2012), followed by accommodation and catering services and expert, scientific and technical activities (0.3 %). On the other hand, the highest job vacancy rate was registered in public administration, reaching 4.3 %. These probably involve unfilled 'roster' positions. In energy sectors, the job vacancy rate was at 2.0 % and in financial and insurance activities at 1.8 %.

⁹⁹ The employment rate of older people aged 55-64 is below the EU average. In 2012, it rose to 43.1 %, up 1.8 percentage points against the previous year. Against 2011, the employment rate of women aged 20-64 dropped slightly, by 0.1 p. p., to 57.3 % in 2012, whereas the employment rate of men rose by 0.3 p. p. to 72.8 %. The employment rate of women was thus 15.5 p. p. lower against that of men.

¹⁰⁰ Based on data provided by the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, of the total number of unemployed people (406,498 jobseekers) at the end of September 2013, the number of those with lower than secondary vocational level of education was 113,281 (27.9 %)

¹⁰¹ In the second quarter of 2013, the unemployment rate in Slovakia stood at 14.9 % and the long term unemployment rate at 9.9 %.

¹⁰² Source: NEET – not in education, employment, training

¹⁰³ Source: Eurostat: [edat_lfse_20]

In 2012, the number of unemployed people increased year-on-year in most regions, with the lowest rise seen in the ZSR (0.6 %) and the highest in the TTSR (8.7 %). The unemployment rate fell only in the BSR (by 0.5 %). In terms of every region's share in the total number of unemployed people, eastern Slovakia contributed the most (19.6 % in the KSR and 18.5 % in the PSR. At the same time, both of these regions, as well as the BBSR, had the highest unemployment rate (19.7 % in the KSR, 18.3 % in the PSR and 18.0 % in the BBSR. Year-on-year, the unemployment rate increased in all regions except for the BSR, with the highest rise seen in the TTSR and NSR (0.8 p. p. each)¹⁰⁴.

1.1.4.1.2 Long-term unemployment

Hitting the 9 % mark, the long term unemployment rate is among the highest in the EU. This is primarily due to a high youth unemployment rate and the long-term unemployment of low-skilled workers and people aged 50 and above who lost their job and are facing difficulties finding a new one. There are no detailed statistics on the unemployment rate of the Roma and estimates can only be drawn from assessing the situation in locations with high Roma population. As shown by data from Roma unemployment surveys carried out in the previous periods, the number of unemployed Roma is continuously rising and the Roma population represents a significant majority of the long-term unemployed in Slovakia¹⁰⁵. In 2012, based on data from the labour force sample survey, more than 60 % of the unemployed did not have a job for a period longer than one year. The problem primarily lies with the very long-term unemployment rate (those not employed for more than 2 years). In terms of education, the long-term unemployment rate was the highest among people who completed primary education and vocational education without the school leaving exam.

The long-term unemployed have reduced ability to join the labour market, which is in particular due to the loss of their working habits and morale in combination with insufficiently motivating social welfare system. In addition to low qualifications and oversaturated labour market in certain professions, the long-term unemployment was also fuelled by low labour mobility, in particular that of low-skilled individuals. As regards problems encountered in addressing unemployment issues, low geographical mobility of the unemployed and burgeoning grey economy played their part as well.

The long-term unemployment represents a problem faced by almost all regions. In 2012, the highest share of the long-term unemployed in the total number of unemployed people was reported in the KSR (71.7 %), the NSR (70.6 %), the TTSR (67.7 %) and the BBSR (66.2 %), with the lowest share seen in the BSR (38.9 %) and the TNSR (43.0 %). In the ZSR, the share of the long-term unemployed (60.2 %) was below the national average, whereas the PSR (63.9 %) was roughly on par with the national average¹⁰⁶.

1.1.4.1.3 Youth unemployment

According to the SO SR, the unemployment rate of individuals aged 15 - 24 years dropped from an all-time high of 37 % in 2001 to 18.8 % in 2008. Due to the crisis, however, it started to grow sharply and reached 34 % in 2012. More than 56 % of the unemployed young people were seeking a job for more than a year (the EU average was 32 %). Similar trend was observed in the development of the employment rate: in 2008, 26 % of young people had a job, whereas this figure was only 20 % in 2012 (the EU-27 average was at 33 %)¹⁰⁷.

The most numerous group of unemployed secondary school graduates comprises the graduates of study programmes in the field of social sciences and services¹⁰⁸, followed by graduates of study programmes with

¹⁰⁴ Source: Statistical report on the basic development trends in the Slovak economy for the fourth quarter of 2012.

¹⁰⁵ e.g. 2012 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) Data in focus report "Financial and labour market situation" (<http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/situation-roma-11-eu-member-states-survey-results-glance>) or The structure of jobseekers by duration of registration in Slovakia, total: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/141895207/Poradenstvo-pri-integracii-Romov-Svetova-banka-2012> (2011, UNDP, the World Bank)

¹⁰⁶ Source: Calculation based on SO SR data, labour force sample survey.

¹⁰⁷ Source: OECD, LFS database

¹⁰⁸ Source: IIPE, Employment of secondary school graduates in practice. Bratislava,,2011.

extended vocational training and graduates of vocational programmes. The graduates of grammar schools had the lowest share, because most of them continue their studies at tertiary schools.

Even though unemployment of tertiary education graduates is the lowest amongst the young people, as well as the shortest in duration (90 % are registered as unemployed for up to six months), it is still relatively high. After completing their education, more than 9,000 graduates¹⁰⁹ are registered by the Labour Office. Some 60 % comprise social sciences graduates and 20 % are graduates of technical universities.

The barriers which prevent an increase in employment rate include, in particular, a mismatch between education and skills in the labour market, insufficient flexibility of secondary vocational schools to respond to the changing needs of the labour market and a weak link between tertiary education institutions and the labour market.

The most frequent causes of this situation include a low motivation of employers to employ young people whose qualification does not comply with their requirements. This is negatively affected by relatively high labour costs when compared to expected productivity¹¹⁰ and the necessary additional investments in further education by employers. The absence of a mechanism for involving companies and schools in the preparation of curricula and the financing of vocational training, the weak functioning of dual education system where vocational education is combined with apprenticeship in a company, inefficient tertiary education system, in particular the absence of short and practically-oriented forms of studying (bachelor's degree), as well as disparities between the number of graduates of study programmes that are in demand in the labour market and the number of graduates in those study programmes that the labour market does not currently need as much, remain a problem. This also includes low efficiency in career counselling, social and activation policies, youth mobility, insufficient network of facilities providing care services for children under three years of age and high social security contributions paid by employers for low-income work.

Since 1 November 2013, this situation is addressed by the state in particular through the provision of reliefs for social and health insurance contributions to the long-term unemployed persons who were employed by an employer.

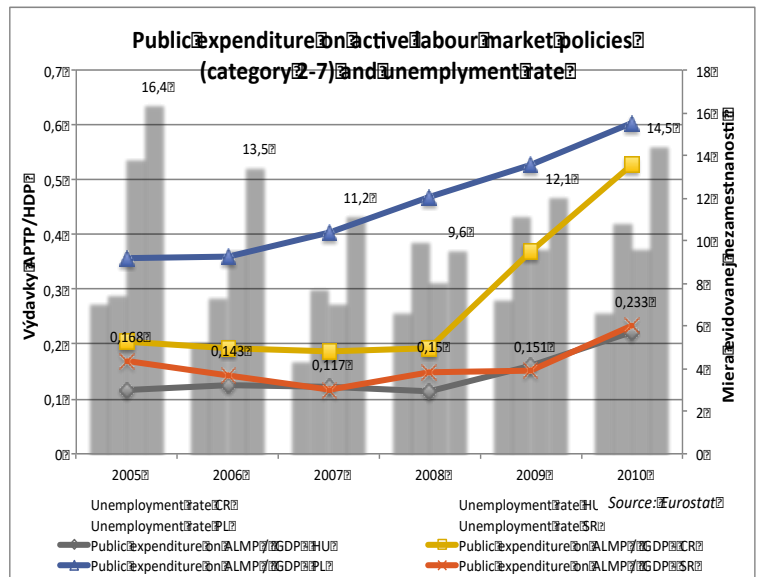
In order to boost employment of young people, it is necessary to step up effort in addressing high unemployment of young people and implementing activities arising from the National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan which the Government of the SR discussed and took into consideration on 5 February 2014. In April 2014, the National Plan was updated by incorporating the Commission's observations and, through the NRP SR 2014, a proposal for the introduction of the youth guarantee scheme was approved. Under this plan, it will be possible to support employment of young people in particular through the agreed reforms in the area of vocational education and training, labour market, early intervention and supportive measures enabling labour market integration of young people, including programmes for gaining professional experience and improving the qualification and skills which the labour market needs. At the same time, support will be ensured for project activities focusing on offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or traineeship in accordance with Council Recommendation (EU) of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee (2013/C 120/01), in cooperation with partners based on the Joint Declaration of the Solidarity and Development Council of the SR on promoting the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in the SR which was adopted on 29 January 2014. Special attention must be paid to young people who are not employed, do not study, or participate in training (i.e. NEET - not in employment, education or training).

1.1.4.1.4 Efficiency and effectiveness of the Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP)

¹⁰⁹ Based on IYPE data, the number of unemployed higher education graduates was 9,670 as at July 2011

¹¹⁰ Source: OECD, LFS database, unit costs of labour

In general, the number of supported persons or jobs in Slovakia has been fluctuating, which is attributable to the financial intensity of measures preferred in a given year¹¹¹. This implies that the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR needs to foresee the changes in the labour market and effectively counteract the undesired trends by means of the Active Labour Market Policy (hereinafter “ALMP”). At the same time, it is necessary to ensure a systemic and comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the ALMP instruments by evaluating their implementation on an annual basis and to assess their contribution to the improvement of the situation in the labour market, as well as analyse the net efficiency and effectiveness of expenditures of the individual active labour market measures (hereinafter “ALMM”) while further continuing to improve the labour market policies..



The disparities are countervailed by the state also by means of the ALMP¹¹². The value of the ALMP expenditure index¹¹³ (categories 2-7) has been following a slightly increasing trend in Slovakia since 2004. Slovakia’s expenditure for activating the unemployed is the lowest among the V4 countries (because of the relatively high number of unemployed people)¹¹⁴.

Pursuant to an amendment to the Act on employment services (effective as of 1 May 2013), most of the obligatory ALMM have been replaced by optional ALMM. With the launch of ALMP programmes, there is more focus on disadvantaged groups of jobseekers in order to increase the employment rate of young jobseekers aged 29 and below and of older workers aged 50 and above. The amendment to this Act should also make services better targeted and tailored to the needs of job seekers in many forms (education, expert advice) which will be made available through the strengthening and modernisation of public employment services. The provision of better advice and counselling services to clients will necessitate a sufficient number of employees. The necessary capacity should be ensured the labour offices through the reallocation of their internal staff and by streamlining their operation. This could be done by centralising and automating the administrative activities with the use of an IT system.

Employment may also be bolstered by a financial instrument which could focus on those economic activities, the operating costs of which are fully covered by revenue, even though they are not bringing profits that would be commercially attractive for regular investors. The instrument would be especially

¹¹¹In 2008, the share of the long-term unemployed was high and many of them (183,229 persons) were assigned to activation works in order to increase their employability and restore their working habits. The average allowance per person was EUR 223.50. In 2012, only 24,098 people were assigned to activation activities with the average allowance reaching EUR 399.60 per person. In the period between 2008 and 2012, allowances totalling EUR 192.4 million were provided to 60,960 jobseekers, i.e., EUR 3,156 per person on average. In 2008, allowances totalling EUR 14.5 million were provided to 3,072 persons with disabilities; in 2012, 6,629 people with disabilities received allowances worth EUR 43.2 million. The total amount of allowances provided to support the employment of people with disabilities represented EUR 156.4 million. Allowances for education and preparation for the labour market were provided to 41,961 jobseekers between 2008 and 2012, with total costs coming in at EUR 14.4 million, that is, the average cost per person was some EUR 343.

¹¹² Defined by Act No 5/2004 Coll. on employment services and on amendments to certain acts, as amended

¹¹³ Indicates the percentage of GDP expenditure allocated for ALMP (or the percentage of participants in the total number of unemployed who participated in ALMP programmes in each country) per percentage point of the unemployment rate.

¹¹⁴ Source: Application of active labour market measures in the context of applied practice in the European Union, Institute for Labour and Family Research.

suitable for supporting employment in regions that are lagging in development and suffering from low interest by investors.

1.1.4.1.5 Low labour mobility

In comparison with other EU countries, Slovakia has low labour mobility due to the low price of labour, high direct costs of travel¹¹⁵, immature housing rental market, high housing costs and low-quality transportation services.

Most people are commuting to Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, and to the largest cities in other regions. A large majority of commuters are employed by major construction companies and financial institutions. The regions adjacent to the emerging strong economic centres that are supported by foreign direct investment, such as Trnava or Žilina, as well as the entire Považie territory, are considered those regions where labour mobility is expected to increase.

Promoting and making urban public transport cheaper, investing in knowledge-based economy and focusing on higher value added production will increase wages and spur more activity among workers, all of which will translate into higher labour mobility. Teleworking, which eliminates the downsides of high labour mobility and helps improve the conditions for the reconciliation of work and family life for parents of minors, may play a positive role in this endeavour as well.

1.1.4.1.6 Gender segregation and inequalities in the labour market

Slovakia's labour market is one of the most gender segregated labour markets in Europe, i.e., despite an increasing proportion of female managers (31 % in 2011)¹¹⁶; women often work in lower-ranked positions than men. Common stereotypes such as "work suitable for women" very frequently affect one's own choice of study programmes and occupation. Such stereotypes are the most visible in entrepreneurship sector where the ratio is three male entrepreneurs per one female entrepreneur, in the healthcare, social services and education sectors where women account for as many as 80 % of workforce or, in public administration, where their share is 70 %. Gender segregation is closely related to gender income gap, which has been below the EU-27 average in Slovakia for a long time (20.5 % against 16.2 % in the EU-27).

Regional disparities and the lack of part-time jobs are also factors of the relatively low unemployment of women (in particular those aged 45 years and above). A lack of care services for children below three years, including the worsening availability of kindergartens since 2006¹¹⁷ which intensifies the impacts of the gender dimension of parenthood on the employment rate of women, also contribute to such negative aspects. Support for services facilitating the reconciliation of family and work life therefore remains one of the priorities for better participation of women in the labour market and their career growth.

1.1.4.1.7 Insufficient appreciation of cultural and natural heritage

Slovakia is required to protect and develop its cultural and natural heritage in accordance with its commitments arising from membership in international organisations, such as UNESCO¹¹⁸, ICOMOS¹¹⁹ or the Council of Europe¹²⁰, and in compliance with the national Heritage Protection Concept, which, however, lacks funding. Historic structures and sites hold a special status in Slovakia and there are, in particular, 18

¹¹⁵ Source: Employment Institute

¹¹⁶ Includes corporate managers and managers of small enterprises, the EU-27 average was 28.7 % (Source: Eurostat: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-07032013-AP/EN/3-07032013-AP-EN.PDF)

¹¹⁷Source: Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education: the number of pending admission applications reached 7,500 in state-run kindergartens as at September 2012, and the situation is especially critical in the Bratislava region (46 % of all applications)

¹¹⁸Conventions: The Hague (1954), Paris (1970), The Hague (1999), Paris (1972), Paris (2001), Paris (2003), Paris (2005)

¹¹⁹ The Venice Charter (1964), the Florence Charter (1982), the Washington Charter (1987), the Charter of Lausanne (1990), Charter on the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage (1996), Charter of Cultural Tourism (1999), the Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage (1999)

¹²⁰Conventions: Paris 1954, Granada 1985, Valetta 1992, Rome 1995, Florence 2000, Faro 2005

urban heritage reserves, 10 folk architecture reserves, 86 heritage zones, 70 protected historical parks, 5 World Heritage sites, and 15 029 national cultural heritage sites¹²¹. As regards ownership, 5 185 (35 %) heritage sites are owned by the state and municipalities, 5 927 (39 %) are in private ownership, and 3 917 (26 %) are owned by the church. Approximately 30 % of heritage sites are in a poor or deficient condition at present¹²². Many of these sites fail to meet the technological standards to be able to perform their basic cultural and economic functions. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage is a source for all forms of art and is an integral part of the cultural and creative industries. It affects creativity and is what many heritage products and services stem from. Cluster-based approach seems to be providing the most effective environment for creativity and innovation. In urban areas, there are many unused or inappropriately used buildings (including cultural heritage sites) and, at the same time, there are many organisations and enterprises of cultural and creative industries which have the potential to increase employment in the region through the production and consumption of innovative products and services.

1.1.4.1.8 Insufficient diversification of economic activities in rural areas

Of the total number of individuals in the productive age group in a particular region (aged 15 to 64), the share of employed people in rural regions is significantly lower than the national average.¹²³ The lower employment rate in rural areas is attributable to economic infrastructure, which remains insufficient, and low business density in rural areas. Employment in the tertiary sector has a considerable potential for growth in rural areas.

In 2012, the unemployment rate in rural areas (17.8 %) was higher than the overall unemployment rate in the SR (14.0 %). The predominant factors of increasing regional polarisation of rural areas include structural difficulties of major, dominant employers in a given region, infrastructural underdevelopment and weak labour market integration of people with disabilities or those facing social exclusion, because most of them live in rural areas. The specific unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24 was 34 % in 2012 (39.1 % in rural areas).

The creation of jobs as one of the key RDP objectives is primarily addressed through support for the creation and development of non-agricultural activities, in particular by means of the provision of services and the processing of non-agricultural products, as well as through the support of relaxation and recreational activities in rural areas, all of which will help stabilise and reinforce rural economy and generate new jobs. During the 2007 - 2013 programming period, the development of non-agricultural activities facilitated the creation of approximately 270 gross jobs and supported rural economy, primarily in the area of tourism and biogas plants.

1.1.4.1.9 Territorial concentration

As regards the targeting of key ESF measures, the employment rate should be increased through wider participation of young people, older and low-skilled workers. In the SR, this would in fact apply to the entire territory. The best prerequisites for the absorption of supported investments exist in urban functional territories, settlement centres, first-level and second-level settlement core centres, as well as local centres located on development axes. ERDF measures to support the restoration of cultural infrastructure will be directed primarily at urban functional areas in 1st and 2nd group centres of population. ERDF measures for investment in the diversification of local economies through the protection and appreciation of cultural heritage and landscapes should be oriented primarily at settlement centres, first-level and second-level

¹²¹These include castles, manor houses, mansions, technical monuments, historical parks or burghers' houses, some of which could aspire to the UNESCO World Heritage status

¹²² The Concept for Heritage Protection in Slovakia (situation as of 31 December 2012)

¹²³ Development trends in rural and urban areas in Slovakia, the Research Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics, 2012, http://www.vuepp.sk/EP2012/4/Buchta_4_2012.pdf

settlement core centres and the centres of other municipalities.

The key EAFRD and EMFF actions supporting the creation of jobs in rural areas should be located in the territories of other municipalities.

1.1.4.2 TO9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination

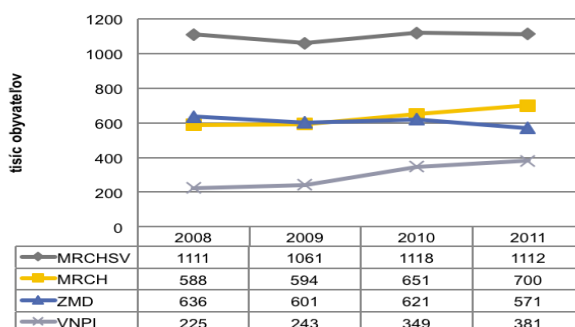
Social exclusion can throw individuals and families into poverty and has economic and financial implications for society. The high long term unemployment rate represents a persistent problem for Slovak society and is the predominant cause of low standard of living, exclusion and poverty.

The long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged unemployed people have difficulties finding their place in the labour market because they lost their working habits or do not possess the required qualification profile, which means that their labour productivity is lower compared to other jobseekers. Should employers decide to employ such people, they face the risk of their company becoming less competitive. Therefore, this problem is typically handled through subsidies to compensate for this imbalance. However, problems come up when the amount of such subsidy becomes too high. At that moment, the system becomes prone to abuse and the market is distorted. If the subsidy amount is set too low, it will be inefficient and employers would fail to see any benefits in employing disadvantaged persons¹²⁴.

According to EU SILC 2012, a total of 1,108,965 of Slovaks were at risk of poverty or social exclusion which accounts for 20.5 % of the total population¹²⁵. It is in particular children, young people, single parents, households with depended persons, people with a migrant background and persons with disabilities who are at risk of poverty the most. Moreover, there is also the obvious gender gap, with women being more at risk than men in general.

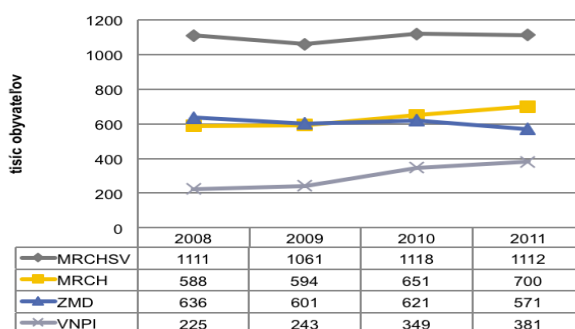
In terms of income poverty, Slovakia ranks among the countries with the lowest at-risk-of-poverty rate in the EU¹²⁶. According to EU SILC 2012, 13.2 % of the Slovak population were at risk of poverty. On the other hand, Slovakia's material deprivation rate is one of the highest in the EU. In 2012, 10.5 % of the Slovak

Development of population at risk of poverty or social



MRCHSV - rate risk of poverty or social exclusion (after social transfers)
 MRCH - risk of poverty rate (after social transfers)
 ZMD - severe material deprivation
 VNPI - very low work intensity

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¹²⁴ In the recent years, the Central Office of Labour Social Affairs and Family saw a 100 % increase in the number of children registered on grounds of unfavourable health condition. This does not imply a rapidly worsening health condition of children; rather than joining the ranks of unemployed, parents often opt for this possibility with support from physicians.

¹²⁵ Source: EU SILC 2011 database or www.statistics.sk

¹²⁶ The at-risk-of-poverty threshold means income below 60 % of the national median equalised disposable income. The total annual at-risk-of-poverty threshold calculated on the basis of EU SILC 2011 was EUR 3,784 per single-person household, which represents some EUR 315 per month. For two-adult households with two children aged 14 and below, the total annual at-risk-of-poverty threshold was EUR 7,945, which represents EUR 662 per month on average.

population lived in material deprivation. The percentage of very low work intensity stood at 7.2 % according to EU SILC 2012. At present, assistance in material need has grown into a system that serves as the social safety net. One of the important aspects of this system is the principle of activation, targeted and merit-based approach, as well as protection. In 2012, the average monthly number of beneficiaries receiving assistance in material need was 183,091. This required the spending of funds in the volume of some EUR 270 million. The average monthly amount of assistance in material need was EUR 122.89.

In Slovakia, the at-risk-of-poverty rate reflected regional disparities. The at-risk-of-poverty rate was the lowest in the BSR and the highest in the PSR. When assessed by age groups and household type, the risk of poverty was mostly faced by children aged 0 to 17 years, households with a higher number of children (three and more), and by single parent households.

Social exclusion also poses a threat to people receiving social services or foster care, and in particular children placed into care institutions. In Slovakia, the traditional institutional model still prevails. For this reason it is necessary to gradually redesign this system towards the development of community-based social services and foster care systems. However, progress in the de-institutionalisation¹²⁷ of large-scale care institutions and services has been slow¹²⁸, the community-based services are underdeveloped, and the same goes for services facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life (childcare facilities for children below three years).

The health condition of the population is an accompanying symptom of poverty and social exclusion. Poor health condition is one of the causes of social exclusion and poverty (in particular due to the subsequent loss of income and unemployment). On the other hand, social exclusion and poverty are the causes of worsening health condition of people living at risk of social exclusion and poverty (the diminishing feeling of responsibility for one's own health, less accessible high-quality healthcare). The indicator of healthy life years at birth of the Slovak population (52.4 % for men and 52.1 % for women) is lagging significantly behind the OECD average (61.9 % for men and 62.7 % for women)¹²⁹. Slovakia is also lagging behind in life expectancy at birth, either when compared to the OECD average, or to the V4 average.

The key problems related to social exclusion and combating poverty which Slovakia will face in the years ahead are as follows: poverty and social exclusion of MRC, the risk of social exclusion faced by persons with disabilities, social exclusion in rural areas, insufficient social economy, inefficient healthcare system and poor public health, de-institutionalisation of social care and foster care and increasing the professionalism of social workers.

1.1.4.2.1 Poverty and social exclusion of marginalised Roma communities

Social exclusion of the marginalised Roma communities manifests itself through poverty, which takes an extreme and even worsening form unseen in non-Roma population living in territories with marginalised communities. According to the Research Demographic Centre¹³⁰, there were some 440 000 Roma living in the territory of the SR in 2011 (8 % of the total population), mostly concentrated in the PSR, KSR, and BBSR. In 2030, Roma should account for 10 % of Slovakia's population and 16 % of the productive or school age population. According to a UNDP sample survey carried out in Slovakia in 2010, the employment rate of Roma men and women is 20 % and, respectively, 11 %, whereas the unemployment rate of Roma men and women is 72 % and, respectively, 75 %¹³¹. The average costs¹³² associated with the exclusion of Roma in

¹²⁷De-institutionalisation of foster care and social services is discussed in detail in the Strategy for the De-institutionalisation of the Social Services and Foster Care System in the SR.

¹²⁸Source: Report of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care. DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, 2009

¹²⁹http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Healthy_life_years_statistics; period 2007 – 2011

¹³⁰http://www.rokovania.sk/html/m_Mater-Dokum-141258.html#_ftn16

¹³¹Roma Integration Strategy until 2020, Government Office of the SR, December 2011

¹³²Social costs primarily include the costs associated with the loss of product formation caused by low employment of Roma, as well as direct cost items such as health insurance of the unemployed, social assistance benefits or inefficient financing of the primary education.

Slovakia were estimated at 7 % of GDP in 2008. An update to the Atlas of Roma Communities (2013) identified 804 concentrations in 584 municipalities where the living conditions of Roma can be described as undignified and inappropriate. Members of these communities, the population of which is currently estimated at some 200,000, suffer from material and social deprivation, as well as significantly reduced life opportunities in overall.

As shown by several surveys, geographical location of Roma settlements and limited social contacts represent a real barrier which deteriorates their full-fledged participation in economic and cultural life of society. One such area is education¹³³. The problem is that many socially disadvantaged children do not attend kindergartens due to their low capacity, financial intensity and the lacking awareness of the benefits of education in kindergartens. Socially disadvantaged children frequently drop out from primary schools before making it to the ninth grade, which opens up the gap in completed education and qualifications in comparison with the majority population. The complexity of this problem is further underlined by the rate of Roma children in special primary schools and special classes in standard primary schools. Even after having completed their studies at special needs primary schools, the students have very little chance to continue their education or find a job. One of the reasons why children without mental problems are placed in special classes or special schools lies in insufficient diagnostics during enrolment, insufficient knowledge of the state language, as well as the fact that Roma language is not used in the tests or other expert activities carried out during the diagnostic process¹³⁴.

A lasting problem affecting the quality of education is the two-shift education at 45 primary schools (mostly in the locations with a high concentration of marginalised Roma communities), which account for 2.02 % of the total number of primary schools, along with the lack of support services for ensuring inclusive education (such as teaching assistants, psychologists, speech therapists)¹³⁵.

In addition to low labour market competitiveness due to insufficient education, qualifications and skills, the marginalisation of Roma in the labour market – or their exclusion from the formal labour market – is caused by other factors as well: existence of discrimination against the Roma ethnic by the majority population (stereotypes of Roma being unreliable workers without working morale, discipline and motivation); spatial/geographic localisation (concentration of the Roma in regions characterised by the lowest work activity); poor housing status, living conditions and health; devastation of human capital and the loss of working habits due to long-term unemployment.

In order to reduce disparities and gaps between non-Roma population and socially excluded and marginalised groups of the Roma population, it is necessary to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach in locations where separated and segregated marginal Roma communities live, i.e., to improve access to high-quality inclusive and desegregated education, reduce their share in the unemployment rate, facilitate access to social infrastructure, healthcare and improve hygiene standards in housing.

1.1.4.2.2 Prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination

People with disabilities represent another group facing the risk of social exclusion; they are compensated for the social implications of their severe disability through the provision of benefits or social services¹³⁶ which facilitate, by means of their own active participation, the social inclusion of people with severe

¹³³Council Recommendation on Slovakia's 2013 National reform programme and delivering a Council Opinion on Slovakia's stability programme for 2012 – 2016 (SWD(2013) 375 final)

¹³⁴Report on the state of education in Slovakia and on systemic steps aimed at fostering its development, <http://www.minedu.sk/data/att/5250.pdf>

¹³⁵<http://diskriminacia.sk/skola-ako-geto-systematicke-nadmerne-zastupenie-romov-v-specialnom-vzdelavani-na-slovensku/>

¹³⁶The types of disability compensation allowances include, for instance, financial contribution for personal assistance, financial contribution for the purchase or modification of a passenger car, financial contribution for transportation costs, financial contribution for the modifications of an apartment, house or garage, financial contribution for higher expenses associated with a diet, financial contribution paid as compensation for higher expenses related to hygiene or worn clothes, shoes and furniture, financial contribution paid as compensation for higher expenses associated with the operation of a passenger motor vehicle, financial contribution to compensate for the costs of care for a specially trained dog, assistance benefit.

disabilities to help them preserve their human dignity in defined areas.

Slovakia has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities¹³⁷. As a result, Slovakia's role is to ensure that all regulations, policies and programmes at EU level be in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities particularly in the following areas: ensuring their access to education, employment, transportation, infrastructure and buildings that are open to the public, protecting their right to vote, promoting their participation in the political life and ensuring that they enjoy legal capacity, whilst improving their access to the development of ICT products, services and e-commerce.

Discriminatory treatment of certain groups of population is one of the reasons to social exclusion. Even though non-discrimination and equality between men and women are defined as horizontal principles, it is necessary to allow, along with their cross-cutting implementation, the provision of specific and targeted support for population groups facing the risk of all types forms of discrimination (on grounds of ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and age).

1.1.4.2.3 Social exclusion in rural areas

Remote rural areas and the smallest rural settlements are often the places marked by the concentration of "invisible" social exclusion and the risk of reproduced exclusion, i.e., the so-called soft forms of exclusion (insufficient community amenities, insufficient availability of healthcare, poor social infrastructure, etc.) which is typical of small rural municipalities and, on a greater scale, the regions of southern and north-east Slovakia. The following aspects are considered the main obstacles to rural development: negative demographic trends and a decline in the number of young people in productive age, single-sector economy, weak or insufficient infrastructure and poor availability, including the quality and access to broadband Internet, low education rate, low skills and entrepreneurial spirit, innovation, underdeveloped social and institutional capital. Moreover, in the context of rural areas in Slovakia, further aspects that can be added to the list of obstacles include the high unemployment rate, low real wages, unsettled ownership of land or real estates.

The needs in terms of improving the quality of life in rural areas and support for the development of local communities/public-private partnerships in rural areas, with a focus on preserving the local cultural and historical character of the territory, should be fulfilled by encouraging those activities that will lay the groundwork for the provision of basic services in rural areas, as well as for increasing the accessibility of rural areas and for tapping the cultural, historical and natural potential, including the use of RES, all of which will speed up local economic development based on efficient use of endogenous resources. The support for local communities through the Community-led Local Development (hereinafter "CLLD") instrument, including the LEADER¹³⁸ initiative, should play the key role in the targeting of subsidies which will have a positive impact on economic growth and the creation of jobs in rural areas.

Support for the development of local communities from the RDP for 2007 - 2013 through the LEADER approach has contributed to an increase in the quality of life, employment, as well as development of local services and municipalities. This facilitated the building and development of local partnerships, as well as the utilisation of the endogenous development potential of rural areas. Companies and local communities involved in the partnership can represent a motivating factor and serve as a social example to other communities/populations living in rural areas, therefore it is necessary to ensure the continuity of activities that have already been implemented and supported in this manner.

In order to foster the development of municipalities and the local development, it is necessary to target

¹³⁷ Initial report to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities <http://www.employment.gov.sk/dohovor-osn-o-pravach-osob-so-zdravotnym-postihnutim.html>

¹³⁸ LEADER - Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale/Links between actions for the development of the rural economy

investments into minor infrastructure (development of entrepreneurship and rural tourism), local services, creation of the conditions for community-based/entrepreneurial activities (with the use of unoccupied municipal buildings) and local employment support.

1.1.4.2.4 Insufficient social economy

Social economy, i.e., economic activities with non-financial benefits for society and profits lower than those deemed commercially acceptable, represent a source of the as-yet-untapped potential for supporting the employment of the long-term unemployed. Such positive externalities include, *inter alia*, support for employing the long-term unemployed people or marginalised groups. The public and non-profit sectors should focus on supporting social economy. The forms of support for social economy also include the application of the social dimension in PP procedures financed from public funds. The social economy should be primarily supported by the public sector. The support for social economy entities has a negative connotation in Slovakia for many reasons; as a result, it is necessary to promote only those solutions which will not raise any suspicions of distorting the competition and influencing the market.

1.1.4.2.4.1 Low efficiency of the healthcare system and poor public health

The key medical causes of poor health condition of the Slovak population¹³⁹ include low efficiency of the healthcare system, its fragmentation and unsatisfactory disease prevention. Low efficiency of Slovakia's healthcare system¹⁴⁰, which is unsustainable in the long term and devoid of coordinated linkage between the existing services with insufficient focus on prevention and public health, cannot effectively contribute to improving the health condition of Slovaks. An analysis of the situation of the health sector in Slovakia, as well as the key priorities and instruments for increasing the effectiveness of Slovakia's health-care system are identified in the Strategic Framework for Health for 2014 - 2030¹⁴¹.

1.1.4.2.5 The risk of social exclusion of people with a migrant background

In Slovakia, this involves making investments into promoting active integration of people who are at risk of social exclusion for various reasons, in particular those with a migrant background, asylum seekers, asylum holders and also persons who were granted additional protection.

1.1.4.2.6 Territorial concentration

The ESF measures aimed at increasing employment will be implemented in the entire territory of the SR. The best prerequisites for the absorption of supported investments exist in centres, territories of settlement core centres, as well as local centres in the territories of other municipalities located on development axes. The ERDF actions will be implemented in urban and rural areas. The key EAFRD and EMFF actions in rural areas should be located in the territories of other municipalities. Actions for the integration of MRC should be located in the territories identified in the Atlas of Roma Communities (2013).

1.1.4.3 TO10: Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning

The key challenge in the education sector is to match the educational content with labour market requirements by increasing the quality of education at all stages from pre-primary education through to the tertiary education, including lifelong learning, with a focus on the inclusive dimension of provided education, in particular for the MRC. It is imperative that marginalised groups have equal access to education and job opportunities offered by the labour market.

¹³⁹Healthy life years at birth (52.4 for men, 52.1 for women) are lagging significantly behind the OECD average (61.9 for men, 62.7 for women)

¹⁴⁰ Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012 - 2016, specific recommendation No. 1

¹⁴¹ <http://www.health.gov.sk/?strategia-v-zdravotnictve>

1.1.4.3.1 Quality of school education

1.1.4.3.1.1 Kindergartens

High-quality pre-primary education constitutes an integral part of building high-quality human potential for a knowledge-based society. As revealed by the forecast¹⁴², the number of children is currently increasing in Slovakia, and this phase is expected to last until 2017. In general, kindergartens are not ready enough for accommodating such an increase in the number of children¹⁴³.

At present, the gross attendance rate of children in kindergartens is 87 %. In international comparison, the attendance of children in pre-school establishments in Slovakia is lower than the EU average. The participation of Roma children in pre-school education is significantly lower than that of non-Roma population in a given region. The main reasons for the absence of children from MRC include insufficient or limited capacity of kindergartens. This results in a disparity between attendance rates¹⁴⁴ (87 % versus 53 % in favour of non-Roma population).

Having assessed the quality of kindergartens, the State School Inspection noted that, despite the existing decent material and technical background, the cause of shortcomings lies primarily in an average or less satisfactory level of ICT inclusion (literacy and ICT skills) and children's cognitive skills.¹⁴⁵

1.1.4.3.1.2 Primary and secondary schools

1.1.4.3.1.2.1 Network of primary and secondary schools

The network of primary schools has been partially streamlined in response to the declining curve of vital statistics and has been relatively stable over the past ten years. In Slovakia, the number of students in schools has been ranging between 2 and 1008, and there are as many as 110 primary schools with less than 13 pupils¹⁴⁶. The number of pupils per teacher has been following a downward trend since 2000 (15.4 pupils per teacher in 2000 and 12.2 pupils per teacher in 2012).

The demographic developments, as well as the fact that general education is preferred to vocational education, hand in hand with insufficient awareness of primary school students about vocational education and training, resulted in a lower interest in vocational education and a decline in the number of students enrolling at secondary vocational schools. Grammar schools are the only type of schools where the number of students grew despite the vital statistics curve following a downward trend. In 2019, grammar schools should expect a drop in the number of students by some 30 % until 2022. The demand for secondary vocational schools¹⁴⁷ peaked in the mid-1990s, and ever since then it has been on a decline which is expected to last until 2021 when 27 % less students should be graduating from these schools when compared to the current figures.

In the long-term, the situation at primary schools is gradually improving. In most cases the schools reside in sufficient premises¹⁴⁸, which the State School Inspection¹⁴⁹ considers largely satisfactory for meeting the

¹⁴²<http://www.uips.sk/regionalne-skolstvo/kvantitativna-prognoza-vyvoja-ms-zs-a-ss-do-roku-2025>

¹⁴³ As of 2006, the number of pending kindergarten admission applications increased 7.6-fold, which represents 8,144 pending applications at present. Although 3,262 kindergartens with 7,576 classrooms were part of the school network in 2000, the figures as at 15 September 2012 were 2,861 and, respectively, 7,395. This implies that the founders of kindergartens seek to address the bad situation concerning the admission of children to kindergartens by enlarging the capacities of the existing facilities or by adapting suitable premises to be used as kindergarten classrooms.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Development Programme (2012), Report on the Living Conditions of Roma Households in Slovakia 2010, UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Bratislava. The report was prepared based on data collected from an extensive questionnaire survey focusing on the living conditions of Roma households in Slovakia.

¹⁴⁵ Source: Report on the state of education at schools and educational establishments in Slovakia in the school year 2011/2012.

¹⁴⁶ Report on the state of education in Slovakia, March 2013, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR

¹⁴⁷ As of 2008, secondary vocational schools also include former technical training schools and conservatoires

¹⁴⁸http://www.uvzsr.sk/docs/vs/vyrocná_správa_SR_12.pdf

upbringing and education requirements. However, the primary schools in areas with a high concentration of marginalised Roma communities are the only exception due to their long-lasting problems with insufficient capacity and double-shift schooling which, for instance, makes it impossible to implement inclusive education and upbringing and has a negative impact on early school leaving.

1.1.4.3.1.2.2 Quality of education at primary and secondary schools

The system of education prefers encyclopaedic knowledge to the honing of practical skills and attitudes of students. The students are not able to sufficiently apply their knowledge in practice and when taking part in international tests, they score below the EU average. Slovakia has been registering a relatively low success rate of students aged 15 years in international PISA tests (2003 - 2009)¹⁵⁰. Mathematics, natural history, financial literacy, as well as the development of language and ICT skills, will require more attention.

According to applicable legislation, all children are treated equally in Slovakia's education system, and are granted the same guaranteed rights and obligations. In real life, however, there are certain shortcomings in the application of these rights, in particular in locations with a high concentration of marginalised Roma communities where, because of the demographic and geographical distribution of the population, classes are made up only of children from MRC or unjustified enrolment of such children in special-needs schools or classes is occurring. These shortcomings have also been confirmed by a court decision¹⁵¹, invoking the applicable School Act which prohibits discrimination – segregation in education.

The education system is blamed for educating in special-needs schools or classes a high number of pupils from socially disadvantaged background (hereinafter "SDB"), i.e., typically the Roma children because of their decisive share in the number of pupils from socially disadvantaged background. At the same time, pupils from SDB often drop out from primary schools before making it to the ninth grade, which has a negative impact on early school leaving and their chances to continue their education at the next level and, subsequently, their employment prospects on the labour market. The degree of application of an inclusive model of education at schools is affected by their insufficient preparedness due to a lack of teaching assistants, expert staff working directly at schools, as well as low number of barrier-free schools or insufficient capacity of premises, in particular in locations with a high concentration of MRC, which is the reason why pupils are integrated into mainstream education only partially.

The main problem of vocational training and education is that there is no system in place for training qualified workforce in order to meet the needs of the labour market. For the past two years, the share of students in secondary vocational specialised schools with apprenticeship training carried out directly in employers' premises dropped from 5.75 % to 3.8 %.

Amidst the growing autonomy and independence of schools in particular as regards the preparation of educational content which, however, has not proven effective in public schools, it is not only necessary to evaluate the performance of students, but also to carry out comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of processes for the strategic planning and accomplishing of performance results. At present, there is practically no such system in place.

Based on data on activities performed by the State School Inspection, the schools have shortcomings in the internal control and evaluation systems which in many cases show a lack of predefined strategies, priorities, causal analysis of phenomena and evaluation tools.¹⁵² There is a persistent lack of financial resources for high quality and practically usable textbooks, teaching materials and workbooks in printed and digital form. The procedures for the approval of textbooks, teaching materials and workbooks are lengthy and require too much paperwork.

¹⁴⁹ Report on the state of education at schools and educational establishments in Slovakia in the school year 2011/2012

¹⁵⁰ http://www.nucem.sk/documents//27/medzinarodne_merania/pisa/publikacie_a_diseminacia/4_ine/Priloha_PISA_2012.pdf

¹⁵¹ Decision of the Prešov Court concerning the primary school in Šarišské Michaľany

¹⁵² Source: Report on the State of Education at Schools and Educational Establishments in Slovakia in the School Year 2011/2012.

At the same time, it is necessary to lay the groundwork for the activities of professional organisations established by a separate Act within support for dual education with vocational education and training of young people for their occupation. In areas where such professional organisations are not present, it is necessary to lay the groundwork for the establishment of new organisations that would contribute, in the relevant areas, to dual educational system in terms of vocational education and training of young people for their occupation. Furthermore, it is desirable to create a mechanism for the collection of data on jobs landed, or the follow-up study programmes attended, by secondary school graduates three years after they had completed their secondary education, as well as a mechanism for ensuring the interpretation of such data and the national know-how for anticipating labour market needs based on additional data and, in particular, surveys for assessing the demand for workforce by means of questionnaires distributed to employers.

1.1.4.3.1.2.3 Quality and status of pedagogical and professional staff

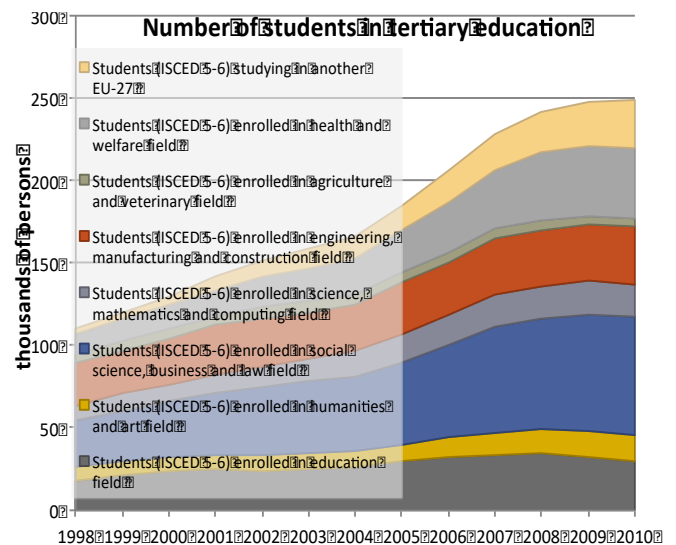
Young teachers aged 30 and below only account for 13.4 % of the total number. The median age of university professors is 61 years¹⁵³.

The content, scope and methodology used in the secondary and tertiary education of teachers are not matching the requirements of practical life and represent a deficiency in achieving a higher quality of education. The preparation of students for the teaching profession shows a significant lack of practical preparation that would be based on the actual requirements for the teaching profession.

In order to make the teaching profession more attractive and to improve the status and quality of pedagogical and professional staff, it is necessary to invest in increasing the professional skills through continuing education of pedagogues who are already working in the education sector, and to invest in improving the quality of training of the future pedagogical and professional staff with a more pronounced focus on practical aspects and inclusive dimension of education. The support should also include more effective management of schools.

1.1.4.3.2 Quality of tertiary education

For the past 20 years, the number of universities rose from 11 to 37. The number of students increased from 63,000 to nearly 250,000. The current problem of the education system, in the context of Slovakia's innovation performance, lies mainly in the low quality of education, mismatch with the skills required by the labour market, efficiency and openness of the tertiary education, and regular revisions of the long-term objectives for higher education aimed at aligning Slovakia's higher education development policy with the needs of society and the market.¹⁵⁴ An increasing number of students want to study social sciences even though the market is oversaturated with lawyers, managers and other graduates of such study programmes; on the other hand, there is an acute lack of students graduating from technical universities. The outflow of young people seeking higher-quality education at foreign tertiary schools and universities has been growing continuously despite a slowdown caused by the crisis¹⁵⁵ and a decline in the number of 19-year-olds in 2009 and, hence,



¹⁵³ Annual Report on the State of Tertiary Education for 2012

¹⁵⁴ pg. 55, Report on the State of Education System in Slovakia and on systemic steps to support its further development

¹⁵⁵ To get a picture: for the past nine years, the number of Slovaks studying abroad under the Erasmus programme increased three-fold to 1,798 in

in the number of enrolled students. Every year in Slovakia, there are some 70,000 students graduating from schools, which represents a total for the full-time and part-time students for all three levels of tertiary education.

When preparing their study programmes, universities should be constantly paying the highest attention to graduate profiles and results. The legislative framework for the design of professionally-oriented bachelor's study programmes whose graduates meet labour-market requirements without having to continue at the master's level of study, has been in place since 2013¹⁵⁶. In the academic year 2012/2013, 89.8% of students showed interest to continue their study at the master's level. In other words, neither the students themselves nor their potential employers consider bachelor's studies sufficient to succeed on the labour market. In order to increase the quality of higher education, the support for entrepreneurship, innovation and problem-solving skills in higher education curricula, as well as projects designed to change study programme descriptions based on the requirements of employers, practical training and internships of students, university pedagogues and researchers organised in the sector of employers in line with the objectives and measures defined by the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the SR¹⁵⁷, are envisaged as the most important tools. Cooperation with employers is inevitable for improving the quality of higher education graduates and their success in the labour market. Higher education, together with the SAS and other research organisations, represents the basis for the R&D potential of the country and provides society with other specific services, usually connected with the development of society and/or the region in which the school is located¹⁵⁸.

The capacity of Slovakia's higher education system is oversized and, worse than that, the structure of the study fields is not appropriate. However, in order to make the system more inclusive and to provide disadvantaged groups with better access to higher education, it is necessary to focus on removing the barriers to education. Along with the share of population studying at tertiary schools and universities, the gender gap between women and men has been continuously increasing as well¹⁵⁹. Of the total number of higher education graduates, roughly 37 % were male graduates (ISCED 5 – 6) in mathematics, science and technology in 2011 and this share has been relatively stable. For women, this figure was 11.6 % of total female graduates (ISCED 5 – 6) in all fields and this share has been fluctuating between 16 % and 11 % over the past ten years¹⁶⁰.

1.1.4.3.2.1 Inefficient funding of higher education establishments

The existing system of funding is not performance-oriented and hence there is no differentiation among the schools based on qualitative parameters. Since the quality aspect is neither reflected in the remuneration of teachers nor in their better professional utilisation (there is no other instrument in place for the retention of quality teachers), the number of high-quality and, in particular, young teachers at universities, as well as young researchers, continues to fall. As a consequence, universities have professors who have reached the age of retirement (65 years) and university teachers have several part-time jobs at a number of universities and, instead of scientific work, focus on external education.

One of the fundamental problems relates to the low level of expenditures on research at universities, the SAS and other research organisation and the instability of the Slovak Research and Development Agency

2010, and the number of Slovaks studying in the Czech Republic increased five-fold over the past 5 years to more than 5,000 in 2010.

¹⁵⁶ Act No 455/2012 Coll. amending Act No 131/2002 Coll. on Universities and on amendments to certain acts, as amended, and on amendments to certain acts which entered into force on 1 January 2013

¹⁵⁷ Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the SR, pg. 69

¹⁵⁸ pg. 52, Report on the State of Education System in Slovakia and on systemic steps to support its further development

¹⁵⁹ In 2009, it represented 1.9 p.p. and, in 2011, it was already at 3.8 p.p. In the age category of students aged 30 to 34, the difference is even bigger. Since 2009, it rose from 4.1 p.p. to 7.8 p.p. in 2011. This trend is observed almost everywhere in Europe, with the number of female students, in particular those falling under higher age categories, being even higher than in Slovakia, Source: Eurostat

¹⁶⁰ Summary Report on Gender Equality in Slovakia for 2012, www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/Index/Mater-Dokum-154241

("SRDA") grant scheme: in 2011, subsidies from this source decreased, by 38.1 % for public universities. Such a system of funding or research grants jeopardises the stability of the academic environment, its differentiation and the very substance of higher education. The main problem lies in the unilateral orientation on basic research without linkages to the actual needs of the economy.

1.1.4.3.2 Postgraduates

According to the statistical yearbook prepared by the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education, the share of postgraduates at public, state and private universities, both in full and part-time type of study, in 2012/2013 reached 5.35 % of the total number of students, regardless of their nationality. The positive elements of innovation development include the high share of postgraduates (3.1 per 1,000 inhabitants, aged 25-34, however, technical and natural science specialties are insufficiently covered). Within the SAS, as an external educational institution, the share of postgraduates to total number of researchers and employees represents 25 % and 14 %, respectively. Nevertheless, the rising trend in the number of postgraduates should not be viewed as clearly positive. Most faculties at Slovak universities have high numbers of postgraduates (future researchers), yet the research activity of the faculty is relatively weak. However, the exceptions with a positive share of postgraduates in the overall scientific population exist in each group of faculties. Yet the differences between universities are considerable and are particularly obvious in postgraduate studies. In order to facilitate the development of postgraduates and young research workers, it is necessary to invest in the creation of stimulating and attractive conditions and implement systemic changes in the future development of higher education.

1.1.4.3.3 Intensity of further education

People who have completed higher levels of education tend to participate more in the activities of further education: this holds true both for the SR and for other European countries. Those who need to further educate themselves the most, are not doing so, and vice-versa. There are some 5 % of economically active people aged 25 - 64¹⁶¹ who participate in lifelong learning in Slovakia. The participation of adults in lifelong learning was 3.9 % in 2011 in Slovakia, even though the EU average stands at 8.9 %.

People are deterred from participating in further education because it is not sufficiently accepted by employers and because further education outcomes do not warrant a higher salary or better employability. Such outcomes are not considered equivalent to a diploma or indenture of apprenticeship, which means that this form of education is not given due weight and respect. The creation of suitable conditions for further education represents another obstacle, i.e., time and accessibility of the place of further training, or the form of provided training.

The balance in the labour market is negatively affected by the demographic development in the SR, which is characterised by a decline in birth rate and population ageing. At present, there is a deficiency of workforce in certain professions and this situation is expected to worsen in the future. It is therefore necessary to fill, through lifelong learning, the key job vacancies by young workers particularly with the use of motivational programmes, as well as to allow older people to find a job by obtaining new skills. The key element in all lifelong learning activities is that they must be matched with labour market needs and the requirements of employers, including their cooperation in the provision of education, creation of educational content and participation in the provision of expert advice to adults. With a focus on the inclusive aspect to education, it is necessary to ensure, in a targeted manner, the possibilities for education and professional training of persons with disabilities or social and other disadvantages in order to integrate vulnerable groups of the population into the labour market and society.

¹⁶¹ To allow comparison, for instance, participation in lifelong learning in Norway is 19 % of economically active individuals aged 25 to 64

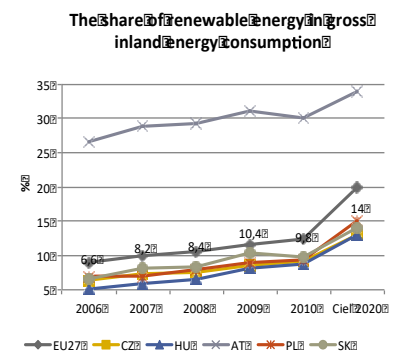
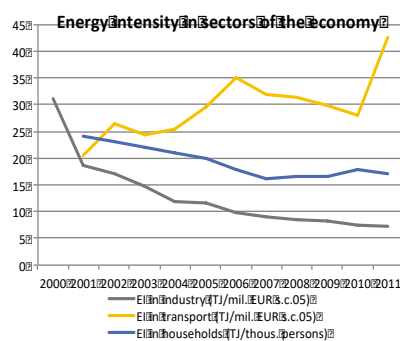
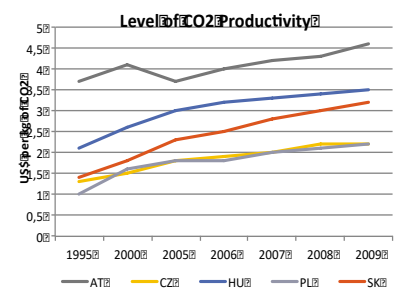
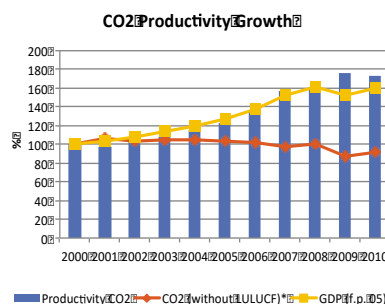
Completing and subsequently implementing the National Qualifications Framework and updating the National Qualifications System in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework and in line with the labour market requirements, which are currently being implemented under the national projects of the Operational Programme Education, will lay the groundwork for better acceptance of lifelong learning outcomes by employers. In terms of the motivation and participation of adults in lifelong learning, it is necessary to ensure the continuity of the outcomes of these projects, including the consultancy system for adult learners as a vehicle for better employability, in particular as regards low-skilled workers and those who have completed lower stages of education.

In terms of rural development, education must be geared towards priority areas of the Common Agricultural Policy, in particular towards increasing the competitiveness of companies and their more effective management, encouraging the introduction of innovation at company level, better use of natural resources, protection of the environment, welfare of animals and improving the quality of life, as well as those areas that are necessary for the SME development of in rural regions.

1.1.4.3.4 Territorial concentration

The key ESF actions with respect to education and training, as well as skills and lifelong learning, and ERDF investments into infrastructure in education and training should be targeted at the entire territory of the SR, in the case of inclusive education, also in view of the needs of the regions listed in the Atlas of Roma Communities 2013. The best prerequisites for the absorption of supported investments exist in centres, territories of settlement core centres, as well as local centres in the territories of other municipalities located on development axes. The key EAFRD actions in rural areas should be located in the territories of other municipalities.

The best prerequisites for the absorption of ESF investments in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning with a focus on SR&I and for the absorption of ERDF investments in infrastructure aimed at supporting SR&I exist in urban functional areas and settlement centres of the 1st and 2nd group, as well as the territories of other municipalities located on development axes. The key EAFRD and EMFF actions in rural areas should be located in the territories of other municipalities.



1.1.5 Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources

Slovakia, as the rest of the EU, considers the support for sustainable and efficient use of resources to be one of the most important economic and environmental challenges, as it stimulates economic growth while ensuring that the quality of this growth leads to a sustainable future¹⁶².

The key needs in this area include: transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors, promoting climate

¹⁶² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM (2011) 571), chap. 1

change adaptation, risk prevention, management and protection of the environment, and promoting resource efficiency.

1.1.5.1 TO4: Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors

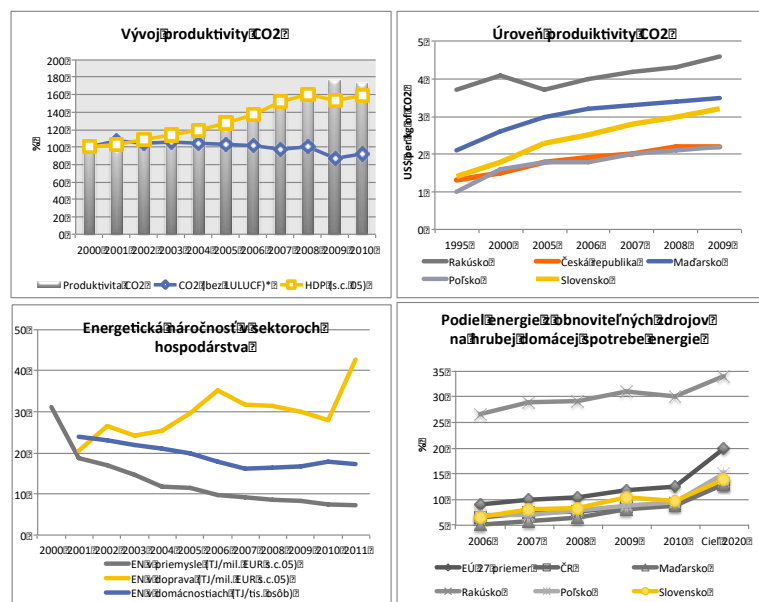
The so-called green growth policy, as one of the priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the OECD, is focused on the use of cleaner energy sources preventing environmental degradation, a shift to a low-carbon economy and a gradual reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution for the purposes of developing a bioeconomy in accordance with communication COM(2012)60. Approximately 50 % of total emissions in 2010 were produced by companies participating in the Emissions Trading System (ETS). In order to meet the national reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, the SR will continue to control the production of emissions in EU-ETS installations towards achieving the defined reduction target of 21 % compared to 2005.

By 2020, Slovakia's emissions in non-ETS sectors (transport, agriculture, households, waste management, non-ETS energy and industrial sources) can increase by a maximum of 13 % against 2005, provided that the set annual ceilings are met..

Up-to-date information on Slovakia's compliance with the emission reduction commitments is provided in the Annual Report of the SR for 2014 submitted to the Commission in accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 525/2013/EU. According to this report, total preliminary anthropogenic¹⁶³ greenhouse gas emissions for 2012 represented 42,719.88 Gg¹⁶⁴ (expressed as CO₂ equivalents). In comparison with 1990, they declined by 41.4 %, dropped 4.4 % year-on-year (against 2011).

After a significant drop in 2009, in particular due to the economic crisis, total anthropogenic emissions for 2010 to 2012 continued to follow a downward trend and emissions still have not reached the level seen before 2009. The most recent evaluation of the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol indicates that the SR is on a path towards not only meeting its reduction commitment, but greatly exceeding it as well. So far Slovakia has been successful in decoupling emissions from GDP growth, i.e., emissions growing at slower pace than GDP. Due to the limited remaining potential, carbon intensity will be reduced at slower speeds and the costs of the technological reduction measures will be higher. In the upcoming period, it will therefore be necessary to primarily focus on win-win measures in terms of increasing energy efficiency and reducing consumption, in particular as regards the household and services sector.

The road transport sector is one of those major sectors where Slovakia does not manage to stabilise the increase in greenhouse gasses emissions. The share of emissions from the energy sector, including



¹⁶³ not including removals for land use, land use change and forestry.

¹⁶⁴ Gg =kilotonnes

transport, in the total greenhouse gas emissions in 2012 was almost 70 % (expressed in CO₂ equivalents); of that figure, emissions from transport represented 22 %. Even though the share of emissions from stationary sources is decreasing, the share of emissions from transport is permanently increasing. Starting at 9 % in 1990, the transport emissions have increased by 31 %. It will therefore be necessary, also in view of Slovakia's emission target until 2020 in non-ETS sectors, to focus more on the introduction of effective policies and measures to halt the negative trends in the production of emissions from road transport. Combustion of fossil fuels in households represents another problematic area where Slovakia fails to effectively regulate the increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

As confirmed by an analysis of greenhouse gas emission trends and projections in Europe for 2012¹⁶⁵, Slovakia could achieve its individual 2020 emissions target in the sectors not covered by the EU ETS with the current set of domestic policies and measures. Since 2001, the developments in environmental effectiveness of the agricultural sector in relation to greenhouse gas emissions can be regarded as positive. In comparison with other EU Member States, Slovakia reports the best figures of greenhouse gas emissions and ammonia from agriculture¹⁶⁶. In Slovakia, air pollutants from agriculture historically dropped the most of all OECD countries. The total emissions of ammonia from the agriculture sector declined by 56 % between 1990 - 2011 (from 53,000 tonnes in 1990 to 30,000 tonnes in 2000 and from 26,000 tonnes in 2005 to 23,000 in 2011). This decline in agriculture-produced emissions is caused in particular by a significant reduction in livestock (for instance, a decline in bovine animals and swine by 70% and, respectively, 77%) and the reduced use of fertilisers. The land use and forestry sector has a negative balance in emissions. This means that removals are higher than emissions from certain activities. Until 2004, they remained relatively stable at some 8–10 % of the total greenhouse gas emissions. In 2004, the removals declined due to higher occurrence of pests and unfavourable climatic conditions. In terms of sequestration processes, the forests play an essential role and their potential to store carbon in wood is much higher than that associated with the growing of crops. The total carbon stock in wood biomass reached 227.9 million tonnes of carbon in 2011. Sequestration could be particularly reinforced by improving the condition of forests and systematic reforestation. The highest increase in greenhouse gas emissions is expected in the transport sector.

Despite dynamic energy efficiency improvements, the SR still has the fifth highest energy intensity, which is approximately three times higher than of the EU-27 average. Pursuant to the Directive on Energy Efficiency (2012/27/EU), Slovakia fixed its national indicative energy savings target expressed as the reduction of final energy consumption at 130 690 TJ for the 2014–2020 period, which represents some 20 % reduction in the consumption of primary energy sources¹⁶⁷.

In terms of energy efficiency, the SR sees the highest energy savings potential in public and residential buildings, industry and heat supply of heat through district heating systems, as well as in activities aimed at promoting sustainable energy sector at national, regional and local level. The Energy Efficiency Action Plan for 2014–2016 contains a plan of actions representing primary energy savings in a total volume of 4.45 TWh. In terms of the projection for the entire programming period, the potential ESI Funds-supported energy savings may be identified as follows:

- Public buildings (430 GWh/year),
- Industry (350 GWh/year),
- Heat supply (1,000 GWh/year),
- Housing sector – multifamily buildings (475 GWh).

¹⁶⁵<http://www.europa.eu/publications/ghg-trends-and-projections-2012>

¹⁶⁶ Source: Context indicators for RDP ; <http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/national-emissions-reported-to-the-unfccc-and-to-the-eu-greenhouse-gas-monitoring-mechanism-6>

¹⁶⁷ Source: The National Reform Programme of the SR 2013, Government Resolution No 198 of 24 April 2013

Reduction of the CO₂ emissions will also be achieved by a more intensive use of renewable energy sources (RES) to the detriment of fossil fuels. According to Directive 2009/28/EC, the SR has a mandatory target of 14 % share of renewable energy sources (RES) in gross final consumption of energy. The interim 8.2 % target for 2011 – 2012 has been fulfilled. In line with these measures, support should be oriented towards heat generation from RES and innovative and promising technologies using RES, including the use of biomass energy generated as a by-product or as waste from agricultural activities, processing, or forestry production. This will ensure the competitiveness of heat generation from RES, while reducing energy generated from fossil fuels and curbing down CO₂ emissions. As regards the use of biomass, only low-emission installations will be supported. In 2020, the share of RES in heat generation will be 14.6 %, and the share of electricity produced from RES is planned at 24 %. In 2012 the share in heat generation was 8.7 %¹⁶⁸ and the share in electricity generation stood at 20.1 %¹⁶⁹. The share of electricity generation from RES is gradually increasing due to a support mechanism involving feed-in fixed prices (tariffs) which became effective in 2009. However, the above mechanism increases the prices of electricity for the industry and other final customers and, therefore, it is likely to change in the future in a way that will gradually, by 2020, limit support for electricity generation from RES due to maturity of such technology. The limitation of support will depend on the meeting of objectives for the individual technologies and will be based on toning down the incentives for such technologies to make their use in electricity production more market oriented. However, in order to achieve the binding target in 2020, it is necessary to preserve financial support and implement measures in accordance with the Slovak National Renewable Energy Action Plan. As a principle to be applied in the future, those who receive financial support in the form of investment aid for the construction of an installation will not be able to use operating financial aid through the feed-in mechanism.

The focus will also be on promoting the deployment of innovative and prospective technologies in the energy sector (e.g., technology using RES) in accordance with RIS3 and in view of the objectives set in the Strategic Energy Technology Plan¹⁷⁰.

1.1.5.1.1 Low industrial energy efficiency

Industry represents one of the most important sectors of the Slovak economy in which energy intensity has been reduced. This was achieved in particular due to the deployment of new innovative technologies and an increasing share of higher value-added industries. Mandatory use of the system of energy audit schemes and the application of low cost measures identified in these audits also contributed significantly to the reduction of energy consumption in industry. Despite the above activities, the share of industry (approximately 40 %) in the final energy consumption in the SR remains relatively high compared to the EU-27 average (roughly 26 %).

Even though the SR fulfilled, based on the common EU indicators, the planned target of energy savings for 2008 – 2010 as outlined in the national Action Plan, specific projects aimed at increasing energy efficiency in industry with total savings standing at some 650 TJ and investment intensity at some EUR 26.4 million, i.e., approximately 55 % of planned savings in industry, have been identified within the evaluation of the Energy Efficiency Action Plan of the SR for 2008 – 2010 under two separate financial mechanisms. The Energy Efficiency Action Plan of the SR for 2011 – 2013 envisages energy savings in industry at 2,490 TJ, which is roughly double the amount of energy savings required under the first action plan. In the draft Energy Efficiency Action Plan of the SR for 2014 – 2016, the annual energy savings in industry are proposed

¹⁶⁸ Source: Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

¹⁶⁹ Source Eurostat: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do;jsessionid=9ea7d07d30e2b8d0224bd2e64ccebcb0ac4fcdf605b.e34MbxSaxaSc40LbNiMbxNbh8Se0>

¹⁷⁰ In accordance with the objectives specified in the SET plan No. KOM(2007) 723 final

at the level of the second Energy Efficiency Action Plan, i.e., an annual reduction of the final consumption of energy in industry at roughly 2,000 TJ (1.5 % of the average final energy consumption in industry between 2010 and 2012).

1.1.5.1.2 Low energy efficiency in the agriculture sector

Under the Energy Efficiency Action Plan for 2011 – 2013, the share of agriculture in Slovakia's final energy consumption during the period between 2001 and 2009 was the lowest, but also the most stable. According to the sectorial indicator report on the impact of the agriculture sector on the environment, which was prepared by the Slovak Environmental Agency in 2010, the positive trends of environmental effectiveness in relation to the consumption of fuels and energy began appearing in the agricultural sector after 2001. In 2011, 157 kToe of energy were used in agriculture and forestry sector which corresponds to the consumption of 40.6 kg of oil equivalent per hectare of used agricultural land. In food industry, the consumed energy represented 121 kToe. In accordance with the draft Energy Policy of the SR, it is possible to expect a reduction in energy consumption in agriculture through the deployment of new technologies and higher self-supply of energy. In order to meet the set targets for energy savings and reduction of the final energy consumption of the SR, investment in more energy efficient technologies and buildings should be supported in the agriculture sector as well.

1.1.5.1.3 Unsustainable transport

Due to a boom in motorised private transport¹⁷¹, obsolete public transport and insufficient use of non-motorised transport and cycling in particular, the main sector where the SR still fails to stabilise the growth of a substantial volume of greenhouse gas emissions¹⁷² is road transport. Since 1990, the share of transport emissions in total emissions increased by 11.5 %.

1.1.5.1.4 Low energy efficiency of buildings and services

The consumption of buildings has the greatest impact on the final energy consumption of households, commercial and services sector, including services provided by public institutions. The share of energy efficient buildings in the SR is low. Between 2008 and 2010, the upgrades of buildings designed to improve their thermal and technical properties reduced the consumption of energy by some 10 GWh (this value was set on the basis of 9,343 certificates). The installation of individual heat meters and thermal valves on radiators also contributes to the reduction of heat consumption. By the end of 2011 some 32 % of the stock of buildings built after 1992 has been renovated. Until 2020, about one half of the existing buildings will be thermally insulated. Support should primarily be targeted on substantial renovation of residential (housing) and public buildings, i.e., buildings where the greatest potential for energy savings exists (in particular office buildings, schools and buildings, that provide healthcare) in accordance with the long-term strategy (under preparation) for mobilising investment in the renovation of the national stock of residential and commercial buildings, both public and private, in line with Article 4 of Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency. A significant reduction in external energy supply, which will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, will be achieved through the implementation of projects which combine energy savings from lower heat consumption with the use of RES primarily for their own consumption. The use of energy services (Energy Performance Contracting/EPC) is planned in line with the results of analyses carried out

¹⁷¹ The car ownership rate in Slovakia has been steadily increasing, standing at 3.26 persons per passenger car in 2010. In the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, the car ownership rate was 2.18, on the other hand, this indicator stood at 4.17 persons in the Prešov Self-Governing Region. The number of trains/ships in rail and waterway transport (as the most environmentally-friendly types of passenger and freight transport) dropped by some 40 % over the period of the past ten years.

¹⁷² The share of emissions from the energy sector, including transport, in the total greenhouse gas emissions in 2010 represented 70% (in CO₂ equivalents); emissions from transport within the energy sector represented 21 %.

under the national project „Supporting the instruments for the deployment and optimisation of energy efficiency measures in public buildings“. EPC will preferably be used in buildings where an energy audit has demonstrated the appropriateness of this method.

The main focus will be given to ensuring that proposed individual measures are mutually complementary in order to optimally utilise the energy saving potential. The priority task is to reduce energy consumption and, subsequently, cover the necessary energy demand from effective district heating systems, or by installing RES-fuelled installations directly in a building or in its immediate vicinity.

As required by Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings, all new public buildings built in 2019 onwards and all buildings built in 2021 onwards should be nearly zero-energy buildings. The above requirements are also reflected in the National Plan for Increasing the Number of Nearly Zero-energy Buildings¹⁷³.

As required under Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, each Member State should start renovating its public buildings as of 2014. This renovation will apply to buildings not meeting the minimum requirements for the energy performance of buildings under Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings. Every year, 3 % of the total floor area of buildings with a total useful floor area over 500 m² must be renovated; later on, the total useful floor area of 250 m² will apply.

1.1.5.1.5 Inefficient heat supply

Emissions from electricity and heat generation account for 24 % of CO₂ emissions from fuel combustion. In the period between 1990 and 2008, these emissions dropped by more than 34 %. However, electricity and heat generation did not register any significant decline during this period¹⁷⁴.

The SR has a well-developed network of district heating systems covering more than 30 % of total heat consumption. In most cases, heat supplied to district heating systems comes from combined heat and power generation (cogeneration). The remaining heat supply is generated mainly in local or district sources of heat (boiler stations, heat plants) using their own heat distribution systems. Obsolete local heat sources, including furnaces for biomass or solid fossil fuels, significantly deteriorate the air quality during the heating season.

The reconstruction of the technically and economically obsolete heat distribution systems and, where necessary, modification of the heat distribution concept from four-pipe systems to two-pipe systems with compact heat exchanger substations in buildings will necessitate an increase in capital expenditure in the foreseeable future, in particular due to the fact that heat offtake declined substantially over the past ten years. In the same vein, it will be necessary to invest in modern, low-emission technologies for the combustion of biomass and fossil fuels, in particular solid fuels, in high-efficiency cogeneration facilities. With refurbished and modernised heat distribution systems, it will be possible to maintain the price of heat from district heating systems at reasonable levels, thus preventing the customers from switching to sources of heat other than district heating in an uncoordinated manner. Otherwise, district heating customers could experience a steep rise in the price of heat which could, in turn, cause the entire district heating system to collapse, with negative implications for the environment, as well as unfavourable social consequences.

1.1.5.1.6 Low share of renewable sources in energy mix and a low share of cogeneration

The use of renewable energy sources stood at 50 PJ in 2012, which accounts for 10.4 % of the gross final energy consumption. Despite a higher use of renewable energy sources over the recent years, their share still remains relatively low in comparison with high imports of fossil fuels. In order to comply with the mandatory 14 % target, the use of renewable energy sources should increase to 80 PJ. The National

¹⁷³The National Plan for Increasing the Number of Nearly Zero-energy Buildings, Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the SR, <http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=83491>

¹⁷⁴ Source: Energy Policies of IEA Countries – The Slovak Republic – 2012 Review

Renewable Energy Action Plan expects a much higher use of the renewable energy sources in the heat sector. So far, the use of RES in the heat sector has seen only a slight increase, because the funds earmarked for these projects were insufficient. For instance, projects using geothermal energy in district heating systems or greenhouses are characterised by a long return on investment and require significant funding that is not available on the market or, if indeed available, it is provided at such terms which render the implementation of these projects ineffective. As regards generation of electricity from renewable energy sources, the priority will be on technologies which combine an innovative solution with positive impacts on the stability of the electricity grid. Effectiveness of support will be accomplished by avoiding any overlaps between similar support instruments while ensuring that the supported projects do not increase the prices of electricity for final customers.

In terms of heat generation, only low-emission facilities using RES (e.g. biomass, geothermal energy, hydrothermal energy, aero-thermal energy and solar energy) should be supported. In the case of electricity generation, support will be oriented towards RES without production of PM₁₀¹⁷⁵ emissions (e.g. wind energy, solar energy, hydro energy, biogas) in accordance with the strategic document for PM10 emissions reduction and provided that this support is based on the strategic energy concept(s) which are subject to the compliance with the relevant EU legislation, including environmental acquis (Water FD, SEA D, Habitats D.). In terms of innovation, supporting the production of bio-methane as an alternative fuel in the transport sector is expected.

The mandatory 10 % target in transport is being fulfilled through the mandatory blending of biofuels meeting the sustainability criteria. These criteria were put in place in 2011. In 2012, the share of RES, including biofuels meeting the sustainability criteria, reached 4.5 % in transport. In the years ahead, the fulfilment of the target will also be facilitated by means of biofuels eligible for multiple counting.

At present, some 20 % of electricity is produced by high-efficiency cogeneration. The share of individual types of fuels used in the combined heat and electricity generation remains relatively stable. The share of wood chips has been gradually increasing since 2007, in particular due to the environmental policy for the reduction of nitrous oxide emissions, as well as because of the national requirement concerning the promotion of electricity generation from biomass only in cogeneration plants. Despite progress made in high-efficiency cogeneration until 2007, the share of electricity from high-efficiency cogeneration follows a downward trend in particular due to the lower useful heat demand.

1.1.5.1.7 RES potential in agriculture

Biomass has the highest share in RES potential in Slovakia (42 %); when expressed in units of energy, the total biomass potential is 147 PJ a year. In terms of useful potential, forest biomass including residues from its processing represent the most important RES. In 2010, the production of wood biomass reached 740 KToe (52.7 % of Slovakia's total RES production). In comparison with 2007, the production of renewable energy from forestry rose by 53 %¹⁷⁶. The total production of renewable energy from the agriculture sector reached 143.3 kToe in 2010 (10.2 % of Slovakia's total RES production), up by 260 % against 2007. Despite an upward trend, the total potential of biomass, which is roughly four times higher than that of hydropower, is still utilised insufficiently, at some 30 %¹⁷⁷. Therefore, it is necessary to support low-emission technologies that are capable of tapping the high potential of biomass from agriculture and forestry.

¹⁷⁵ SK strategy for reduction of PM₁₀, <http://www.minzp.sk/tlacovy-servis/tlacove-spravy/tlacove-spravy-2013/tlacove-spravy-februar-2013/vlada-prijala-strategiu-znizovania-znecistujucich-castic-ovzduasi.html>; own strategy document: <http://enviroportal.sk/uploads/files/ovzduisie/Strategia-pre-redukciu-PM-10-1.pdf>

¹⁷⁶ Source: EurObserv'ER, context indicators for RDP; <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do> (table nrg_1071a: INDIC_NRG (Primary production), PRODUCT (Wood & Wood Waste))

¹⁷⁷ Source: Action Plan for the Use of Biomass for 2008 - 2013: <http://www.mpsr.sk/sk/index.php?navID=2&navID2=2&SID=26&id=1214>

Fast-growing plants and multiannual crops intended primarily for combustion seem to be an advantageous option due to relatively low costs of high-volume production and because they make weed management easier due to optimal land cover. The fast growing plantation area recorded in the central register of fast-growing plantation areas for 2012 was 240 ha (0.012 % of used agricultural land).

1.1.5.1.8 Raising awareness and educational levels in introducing low-carbon strategies

In order to comply with the Europe 2020 strategy objectives for the energy sector, it will be necessary to increase the educational level of experts in the energy sector and in related fields, as well as adequately raise the awareness of the general public in this area. In terms of energy efficiency, awareness should be raised in this area among all population groups ranging from children to experts, with support focusing on the development of awareness and education of general and expert public in the field of energy efficiency, as well as on the implementation of energy efficiency-related information campaigns and on projects involving consultancy and training for civil servants and local government employees in the area of energy efficiency, in order to monitor and evaluate energy efficiency savings.

The absence of local and regional action plans focusing on sustainable energy represents an important factor in the SR. The only exceptions are the municipal development strategies for thermal energy sector.¹⁷⁸ As regards changes in useful heat demand, the municipalities should be playing the key role in stabilising the heat market by more effective use of zoning and building permit procedures with a view to ensuring an economically and environmentally acceptable method of heat supply on the basis of drawn-up or updated thermal energy sector development strategies.

The personnel or financial capacity of cities and municipalities is not sufficient for implementing the action plans for energy supply. So far, only 13 municipalities and cities have availed themselves of the opportunity to accede to the European Covenant of Mayors which sets out a commitment concerning local sustainable energy development. Of that number, three cities have drawn up their sustainable development action plans (hereinafter "AP") which have been approved by the Commission and one action plan is being prepared. For this reason, more support needs to be provided for the preparation and implementation of local and/or regional sustainable energy and energy services development plans. Prepared in accordance with the methodology for a sustainable energy development action plan as applied in the European Covenant of Mayors, the plans will include a comprehensive assessment of the situation in the supply and consumption of all available forms of usable energy, including energy used in transport. The emphasis should particularly be placed on energy efficiency and utilisation of high-efficiency cogeneration potential in compliance with the requirements set out in Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, effective use of RES and environmental protection, especially with respect to reducing the production of greenhouse gas and particulate matter (PM) emissions. The Low-carbon Development Strategy until 2030, which should be prepared by the end of 2015, will serve as the framework for the selection and implementation of cost-effective means. The fulfilment of objectives for meeting the targets in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, increasing the share of RES and improving energy efficiency will cover all sectors that substantially contribute to the production of greenhouse gas emissions, including the transport sector.

1.1.5.1.9 Territorial concentration

In order to address the thematic objective in the most efficient manner and with respect to the territorial concentration of key ERDF actions focusing on energy efficiency, heating and air-conditioning in public buildings and residential buildings (only within the buildings) and on the energy performance of buildings, the use of RES in enterprises, integrated low-carbon strategies and action plans related to sustainable energy for urban zones and raising awareness and educational level in introducing low-carbon strategies, the investments should primarily be located in the most developed territories of urban functional areas,

¹⁷⁸ Preparation of concepts for the thermal energy sector in accordance with Act No 657/2004 Coll. on thermal energy

settlement centres and first-level and second-level settlement core centres. Actions concerning integrated low-carbon strategies and action plans should be located in the entire territory of the SR. In particular, actions related to low-carbon economy in connection with transport should be located in these locations as well, including the relevant development axes where the heaviest traffic burden is expected. The key EAFRD actions in rural areas should be located in the territories of other municipalities.

1.1.5.2 TO5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

Despite the fact that the SR is not among the regions most vulnerable to climate change¹⁷⁹, increasingly extreme weather events have been observed in recent years, such as torrential rains and droughts. Climate change in the SR has been captured using 6 groups of indicators pointing to long-term, mostly deteriorating trends. These trends can be influenced, in particular, by mitigation measures¹⁸⁰. In order to minimise the risks and negative effects of climate change on the quality of life and economic growth, a set of adaptation measures also needs to be applied¹⁸¹. In this regard, Slovakia approved the Strategy for Adaptation to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change and prepared the Methodology for Assessment of Selected Risks at the National Level¹⁸², which will be put into context with other strategic documents¹⁸³. The key issues in respect of adaptation to climate change and risk prevention and management are:

- Investment for adaptation to climate change in the areas of agriculture, forestry, water management, biodiversity, transport, the energy sector, geology, and natural resources;
- Addressing specific risks, ensuring prevention against emergencies affected by climate change, readiness and resilience and developing emergency management systems, as well as instruments to increase effectiveness of risk management and mitigating the risks related to climate change;
- In the area of climate change, the labour market and the education system should play a supportive role, in particular in relation to the need for adapting the labour market towards sustainability, focus on creating green jobs or making existing jobs greener¹⁸⁴.

1.1.5.2.1 Investment for adaptation to climate change

1.1.5.2.1.1 Agriculture and forestry

Agriculture responds to climate change very sensitively, in particular to weather extremes, such as droughts, severe storms and floods. Factors common to global climate change and agricultural production include:

- increase in average air temperature,
- changes in the amount and distribution of precipitation,
- rising CO₂ concentrations,
- level of air pollution (e.g. by tropospheric ozone, PM2.5 and PM10),
- changes in climate variability and occurrence of extreme events.

In the Slovak context, the expected global climate changes will translate, above all, into changes in temperatures and soil moisture affecting plant production, changes in phenological conditions, physical and chemical properties of soils, wintering conditions, as well as changes in the incidence of diseases, pests and weeds. Even though increased temperatures and precipitation may support crop yields in one area, they

¹⁷⁹European Environment Agency Report No 12/2012 "Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe in 2012"

¹⁸⁰Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

¹⁸¹Adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change

¹⁸²http://www.minv.sk/?Dokumenty_na_stiahnutie_CO&subor=175547

¹⁸³For instance, Slovakia's Energy Efficiency Concept, the forthcoming 3rd Energy Efficiency Action Plan

¹⁸⁴For instance, in respect of reducing the consumption of energy and natural resources, transition to a low-carbon economy, protection and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity, and minimisation of waste and pollution

may create zones of drought and increase the risk of erosion in other areas. The soil may absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere (carbon sequestration) and thus mitigate global warming, yet higher temperatures may also encourage the decomposition of biomass, thus increasing CO₂, nitrous oxide and methane emissions.

Climate scenarios predicting climate changes by 2100¹⁸⁵ suggest that these will also affect the properties of soil in the SR, e.g. by increasing the proportion of soils suffering from drought (the need to build irrigation systems and surface water retention basins) or greater risk to soils due to more frequent and intense local soil washing and flooding. Soil protection, agriculture and landscape protection from water regime extremes will require preventive measures to reduce the consequences of floods and waterlogging.

The same situation can be observed in forestry - changes in temperature and moisture conditions, properties of forest soils, as well as the increasing incidence of diseases and pests in forests is reflected in deteriorating forest health. More than 50 % of forests are at medium or higher level of damage as evidenced by the volume of incidental logging, the amount of which regularly exceeds 50 % of the total volume of logging (e.g. in 2011, it accounted for as much as 52 %). In order to stabilise forest soil conditions, focus needs to be on promoting restoration and prevention measures on forest land, as well as implementation considerate forest management procedures, ecological procedures for incidental logging so that they do not cause further damage to forest ecosystems. Slovak forests and their health conditions are also exposed to a risk of forest fires. Between 2003 and 2012, 3626 forest fires broke out in Slovakia, causing a total damage on Slovak forests in the amount of EUR 10,665,079. In 2013, there were 453 forest fires in state-managed forests alone over said period. Costs of putting down forest fires represent a considerable financial burden and impediments to forest management. Similarly to other central European countries, individual and collective recreational activities are strongly linked with nature in Slovakia. Forests are also very close to non-built up and built-up areas of individual municipalities. On that account, Slovakia must promote fire protection efforts to prevent such damage.

Irrigation systems have been built on agricultural land with an area of 321 thousand ha. The developments in climatic conditions in Central Europe, including the SR, indicate increased water consumption even for the cultivation of field crops and, in a broader sense, for the maintenance of existing landscape ecosystems. In order for agriculture to continue, the use of irrigation will need to be intensified and, to maintain landscape ecosystems, water retention in the soil and in the landscape and prevention of water pollution will be needed in particular.

In 2008, the Soil Science and Protection Research Institute (hereinafter "SSPRI") developed a long-term forecast of expansion of irrigated land area and identification of irrigation areas (see the table below). The forecast was developed based on climatic criteria, taking evapotranspiration, or the ratio between actual and potential evapotranspiration over a specified period, also called relative evapotranspiration (ET/ET₀), as the determining criterion. Irrigation areas are identified by an isoline of relative evapotranspiration of 0.7, which delineates dry and moderately dry climate zones in accordance with climate classification.

Estimate of the irrigated land area required in the SR

Irrigation area	Area of irrigated land (in thousands of ha)				
	2005	2010	2030	2050	2075
I.	177	160	255	290	325
II.	76	60	70	72	75
III.	22	15	25	30	35
IV.	18	8	25	30	35
V.	27	7	25	28	30
VI.	1	0	0	0	0
Total	321	250	400	450	500

¹⁸⁵ under the presumption that the moderately pessimistic scenarios for global greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere within the intervals under IPCC IS92 A/B and SRES A2 to B2/B1 occur

Source: SSPRI

Note: I. - Danubian Lowland - South (Hurbanovo); II. - Danubian Lowland - North (Jaslovské Bohunice); III. - Záhorská Lowland (Malacky); IV. - South Slovak basins (Boľkovce); V. - East Slovak Lowland (Michalovce); VI. - Košice Basin (Košice)

According to the SSPRI's forecast, over the forthcoming years the demand for irrigation water in major irrigation areas should increase to around 300 million m³ (up to 500 million m³ in the long run), while the actual increase will be determined by the availability of funding for developing and operating irrigation systems, which will depend on irrigation needs resulting from precipitation deficit. In the future, irrigation economy will focus on the development of private irrigation systems.

On the other hand, it is expected that as a result of climate change, more intense flooding at the local level and waterlogging of agricultural land will occur. Retention of water in the landscape, including torrential rains, can also be achieved by creating conditions for greater water retention capacity of the landscape by making use of more natural elements and procedures (including with respect to agricultural land and forests) or, where applicable, by means of drainage channels adapted for this purpose, as well as by adaptations in forest management, etc. The utilisation of these methods will also significantly reinforce the areas of biodiversity protection and climate change (wetlands are the best CO₂ absorbers). Drainage canals and pumping stations play an important role in the prevention of damage to agricultural production caused by flooding and waterlogging of agricultural land, as well as in the agricultural landscape. Drainage facilities (such as anti-erosion ditches) are effective against water erosion resulting from intense (torrential) rains and streams of running water and the subsequent soil degradation.

Over time, drainage facilities are subject to wear and tear and it becomes increasingly difficult to keep them serviceable, which is further exacerbated by the fact that many of them are in use even after they have reached their intended service life (40 years). In order to keep them functional and to ensure that they perform their protective function, investment in their repair, reconstruction, modernisation and completion is needed. Where there are suitable local conditions, it would be less costly to rebuild the existing drainage systems into controlled drainage systems with runoff retardation.

A look at the possible developments in production in the sector reveals that in 2050 negative effects of climate change are likely to result in a decline in production by 5 to 10 %, depending on its intensity. In order to mitigate the above effects of climate change, measures of good management of the water and soil regimes in agriculture need to be implemented, including improving the effectiveness of water use through mitigation and adaptation measures. In this context, it would be appropriate to use the outcomes of land consolidation projects under which communication, water management, erosion control and environmental equipment and measures are being proposed.

The effects of climate change on forest ecosystems and forestry will translate, above all, into bioclimatic conditions changing by 1-2 vegetation levels and into changes in the growing conditions for forest reproductive material and effects of biotic damaging agents. Damage by snow will extend to higher altitudes (6th to 8th levels) and, due to changes in the time and location of incidence of biotic pests, gradual invasion of new pests, in particular from the Balkan region, is expected. If appropriate adaptation measures are not implemented, damage to forestry production could increase by 5.5 % (EUR 132 million, a decline in employment by around 3 000 people) according to model estimates.

1.1.5.2.1.2 Water management

As stated in the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe¹⁸⁶, climate change is likely to increase water scarcity, as well as the intensity and frequency of floods, which is also one of the most significant water management issues in the SR. Weather extremes, such as prolonged droughts and floods, will have a

¹⁸⁶ Source: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM (2011) 571), chap. 4.4

negative impact on the quality and quantity of water supply in water bodies leading to changes in the hydrological balance of water resources. This may result in a decline in water supply in the country, increased variability of average annual flow rates and greater drainage extremes. If measures using a combination of technical measures on endangered sections of water courses with green landscape infrastructure¹⁸⁷ are not implemented, it can be expected that especially areas with a lack of groundwater resources will face more intensive negative consequences of climate change causing damage not only to property, but also to agricultural production and quality of agricultural and forest land. Well-planned management of flood prevention measures with maximum utilisation of the possibilities offered by measures promoting green infrastructure and well-designed grey infrastructure enabling management of water drainage from the landscape can significantly contribute not only to the elimination of the manifestations of climate change and provision of sufficient water supply for the needs of the population, but also to the stability of the affected ecosystems. The flood protection measures will be implemented in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Plans, taking into account the particular characteristics of the areas they cover and with the aim to ensure the most efficient flood protection. It should be taken into account conveyance routes and areas that have the potential to retain flood water, for example natural floodplains (flood plain areas). Any structural project, must also comply with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. In relation to flood risk reduction projects, a strategic approach needs to be taken to ensure that environmental impacts are duly considered and that FRMPs are coordinated with RBMPs. For any project that modifies the hydro-morphological characteristics of a water body causing deterioration of the status, an appropriate analysis as required by Article 4(7) should be carried out as early as possible in the planning process. This would entail the analysis of alternatives (better environmental options), the set-up of the necessary mitigation measures, and a justification of the importance of the project for overriding public interest. Natural flood risk management measures should be considered prior to grey infrastructure projects for flood prevention and protection as a better environmental option (or as complementary to minimize Grey Infrastructure impacts) provided that they are equally or more effective in terms of meeting the objectives according to Article 1 of the Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks.

Biodiversity

The biodiversity of the main ecosystems (forest, agricultural, water) indicates a slightly negative trend. It may deteriorate further due to increased intensity of land use, climate and water level changes and expansion of non-native species. Invasive species displace native species and alter species representation, which may lead to the collapse of ecosystems. According to data from the Updated National Strategy for the Conservation of Biodiversity until 2020¹⁸⁸, 16.3 % of lower plant species in Slovakia is currently endangered. Of the total of 3 352 species, 40.3 % of higher plant species are endangered. Around 8.4 % of invertebrates and as much as 59 % of vertebrates in Slovakia are currently under the endangered status. Also endangered is 70 % of fish species, all amphibian species, almost 92 % of reptile species, 46 % of nesting bird species and 69 % of mammal species.

In relation to biodiversity, agricultural land with a high nature value, contributing to the diversity of plant and animal species, has been identified¹⁸⁹. Forest ecosystems, which account for 50 % of the area of the SR, significantly contribute to the sequestration of CO₂. Biodiversity is equally supported by forest management procedures compatible with environmental protection and improvement to preserve forest eco-systems

¹⁸⁷ Aimed at slowing down water drainage, retention or accumulation, both in rural and urban areas

¹⁸⁸ http://www.enviroportal.sk/sk_SK/eia/detail/aktualizovana-narodna-strategia-ochrany-biodiverzity-pre-roky-2012-202, approved through Government Resolution No. 12/2014 of 08.01.2014

¹⁸⁹ In the 2007 - 2013 programming period, measures aimed at protecting semi-natural and natural grasslands and Natura 2000 areas were promoted through a combination of AE and LFA measures. As regards the contribution of LFA to biodiversity and high added value agriculture, Natura 2000 sites with an area of 193 906 ha of agricultural land had received support through LFA payments by 2012. AE measures contributed to improving the quality of water (384 295 ha of agricultural land) and soil (361 382 ha of agricultural land), mitigating climate change (267 636 ha of agricultural land), and preventing land marginalisation and abandonment (852 705 ha of agricultural land), thereby meeting the result indicators set out for the 2007 - 2013 period

with high nature value, protection and support of genetic pools, establishment of new gene bases for long-term conservation of the original (autochthonous) genetic pool for forest wood plants *in situ*. Implementation of these and other commitments will automatically be reflected in forest care programmes (forest management plans).

Preserving diversity in forests is enhanced by activities designed to improve the conditions of forests and their recovery and to encourage conversion of spruce grove (at a high degree of decay) to mixed forests with ecologically appropriate and proportionate composition of wood plants, as well as through improvements in forest management procedures, especially by introducing considerate procedures for incidental logging.

1.1.5.2.1.3 Transport

Extreme weather events cause serious complications in almost all modes of transport. As a result, transportation of goods takes longer and travel times and the likelihood of accidents increase.

Closely related to the issue of traffic safety, including in relation to the expected effects of climate change, is the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems. Another measure in this area is the intensification of educational and awareness activities (the media, schools, driving schools) focusing on awareness of the risks associated with extreme weather.

1.1.5.2.1.4 Energy sector

According to the upper bound estimates of the impacts of climate change (greater impact on the economy), without adaptation measures, production in the energy sector will decline by EUR 4.6 billion by 2050, which is almost twice that under the lower bound estimate. In relative terms, this represents a drop in production by almost 11 %¹⁹⁰.

1.1.5.2.1.5 Geology and natural resources

One of the most important manifestations of exogenous geodynamic processes are slope deformations (mostly landslides). Based on data from the Atlas of Maps of Slope Stability in the SR¹⁹¹, there are 21 190 slope deformations in the SR. These cause disruption in an area of 257.5 thousand ha, which represents 5.25 % of the total area of the SR. Slope deformations pose a threat to 98.8 km of motorways and 1st class roads, 571 km of 2nd and 3rd class roads, 62 km of railroads, 11 km of overhead lines, 3.5 km of oil pipelines, 101 km of gas pipelines, 291 km of water pipelines, and almost 30 000 civil engineering works. There are several closed and abandoned mining waste repositories in the SR, which, due to the material stored, present a long-term risk in terms of their impact on human health and the state of the environment and pose a threat of release of hazardous substances should the sites be flooded during torrential rains or local floods.

1.1.5.2.2 Addressing specific risks, preventing disasters and developing disaster management systems

1.1.5.2.2.1 Flood protection

A preliminary flood risk assessment¹⁹² identified 559 geographical areas in the SR at significant flood risks associated with watercourses with a length of 1 286.5 km, 378 of which are geographical areas at a potentially significant flood risk and 181 are geographical areas in which floods may be assumed likely to

¹⁹⁰ Source: Final report from the project "Consequences of Climate Change and Possible Adaptation Measures in Individual Sectors" (Mindáš, Páleník, Nejedlík, 2011) - Chapter 5.8.4 Economic analysis of adaptation measures in the energy sector, p. 235), <http://www.shmu.sk/File/projekty/Zaverecna%20Sprava%20projektu%20Klim.%20Zmena%20a%20Adaptacie%202012.pdf>

¹⁹¹ http://www.geology.sk/new/sk/sub/Geoisnomenu/geof/atlas_st_sv

¹⁹² <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=19303>

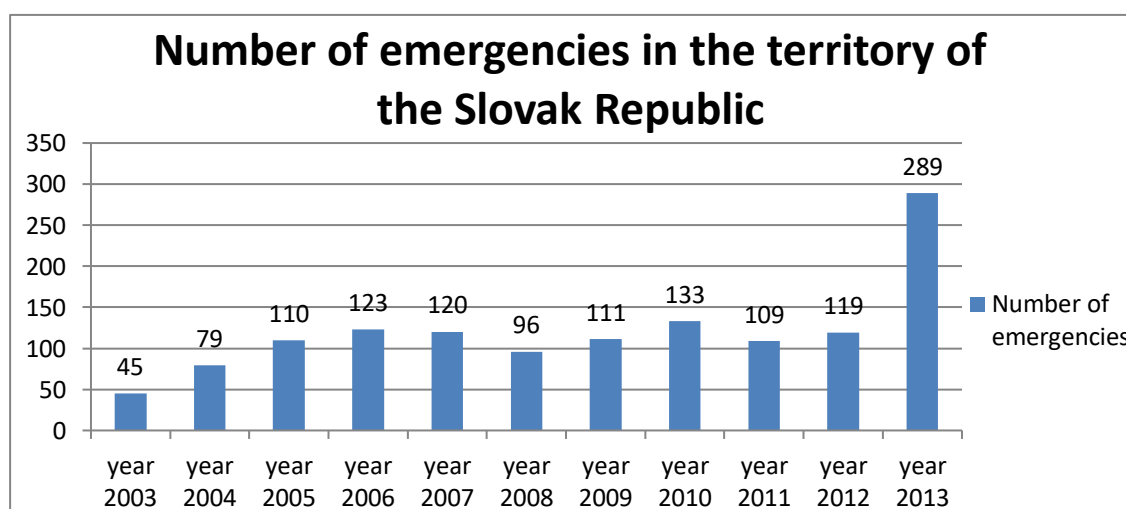
occur¹⁹³. The specific flood protection measures in areas where flood risks have been identified will be subject to flood risk management plans and will be included in the updated river basin management plans. Taking flood risks into consideration in spatial planning and the process of authorisation of construction, so that it takes place in safe locations, as well as appropriate land use, rational management and preventive measures in forests and on agricultural land, which are important in respect of prevention of damage to production caused by floods and soil waterlogging, also play a major role. The use of the flood hazard and flood risk maps as other documentation within spatial planning activities and the preparation of spatial planning documentation will lay the groundwork for mitigating the risks of damage caused by floods.

1.1.5.2.2.2 Services in the area of prevention and preparedness to manage emergency situations (caused by climate change)

Services in the area of safety, prevention and management of risks are services focused on the protection of civilians, ecosystems and on social and economic infrastructure and constitute a support tool for the purposes of intervention management and emergency relief with respect to climate change adaptation and strengthening of internal security.

The development of the emergency management system currently lacks a comprehensive approach that would integrate all components and available resources, relate them to risks and thus systematically reduce their impact on the landscape, its infrastructure and potential for sustainable development. The total amount of damage caused by floods between 1996 and 2010 exceeds EUR 1.4 billion, while, due to inconsistent methodology, this amount does not include damage to agricultural land and production. The problems faced by the current crisis management infrastructure include a lack of comprehensive information about the rise of risks, the status and progress of emergencies affected by climate change and crisis situations, the state of intervention capacity in relation to the needs arising from risks, but also the availability of instruments to increase effectiveness in comprehensive climate management. If their availability is improved and the situation is optimised, the loss of life and damage to health and property of individuals and businesses, as well as to environmental and cultural values, can be reduced. Maps or other documentation in the area of risk prevention and climate change adaptation will be used as other documentation within spatial planning activities and the preparation of spatial planning documentation in accordance with the legislation of the SR.

1.1.5.2.2.2.1 Crisis management infrastructure in public administration



¹⁹³ <http://www.minzp.sk/sekcie/temy-oblasti/voda/ochrana-pred-povodnami/manazment-povodnovych-rizik/>

A growing number of emergencies affected by climate change and comprehensive risks and their impact on ecosystems, social and public infrastructure and the national potential for sustainable growth require optimisation of adaptation and intervention strategies and optimisation of the availability of tools for implementing them. In order to strengthen the resilience of the landscape and its infrastructure to the risks that have been identified, Slovakia's ability to guarantee delivery of public services in crisis situations and engage in assistance to other EU Member States in the event of emergencies affected by climate change, investment in optimisation of the infrastructure for prevention and preparedness for adverse events.

The current crisis management infrastructure faces the problem of a lack of comprehensive information about the rise of a risk, the status and progress of emergencies affected by climate change and crisis situations, but also about the state of intervention capacity in relation to the needs arising from risks. If their availability is improved and the situation is optimised, the loss of life and damage to health and property of individuals and businesses, as well as to environmental and cultural values, can be reduced.

1.1.5.2.2.2 System of monitoring, warning and forecasting services and intervention capacities of emergency responders

According to the concept for the technical framework for early notification and warning of the population in the SR after 2014, a civil protection warning siren network is the main means of alerting the public. In areas not covered by the warning signal from sirens, public communications networks, the mass media and local wireless radios will be used massively to alert the populations.

The cell broadcasting service (automatic delivery of messages to mobile phones within reach of mobile networks in an area under threat) in combination with a network of sirens is a very efficient and cost-effective means of initial public warning. The use of this service will significantly enhance the warning system and the way in which the requirement that the messages be multilingual will be met. One of the monitoring, warning and forecasting service systems is the flood warning and forecasting system project (POVAPSYS), which is being implemented by the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute (hereinafter "SHMI") within the framework of the 2007 - 2013 programming period and which will be followed by further measures that are being prepared. The ultimate objective is the online availability and interoperability of the different monitoring, warning and forecasting service systems and interventions as a prerequisite for ensuring a standard quality of the intervention capacity and services of emergency responders. From the perspective of the population, the objective is to ensure that in permanently inhabited areas an alert can always be delivered to an individual via at least one technical means.

1.1.5.2.2.3 Training for civil protection and management of crisis situations

Training in the area of crisis management¹⁹⁴ is inconsistent, which affects cooperation, decision-making and execution of measures by the different crisis management authorities, including in relation to the population, when responding to complex threats or emergencies affected by climate change. The result of the fragmentation of the educational process is that professional crisis management capacities are underprepared for crisis situations and for responding to them. The content of training does not reflect the current needs and requirements. The preparation for the management of crisis situations fails to take appropriate account of the interconnection between national management systems and volunteer rescue systems and services, associations and volunteer centres in the field of prevention and intervention, as well as monitoring and warning systems. The action to raise awareness of the general public with regard to prevention against emergencies affected by climate change and development of their skills in planning local measures (at the community level) against risks increasing the self-sufficiency of communities in crisis situations and their resilience against emergencies affected by climate change is also inadequate.

1.1.5.2.3 Territorial concentration

The issue of climate change is closely linked to the issue of low-carbon economy since investments channelled into the most polluted areas should mitigate the negative effects caused by climate change and, under optimal conditions, slow it down. ERDF and Cohesion Fund measures for climate change adaptation and risk prevention need to be directed virtually at the whole of the SR, in particular at areas facing the greatest potential risks. Key EAFRD actions in rural areas should be directed at other municipalities.

1.1.5.3 TO6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

The key issues in this area include inadequate protection and unbalanced use of water, insufficient recycling and energy recovery of waste, insufficient appreciation of cultural and natural heritage, inadequate protection of biodiversity, air quality issues, and the existence of contaminated sites.

1.1.5.3.1 Inadequate protection and unbalanced use of water

Council Directive 91/271/EEC lays down the requirements for the collection and treatment of urban waste water for agglomerations with a population equivalent (hereinafter "PE") of more than 2 000. The SR has made the commitment to the EU to meet these by 31 December 2015, but this is extremely difficult both in terms of funding and the number of construction projects. Slovakia's National Programme for the

¹⁹⁴In accordance with Act No 387/2002 Coll., the Ministry of the Interior coordinates the training in preparation for crisis situations for crisis management authorities of ministries, other central government authorities and district authorities in regional capitals. District authorities in regional capitals organise training for crisis management authorities of other district authorities. These district authorities then organise training for crisis management in municipalities

implementation of Council Directive 91/271/EEC shows that, as of 31 December 2010, pollution corresponding to 83.21 % of the total pollution load from agglomerations above 2 000 PE has been eliminated satisfactorily (secondary treatment, i.e. 4 343 thousand PE of the total of 5 215 thousand PE). Compliance with the requirements of the Directive has not been achieved in agglomerations above 10 000 PE. As of the end of this year, only 51.51 % of the pollution load from agglomerations above 10 000 PE (i.e. 2 105 thousand PE of the total of 4 087 thousand PE) was compliant. This means that 43 of the total of 88 wastewater treatment plants (hereinafter referred to as the "WWTP") in this category of agglomerations complied with EU requirements. A portion of agglomerations above 2 000 PE were addressed in 2004 - 2006 and 2007 - 2013 programming periods. An estimated number of agglomerations above 2 000 PE to receive support under the ESI Funds is 64; the actual number will depend on particular agglomerations to which the support will be provided and a volume of investment expenditures. The estimate covers agglomerations that do not meet the requirement under Council Directive 91/271/EEA, especially those in the 2 000 - 10 000 PE category. This will connect 173 205 PE to a public sewage system with municipal waste water treatment.

Activities in the area of wastewater drainage and treatment are priorities under the Water Plan of Slovakia, which includes Plans for the management of the Danube river basin and the Visla river basin. As a result of the discharge of insufficiently treated or untreated wastewater from point sources of pollution (agglomerations, industry and agriculture), surface waters are polluted with nutrients. In compliance with Council Directive 91/271/EEC, the entire territory of Slovakia is considered a sensitive area that requires more stringent treatment technology for all medium and large WWTP. This means that agglomerations above 10 000 PE must be equipped with nutrient removal.

Therefore, in order to achieve a reduction in nutrient pollution of surface waters to at least a level compatible with the criteria of good ecological status/potential, measures in this area and in the area of sewerage and wastewater treatment need to be implemented in agglomerations above 2 000 PE, as well as in agglomerations below 2000 PE located in protected water management areas, which have been found to have poor water quality. The Water Plan of Slovakia indicates that around 36 % of water bodies currently fail to comply with good status and, in terms of the length of watercourse, around 10 to 11 % of water bodies fail to comply with good chemical status. In addition to the above, measures to ensure longitudinal continuity of rivers and their habitats by removing disruptions caused by hydraulic structures, lateral continuity of wetlands and inundations with watercourses, water monitoring, etc. will also contribute to achieving good status of waters.

In terms of problem-free drinking water supply to the population without negative impacts on the environment, the elimination of deficiencies in surface and groundwater treatment plants and water supply lines, especially malfunctions of water inlets and water supply networks, needs to be ensured.

In the agricultural sector, contamination of groundwater and surface water by nitrates and other pollutants is mostly caused by intensive land management and breeding establishments. With certain difficulties, the SR is implementing its Action Plan to Protect Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (Program of Agricultural Activities in Designated Vulnerable Areas), within the meaning of the EU Nitrates Directive, in 33 % of its territory. The area of vulnerable zones in terms of the protection of water resources in the SR is 2 232 810.41 ha, which represents 45.53 % of the area of the SR.

The level of water pollution from agricultural activities is improving and the current situation (a stable trend) is a result of the positive protective effect of the implementation of organic farming support, effective agri-environmental schemes and other systems of sustainable land management practices that minimise pollution of surface and groundwater by nitrates, pesticide residues and other contaminants from agricultural activities (such as accurate fertilisation, integrated plant protection, changes in stabling systems, safe storage and application of organic and industrial fertilisers and pesticides, extended plant cover periods and cultivation of catch crops to eliminate nitrate leaching, etc.).

1.1.5.3.2 Insufficient recycling and recovery of waste

In 2011, a total of 10 835 784.69 tonnes of waste was generated in the SR, of which 379 628.73 tonnes was hazardous waste and 1 766 990.48 tonnes was municipal waste. The average per capita generation of municipal waste amounted to 327 kg, which is less than the EU-27 average.

Municipal waste disposal is dominated by landfilling, which has an almost 75 % share. Energy recovery (around 10.27 %), recycling or reclamation of organic substances by means of composting and recovery of plastics (around 5.65 %), and recycling or reclamation of other inorganic materials (around 3.58 %) are also significant methods of disposal¹⁹⁵.

The strategic objective of Slovakia's waste management is diversion from landfilling. This objective arises from the Waste Framework Directive¹⁹⁶ and the Landfill Directive¹⁹⁷. In accordance with the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive, the SR has set itself the objective to increase, by 2015, preparation for re-use and recycling of waste from households to at least 35 % by weight of the waste generated. It will be similarly demanding to ensure compliance with the requirements under the Landfill Directive relating to reducing the amount of landfilled biodegradable municipal waste.

Waste management activities focused on waste prevention, promotion of separated collection of municipal waste, as well as promotion of recovery of waste aimed at recycling will be supported in the line with the main recommendations of „Roadmap for Slovakia¹⁸⁹“ with the aim to reduce the amount of municipal waste being sent to landfills.

The waste management hierarchy as defined in the Waste Framework Directive has been transposed to Slovakia's legal system through the Wastes Act¹⁹⁸. Prevention of waste generation and increased degree of re-use and recycling of waste contribute to the efficient use and conservation of natural resources, in compliance with the objectives set out in the document “Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe”¹⁹⁹.

In keeping with the bioeconomy development in accordance with Commission communication COM(2012)60 support will be provided for using waste generated by agricultural and primary forestry production as alternative sources of energy.

1.1.5.3.3 Inadequate protection of biodiversity

Biodiversity is essential to the existence of human life and welfare of society, both directly and indirectly through the ecosystem services it underpins²⁰⁰. 9 national parks, 14 protected landscape areas, 610 nature reserves, 166 protected areas and over 300 natural monuments have been designated in the SR in the context of nature protection. Being part of the European Natura 2000 network, a significant portion of this national network of protected areas overlaps with 473 areas of European interest (11.9 % of the SR) and 41 protected bird areas (26.2 % of the SR), as well as 2 World Natural Heritage sites, 14 Ramsar sites and 3 geoparks.

The majority of Natura 2000 areas include agricultural and forest land.

¹⁹⁵ Source: Information on the development trends in waste management are contained in the documents Waste Management Programme of the SR for 2011 - 2015, Slovak Waste Prevention Programme for 2014-2018, the reports on the state of the environment in the SR published at <http://www.enviroportal.sk/spravy/spravy-o-zp/kapitola/1>, as well as in the electronic publications Wastes in the SR and the Environment in the SR - selected indicators, published on the website of the Statistical Office of the SR at <http://portal.statistics.sk/showdoc.do?docid=60471>.

¹⁹⁶ Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives

¹⁹⁷ Council Directive 1999/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste

¹⁹⁸ Act No. 223/2001 Coll. on wastes and on amendments to certain laws, as amended

¹⁹⁹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM (2011) 571), chap. 3.2

²⁰⁰ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM (2011) 571), chap. 4.2

Natura 2000	Number	Area (ha)	Area of agricultural land	Proportion (%)	Area of forest land	Proportion (%)
Protected bird areas	41	1 282 811	365 102	28.4	828 110	64.3
Areas of European interest	473	584 353	58 640	10.0	503 926	86.2

The report on the status of areas, species and habitats of European interest listed in Annex I, II, IV and V of the Habitats Directive for the preceding 6-year period (based on Article 17 of the Habitats Directive) revealed that of the 66 habitat types, 50 plants and 150 animals of European interest evaluated only 19 % were in good status, 34 % were in unsatisfactory status, 18 % were in poor status and the status of 29 % of them was unknown. Therefore, the protection of biodiversity requires the implementation of systematic monitoring (effective biodiversity protection needs based on scientific documents), strengthening of protection of protected areas, in particular the Natura 2000 network and internationally protected areas, intensified development of the green infrastructure and, implementation of further measures to improve the condition of habitats, species and selected ecosystems. Once the forthcoming EU legislation has been passed, measures to eradicate invasive non-native species will become relevant. The implementation of multifunctional measures, which simultaneously contribute to tackling other problems (population health, floods, climate change, etc.), brings many benefits.

As regards the conservation of biodiversity, it is also crucial to define agricultural and forest areas of high nature value (hereinafter “HNV”), systematically protect them, monitor changes and raise awareness of their importance. Areas of high natural value represent 662 000 ha of agricultural land and 1 270 000 ha of forest land.

In addition to AEP, organic farming (implemented on 8 % of agricultural land under LPIS, which represents 150 000 ha) and Natura 2000 payments, LFA/ANC support also indirectly contributes to the preservation of biodiversity as landscape conservation is ensured through the continuation of agricultural activities. 1 225 763 ha of agricultural land has been designated as less favoured areas (64 % of land under LPIS). As much as 60 % of areas with agri-environmental schemes coincide with LFA areas and both supported activities synergistically contribute to biodiversity. It is necessary to continue to foster this positive synergy to an even greater extent in the RDP 2014 - 2020.

1.1.5.3.4 Air quality issues

Based on the regularly conducted analyses of air quality in the SR,²⁰¹ it can be stated that the unfavourable situation in the area of air quality persists, despite the gradual downward trend in the total amount of polluting emissions emitted into the air. Air pollution caused by suspended particulate matter (both PM10 and PM2.5) has been identified as the key issue. The PM10 Reduction Strategy adopted by the Government of the SR²⁰² follows from Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe. It contains cross-cutting measures for reducing PM10 concentration which need to be implemented in several areas, such as heating sector (local heating systems), transport, agriculture (the farming of land) as well as construction activities. In addition to air pollution by PM dust particles (causing the so-called primary dustiness), it is also necessary to reduce air pollution by other pollutants (e.g. nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides, ammonia, etc.), which contribute to secondary dustiness.

²⁰¹ Source: Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute: Report on Air Quality and Shares of Individual Sources of Pollution in Slovakia <http://www.shmu.sk/sk/?page=997> and the Assessment of Ambient Air Quality in Slovakia <http://www.shmu.sk/sk/?page=996>

²⁰² <http://www.minzp.sk/tlacovy-servis/tlacove-spravy/tlacove-spravy-2013/tlacove-spravy-februar-2013/vlada-prijala-strategiu-znizovania-znecistujucich-castic-ovzduchi.html>, the actual document is available at: <http://enviroportal.sk/uploads/files/ovzdušie/Strategia-pre-redukciu-PM-10-1.pdf>

The issue of air quality is also covered in the Roadmap for a Resource-Efficient Europe, which places emphasis on harmful concentrations of dust particles in the air²⁰³.

An analysis of the development trends in emissions of key pollutants until 2011 suggests that small sources of pollution have long been a major contributor to pollution by particulate matter. Obsolescence and unsuitable types of fuel used by heat sources are also significant factors in pollution by other pollutants (SO₂, NO_x and CO in particular). Attention also needs to be paid to other sources of air pollution. An improving standard of air quality can be assured by applying the principles and rules for the use of BAT (best available techniques).

Transport accounts for a significant share of total emissions of pollutants²⁰⁴. In the case of public transport, the key problem is the obsolescence of fleets and the use of diesel-powered buses. In addition to pollution by exhaust emissions, secondary dustiness in the vicinity of roads (winter sanding and other pollution) is also significant.

1.1.5.3.5 Existence of contaminated sites

A systematic inventory of contaminated sites led to the identification of around 1 200 sites that present a risk to human health and the environment, of which around 250 pose a high risk. The register of contaminated sites²⁰⁵, which is part of the Information System of Contaminated Sites, contained 1 960 records as of 1 April 2013.

On 3 March 2010, the Slovak Government approved a strategic document for the systematic elimination of contaminated sites, the “State Programme of Remediation of Contaminated Sites for 2010 - 2015” and, at the same time, took steps to adapt national legislation on contaminated sites by adopting an amendment to Act No 569/2007 Coll. on geological works (the Geological Act), as amended, and Act No 409/2011 Coll. on certain measures related to contaminated sites and on amendments to certain laws.

1.1.5.3.6 Territorial concentration

The CF will provide support for activities arising from the requirements laid down in EU environmental legislation that need to be met at the national level. Activities financed from the CF will, therefore, be directed at the whole of the SR. At the same time, division by administrative borders is not relevant for the majority of activities in the area of environmental infrastructure and environmental protection. The localization of activities in the field of water management is based on the Water Plan of Slovakia and the plans for the management of the Danube and Visla river basins. In the area of collection and treatment of urban waste water, support will focus, as a matter of priority, on agglomerations referred to in the National Programme for the Implementation of Council Directive 91/271/EEC. Similarly, air protection does not allow for a region-specific approach either, as the impact of air pollution, due to the dispersion of emissions, is manifested throughout the SR. The priorities in respect of conservation and restoration of biodiversity stem from, in particular, the Priority Action Framework for the Financing of Natura 2000 in the SR. The activities relate to the entire territory of the SR since the borders of protected areas do not follow the territorial division of the SR. The starting point for territorial concentration of support in the area of remediation of contaminated sites is the inventory of contaminated sites in the SR and the priorities for eliminating them set out in accordance with the State Programme for the Remediation of Contaminated Sites. The territorial priorities for waste management will be based on the current Waste Management

²⁰³Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (COM (2011) 571), chap. 4.5

²⁰⁴It accounts for 25 % of CO emissions, 11 % of NMVOC and around 51 % of nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions. Road transport is the greatest contributor to nitrogen emissions (as much as 44 % in 2011). In 2010, transport accounted for 8 % of the total emissions of particulate matter and 0.40 % of SO₂ emissions. The contribution of transport to heavy metal emissions is around 3 %. CO₂ emissions from transport grew by 7.1 % year-on-year, but in reference to the year 2000, they have increased by 60%. 2011 Report on the State of the Environment <http://www.enviroportal.sk/uploads/spravy/2011-sprava.pdf>

²⁰⁵<http://envirozataze.enviroportal.sk/Informacny-system>

Programme of the SR, drawn up at the national level, which serves as a basis for the subsequent Regional Waste Management Programmes.

ERDF measures for investment in efficient water supply, including new investment in reducing water loss and reconstruction of sewer network and investment in measures to reduce air pollution associated with traffic, will be concentrated primarily on urban functional areas, 1st and 2nd group centres of population, as well as suburban zones of 1st level core areas of settlement and the territories of other municipalities, together with water management agglomerations. ERDF measures to support sustainable integrated urban development and remediation of contaminated sites will be directed primarily at urban functional areas in 1st and 2nd group centres of population.

EAFRD measures for the protection and conservation of biological diversity will be directed, as a matter of priority, at the designated NATURA 2000 areas and areas of high natural value. In the area of soil and water protection, top priority will be given to areas with a high degree of erosion and water pollution from agricultural activities. EAFRD measures to maintain farming in areas with natural or other specific constraints will be directed at precisely defined areas.

1.1.6 Modern and professional public administration

Public administration creates the regulatory environment, guarantees and enforces rights, and creates and implements policies, that directly or indirectly affect the quality of life of people in Slovakia, and, at the same time, is the largest employer²⁰⁶ and owner of the largest volume of fixed assets in the economy²⁰⁷. A standardised quality of public administration services and provision of higher quality services to citizens and businesses is the most important aspect for making any structural changes towards smart growth at the European, national and regional levels a reality.

The ability to provide, at local, regional and national levels, public services that are tailored to the needs of citizens and businesses and that encourage their active participation in public administration and promote job creation, social inclusion and sustainable growth has been identified as the key need in this area.

At present, the intensity and quality of cooperation between the public sector and social and economic partners, the civil society and partners at the local level in ensuring effective performance of public services in selected areas is inadequate. The oversight by the civil society of the performance of public services needs to be reinforced. Active civil society, in partnership with public administration, will oversee the management of public funds and, to this end, use open and accessible data coming from public administration. A network of non-government providers of public services will be created and social innovations and innovation in public services will be promoted with an emphasis on their availability and effectiveness in response to the needs of the recipients of these services.

An important aspect of structural changes towards a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth with respect to modern and professional public administration is also a modern and professional justice system. In the area of justice, it is necessary to improve the efficiency and quality of civil justice procedures, ensure enforcement of courts decisions, and promote alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and, last but not least, to modernise the infrastructure and organisation of courts.

Based on the public finance long-term sustainability indicator (GAP) at unchanged policies, the current position of the SR is considered to be clearly unsustainable²⁰⁸. In order to ensure that debt does not rise above the upper limit²⁰⁹ in the forthcoming decades, structural changes need to be implemented and the

²⁰⁶ Public administration employed 345 000 people in 2012

²⁰⁷ Fixed assets comprise all tangible and intangible assets to which an economic operator has the right of ownership or which it has right to manage. According to Statistical Office data, as of 31.12.2010, by item and economic activity (SK NACE Rev. 2), fixed assets of public administration at cost totalled EUR 21 billion, just behind the electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply sector with EUR 22 billion.<0}

²⁰⁸Report on the Long-term Sustainability of Public Finances (December 2012); Council for Budget Responsibility, December 2012

²⁰⁹ Set to 50 % of GDP through a constitutional act

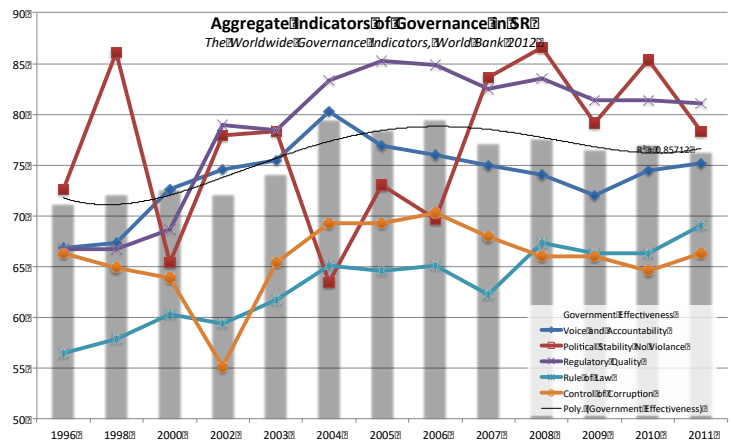
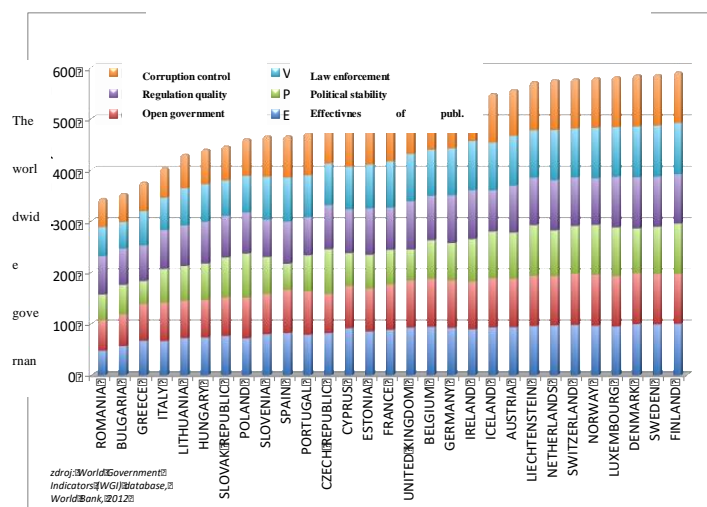
SR needs to ensure a sustained increase in revenues, while reducing public finance expenditure. This can be achieved only through fundamental and comprehensive reform of public administration, which will be based on increased institutional capacity and efficiency of public administration and the introduction of e-Government.

1.1.6.1 TO11: Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and an efficient public administration

Based on an analysis of the World Bank indicators assessing the quality of public administration²¹⁰ (hereinafter “PA”), the SR is one of the least developed countries of the EU. In 2010 and 2011, Slovakia was ranked 9th from the end among EU-27. Since 1996, the SR has been improving its position with regard to openness, regulatory quality and political stability, yet, improvements have been slower in law enforcement. The SR lags significantly behind in the areas of control of corruption (66 of 100) and efficiency of PA (76 of 100), which have the tendency to stagnate or deteriorate. These are the two most important areas that reflect the overall standard and financial intensity of PA services.

Efficiency of PA is a complex indicator assessing the cost-effectiveness (the relationship between public budget expenditure and revenues), the standard of selected services (education, health, transport) and economic policy. The proportion of PA spending on consumption of goods and services of PA (around 50 %)²¹¹, the largest part of which relates to the operation of public administration itself, is disproportionately high. Thanks to budgetary limits, this proportion is maintained at a relatively stable level. With the number of G2P transactions increasing,²¹² the quality of services in the SR is deteriorating²¹³.

The poor standard of PA services is also reflected in Slovakia’s limited participation in cross-border services and prevents deeper integration into the single European digital market. Progress in implementation of the strategy in relation to international interoperability of services and deeper cross-border administrative cooperation is slow compared to other countries (e.g. V4). Interoperability means the provision of services to citizens and businesses with the aim of maximising the social and economic potential of



²¹⁰Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) database, World Bank, 2012; these assess 6 areas: efficiency of public administration, freedom, political stability, regulatory quality, law enforcement, and control of corruption

²¹¹ Government at Glance, OECD, 2011

²¹² Government to public

²¹³ For example, in the area of social welfare administration: instead of the optimal number of 300 unemployed, there are 700 to 900 clients per one employee of the labour office; source: STV News, 29 March 2012

information and communication technologies and providing common access for public authorities in the neighbouring Member States so that it helps citizens and businesses fully benefit from the EU single market in line with the European Interoperability Strategy (EIS) and the European Interoperability Framework (EIF). The reason is the low level of interoperability of information systems as the means for reforming public administration, administrative processes and PA services at the national level²¹⁴.

The key issues in respect of increasing institutional capacity and efficiency of PA include measures improving the standard of public services, integration and optimisation of processes, measures strengthening analytical capacity for policy development, increasing the effectiveness of expenditure and improving human resources management and law enforcement, as well as close cooperation with social partners, the business sector and civil society in the monitoring and implementation of public policies. In the area of strengthening the efficiency of public authorities in the implementation of policies, the key issues include: combating corruption and strengthening the effectiveness and independence of the judiciary and the police, together with law enforcement, improving the efficiency of financial and tax administration, increasing the performance and standard of customs authorities, improving the efficiency of public procurement and strengthening transparency, and capacity building of the makers of employment, education and social policies and sectoral and territorial strategies.

1.1.6.1.1 Structure and infrastructure of public administration

The unsustainable developments in public finances are directly related to the poorly regulated²¹⁵ “evolution” of PA over the last two decades, which can be briefly described as a period of growth in quantity and decline in quality of PA.

This translates in non-transparent organisational structure of PA comprising more than 7 thousand institutions²¹⁶ with around 349 thousand employees (of which approximately 180 thousand are in local self-government), and a large number of redundant processes that are difficult to measure. As a consequence, this not only causes complications for citizens, but also increases government spending due to spatial fragmentation and difficult orientation in PA institutions and services.

While current expenditure of PA was at EUR 7 billion (63 % of total expenditure) in 2001, it will reach EUR 27 billion in December 2015 and account for 96 % of total PA expenditure²¹⁷. The growing share of regular current expenditure siphons away capital expenditure intended for funding long-term development needs and is a major factor of the inefficiency of PA services. This is evidenced, for example, by the lack of investment in the development and renewal of science, education and transport infrastructures in the last two decades²¹⁸. Current development of these infrastructures is taking place entirely through SF and the CF, which underlines inadequate ability of PA to generate its own investment resources.

1.1.6.1.2 Poor interoperability of processes and effectiveness of public administration services

PA processes replicate the hierarchical organisational structure of PA. These are built vertically, with a minimum portion of shared, horizontally integrated processes between departments. In addition to all specialised, agenda-specific processes, the institutions themselves also provide cross-sectional and support

²¹⁴The implementation of several actions under the Digital Agenda is either delayed or jeopardised in the SR. This concerns, in particular, actions 89 (an interoperability framework is missing at the national level), 90 (points of single contact), 91 (cross-border services), and 96 (European Rail Traffic Management System); source: http://daeimplementation.eu/dashboard2_actions.php

²¹⁵ By means of spatial and technological equipment standards

²¹⁶According to Statistical Office data, in 2008 there were 7 408 PA institutions, of which 3 714 were budgetary organisations, 2 926 were municipalities, 719 were contributory and other organisations (non-profit and public organisations, self-governing regions, businesses); Out of the 4 406 budgetary and contributory organisations, 2 629 were schools, secondary grammar schools and universities, 323 were homes (children, social services, retirement, re-education homes), 232 were centres (pedagogical, psychological, leisure, ...)

²¹⁷ Source: 2013 - 2015 public administration budget

²¹⁸Further details are provided in the analysis of the current situation under thematic objectives 1) Strengthening research, technological development and innovation and 7) Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

processes (e.g. registers, property management, IT, HR management, procurement, etc.). The result is a multiplicity of processes and allocations of PA budget resources, as well as absence of a pro-client approach towards citizens and socio-economic partners. Difficulties also occur with respect to handling life situations where citizens and business must still visit a number of offices and submit several types of documents which results in a low degree of transparency in administrative procedures and low savings in time and costs of citizens and businesses.

The introduction of PA will be part of a systematic approach aimed at reducing the administrative burden on citizens and businesses. Systematic approach means the use of appropriate tools for organisational and procedural preparations (the development of process maps) of PA agencies in order to implement instruments contributing to addressing the needs of citizens and businesses (i.e. based on identification of their needs, analysis of how they arise, proposals of possible scenarios for addressing them, identification of the most appropriate alternative for eliminating the causes for such needs, including the implementation and evaluation of the selected solution). Results to be delivered by the implementation of smart PA will also take into account practical aspects of the functioning of the business environment, such as enhancing transparency and availability of public services through cuts in costs for their delivery, reducing time necessary to handle administrative requirements and adapting the services of clients' needs,

In order to ensure a close interconnection with activities under TO2 (e-Government) and TO11 (redesign of processes), the relevant projects will be managed in a coordinated manner²¹⁹ to ensure their complementarity.

The key instrument for enhancing the quality of management of PA processes is programme budgeting, placing an emphasis on the results and outcomes rather than inputs. However, public finance management reform is yet to be completed and, rather than a useful tool, programme budgeting currently constitutes an administrative burden for the administrators of budget chapters²²⁰.

Changing the current, mostly hierarchically organised provision of services into a model of horizontally integrated services, development of a result-oriented culture in PA and de-institutionalisation of public administration services in favour of community-based services are the responses to the current challenges, such as the increasing complexity and pace of changes in the context of limited resources, the absence of an effectively developed network of "one-stop shops" for all electronic and assisted PA services at a single point of service, or isolation and inadequate interoperability of data in departmental systems.

Streamlining of the structure of PA by creating the so-called "one-stop-shops" providing all services at a single point in a pro-client manner and on the basis of the various life situations is a globally implemented concept, which forms part of the common European strategy. The principle lies in dividing PA processes into processes with direct interaction with the public in the "front-office" and other processes – the "back-office", while standardising and centralising these processes so that the public has access to all PA services in one place and at the same time.

1.1.6.1.3 Provision of further training

A uniform system of lifelong learning for PA, including justice, employees in terms of the structure of the types of training, framework definition of its content, participants and methods and forms of training are a

²¹⁹Through its Resolution No 388/2013 of 10 July 2013, the Slovak Government set up a Steering Committee to Coordinate the Public Administration Reform in the SR responsible for ensuring coordination of the implementation of tasks arising from the national PA reform. On 18 December 2013, the Steering Committee submitted to the Government the document "Basic Starting Points of the Public Administration Reform in the SR", which reflects the Government's commitment to carry out a comprehensive reform of PA across all segments where public services are being created, administered and developed, while in the next phase the bases for further development of reform competencies in the various segments of PA will be defined in accordance with the priorities identified

²²⁰The main problem is that some cross-sectional processes have yet to be resolved completely. For instance, there is a lack of closer ties between programme budgeting and policy-making, flexibility for programme managers when choosing the mix of inputs, accurate monitoring and evaluation of programmes, result-based remuneration and, not least, financing of current expenditure on the basis of standards and norms

prerequisite for increasing professionalism and qualifications of the staff and for standardising and improving the quality of PA services. No such system is currently in place in PA.

As regards the provision of further training to the staff of local government authorities, there is an apparent inconsistency in quality and a disproportion in the amount of funding used. Central government authorities provide further training for the relevant staff above all through their own educational institutions or training institutions administered by other central government authorities on a contractual basis, as well as other, private educational institutions and agencies.

In order to develop quality solutions, PA also needs people with expertise who will develop these solutions (e.g. only 8 out of the 13 ministries have analytical units). Experience shows that the various ministries responsible for the implementation of structural policies do not necessarily always have the expertise in all areas. Often, there is a lack of conceptual thinking and the measures proposed are not always sufficiently analytically elaborate, which reduces the quality of the proposed solutions and may also result in creating potential room for inappropriate and lobbyist-driven decisions. In order for the implementation of changes in the fields of organisation, management, implementation of management systems, performance measurement, policy and strategy making, impact assessment, budget programming practices, monitoring and evaluation to be successful, the staff need to receive training in these fields. Further training for the staff in specialised areas is also needed to ensure that citizens are provided quality services.

The improvement of the business environment and overall higher efficiency of services is dependent on a transparent and non-corrupt environment that fosters economic growth and contributes to transparency and equal opportunities in the economy and, ultimately, promotes the quality of people's life. In the SR, there is currently no system in place of legislative and institutional protection for corruption whistleblowers. Effective combat of corruption means more transparency and narrower room for unfair practices in the management of state and PA property and public procurement. The critical areas include unstable legal environment, delays in court proceedings, the quality of judicial personnel, the quality of judicial decisions, measurement of performance of judges and courts, and increased proportion of alternative methods of dispute resolution.

1.1.6.14 Territorial concentration

Since the issue at hand concerns reform of PA at all levels, geographically, it can be described as a nationally relevant issue. ESF key measures aimed at investment in institutional capacity and efficient PA and public services, with a view to reforms, better regulation and good governance, and key ESF actions aimed at capacity building of stakeholders active in the field of employment, education, healthcare and social policies, as well as sectoral and territorial unions designed to initiate reforms at national, regional and local levels, need to be focused primarily on the cities of Bratislava and Košice, centres of population and other local centres.

1.1.7 Justification of the transfer of a 3 % allocation from the less developed regions to the Bratislava Self-governing Region

At the NUTS 2 level, the BSR is the only of the four regions of Slovakia where GDP per capita exceeds 90 % (176 %, 2010)²²¹ of the EU average in PPS. The region's high performance is mainly a result of the presence of the capital city, nevertheless, unlike other metropolitan regions in the EU (e.g. Prague, Berlin or Vienna), the BSR also includes three further districts, namely Malacky, Pezinok and Senec, which have a 31 %²²² share in the region's population and an area more than 4 times larger than that of the city of Bratislava. The requirement for a balanced polycentric development needs to be ensured, in particular, in the context of eliminating the disproportionate growth of internal flows and internal migration of people for work and

²²¹ Source: Eurostat

²²² Source: Regional database of the Statistical Office, 2012

services, which could lead to crisis situations if the spatial growth is unorganised. A systematic approach to managing the development of the BSR requires that the existing natural centres be respected and promoted and the emerging sub-centres, which must be assigned a role in the urban system, be regulated. Among other things, this requires that the desired spatial structure for all activities be identified so that the areas that develop are hierarchically organised and appropriately functionally comprehensive.²²³ In recent years, the suburbanisation tendencies around the city of Bratislava, reflected in migration for housing and economic activities within the region, are gaining in intensity. Despite the fact that the municipalities developing in the context of suburbanisation create new jobs, these fail to cover the needs of the resident population. Moreover, a large proportion of the new economically active population remain oriented on jobs in the region's centres, especially in Bratislava.

1.1.7.1 Business environment conducive to innovation

Thanks to the high concentration of academic and scientific communities, economic diversification throughout the area in question, as well as its attractive location within the open Europe, but mainly due to the overall growth in the society's demand for quality and variability of services, services of an innovative nature are gradually starting to develop in the BSR. Hence, with a view to the gradual computerisation of society, significant changes in the structure of the economy in favour of the tertiary and, partially, the quaternary sectors are occurring in virtually all sectors of the BSR's economy.

1.1.7.1.1 TO1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation

As much as 75 % of the research capacity is located in the BSR and, conversely, 70 % of the industrial base is outside this region. International comparisons show that the performance of research and development in the BSR is poor and faces similar structural problems as those faced by other regions in the SR, which consequently do not allow for appropriate involvement in ERA. Innovation is becoming an increasingly important phenomenon for the economy and activities based on intellectual property are also turning into an important commodity. The intensive business activity and concentration of scientific-research capacity in the BSR creates favourable conditions for the emergence of high-tech companies and knowledge-intensive services²²⁴, among other things, thanks to the introduction of knowledge economy elements and implementation of transnational development initiatives through the Danube strategy²²⁵. In this respect, the BSR creates an environment for testing innovative business concepts and transferring the outcomes of the scientific-research process into commercial practice. Systemic support for enterprises in the BSR is, therefore, of vital importance to the development of the innovation potential of this region as the country's key economic centre and, hence, for providing spillover effects, i.e. the transfer/replicability of innovation, know-how and outcomes of applied research and development from institutions and enterprises in the BSR to other regions of Slovakia. As regards the envisaged utilisation of financial instruments for supporting SMEs, their economic viability under commercial conditions, without making the BSR eligible, is highly problematic²²⁶. The importance of promoting universities in the BSR is also based on the fact that more

²²³ The term functional comprehensiveness needs to be understood as the need to provide not only the appropriate number of new jobs in the relevant territory, but also the complementary basic and advanced social, service and leisure facilities so that transport mobility related to these facilities is shortened and minimised.

²²⁴ A half of the total number of high-tech and knowledge-intensive services started up in Slovakia in 2012 is located in the BSR. The structure of the BSR's economy provides good conditions for the utilisation of the intellectual potential.

²²⁵ A number of activities are being carried out in the BSR to promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation between SMEs with adjacent regions and countries in the Bratislava – Vienna – Győr – Brno quadrangle (the CENTROPE project). There are good conditions in the region for exploiting the potential of Europe's multi-modal transport system along the Danube, thereby meeting the objectives of the Danube Strategy in the area of commercial transport (priority areas 1A and 1B) and socio-economic development (priority areas 7 and 8; priority area 7 is coordinated by Slovakia). The European Alliance for Innovation is currently setting up a regional branch at the Slovak Technical University, the organisation's first in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of the alliance is to support the emergence of innovative start-ups and spin-offs on the basis of knowledge gained from academic research and the creation of international research and innovation partnerships between enterprises and scientific-research institutions.

²²⁶ This fact is particularly important in the case of risk capital instruments as the Slovak market, having no history of and lacking functional capital-funding instruments, is very underdeveloped in this area, which, in combination with the unfavourable structure in terms of size and under-

than 75 % of students of the two largest Slovak universities come from regions of Slovakia²²⁷ outside the BSR, which means that educational activities, including the preparation of a new generation of research workers and workers for key industrial sectors, also have a significant impact on the less developed regions of Slovakia. Scientific teams from research institutions in Bratislava cooperate with businesses, a large proportion of which are located outside the BSR and are of great importance to the Slovak economy as a whole, whether this concerns the automotive industry, mechanical engineering, the energy sector or other sectors. Educational institutions in Bratislava provide education to a substantial portion of the total number of students in Slovakia, who are also needed by the industry in regions outside the BSR in order to be competitive²²⁸.

In the area of R&D, the establishment of various types of research centres (centres of excellence, competence centres, university science parks, research centres of national importance) was promoted in the 2007 - 2013 programming period. In the 2014 - 2020 programming period, the centres that received support will need to be consolidated and merged into larger interdisciplinary units after their quality has been assessed.

The main purpose of the activities planned in the BSR is to eliminate the aforementioned difficulties and enable effective collaboration in the areas of expertise, development of technical skills and innovation²²⁹ between the research and development base in the BSR

and other regions of Slovakia, with special emphasis on cooperation with industrial operators in the key sectors identified in the RIS3 strategy. For the purposes of implementing the objectives of the RIS3 strategy, it is necessary to strengthen educational, research, innovation and entrepreneurial capacity of Slovakia's largest research-oriented universities, organisations of the SAS and the emerging centres of vocational education and training²³⁰ capable of introducing innovation in Slovakia, which are located in the BSR so that they become significantly more engaged in international science and technology cooperation and better connected with economic reality.

1.1.7.1.2 TO3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, of the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)

More than a third of the total number of SMEs is concentrated in the BSR²³¹. SMEs in the BSR generate more than 30 % of total sales and nearly a third (32.6 %) of the added value created in the sector (2011). Companies in the territory of the BSR provide jobs to a fifth (20.1 %) of the persons in employment in Slovakia (2012). The region exhibits a high degree of entrepreneurial activity and in 2012, 38.9 % of all start-ups in the SR were registered in the territory of the BSR. More than a quarter of high-tech industrial enterprises, more than a fifth of mid-tech enterprises and almost a half of the enterprises providing knowledge-intensive services²³² operate in this region. Within high-tech sectors, as much as a half of the total number of high-tech enterprises and knowledge-intensive services started up are in the BSR²³³.

capitalisation of SMEs, creates significant obstacles to economic viability of products. Without making the whole territory eligible, including the BSR, which has the potential to generate innovative business ventures, the effective implementation of these products will be very unlikely as evidenced by the current problems in the preparation of risk capital instruments under the JEREMIE initiative.

²²⁷ Source: Slovak Technical University in Bratislava, Comenius University in Bratislava

²²⁸ "Knowledge to Prosperity - Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic" - RIS3 approved by the Government on 13 November 2013

²²⁹ The performance of Slovakia in this policy area is consistently below the EU average (e.g. SMEs providing training to their employees - 8 % points below the average, SMEs implementing in-house innovation - 15 % points below the average). Source: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/performance-review/files/countries-sheets/2013/slovakia_sk.pdf

²³⁰ Under Act No. 184/2009 Coll. on vocational education and training and on amendments to certain laws, they provide, among other things, practical training in identical or related fields in the whole of Slovakia, train teachers of vocational subjects and practical training teachers on new technologies, and prepare experts on the basis of demand from businesses

²³¹ Legal persons

²³² Slovak Statistical Office, 2012

²³³ A major portion of creative industry businesses is concentrated in this territory, which has the infrastructure in place for developing business

As a result of the significant restrictions placed on assistance from the EU cohesion policy programmes and other systemic assistance in the previous period, innovations are not being implemented in the business sector, the outcomes of the scientific-research process are being poorly utilised and economic stagnation and marginalisation of businesses (in particular SMEs) continue. In 2011, only 51.8 % of SMEs in the region recorded profit (including zero profit), which is the lowest proportion of all regions of the SR²³⁴. Consequences of the financing gap for micro-enterprises and start-ups can be observed in the BSR. According to a survey,²³⁵ only 5.1 % of entrepreneurs who applied for a loan were successful²³⁶, which is the lowest success rate of all self-governing regions in the SR. As many as 12.9 % of respondents stated that the terms of financing were significantly worse than in 2008, making it the highest proportion of all self-governing regions.

The strong presence of businesses in the BSR represents a significant absorption potential for the application of financial instruments. According to an analysis of the financing gap for SMEs, the absorption potential of the BSR for a credit instrument is EUR 144.2 million. By including this region among eligible regions, the absorption potential for a credit instrument implemented at the national level would increase by as much as 20.7 %. In the case of medium-sized enterprises, the increase in absorption potential would be as much as 31 %. The exclusion of the BSR has caused major difficulties in adjusting the sustainability criteria for the financial instruments under the JEREMIE initiative and their attractiveness to commercial intermediaries, which contributed to the significant delay in launching this initiative in the SR.

Given the above specificities of the BSR, assistance should be implemented, in particular, through financial instruments aimed at improving SMEs' access to funding, especially for start-ups, which are emerging at a very rapid rate. Since support provided only in the form of financial assistance usually does not provide for a long-term growth of SMEs' competitiveness, a business centre will be created that will act as a one-stop-shop²³⁷ structure providing combined services (information, advice, funding, contacts, premises, equipment, administrative and organisational services) with the aim of providing long-term support, in particular, to start-ups, but also to existing SMEs. The creation of a business centre in the BSR is a model that will be subsequently introduced in other regions of the SR. Unlike the partially developed incubators dedicated to supporting a narrowly defined group of incubator businesses, these centres (and the incubators within them) will exist as part of the concept of one-stop-shops under a single interconnected structure²³⁸. SMEs will also receive support in the form of consulting services in the area of introducing innovations (especially non-technological innovations in the service sector), utilising the outcomes of the scientific-research process and testing innovative business concepts and ideas in domestic and foreign markets. The results of these activities can then be transferred through corporate networks, supplier

ideas in this area; Statistical Office 2012

²³⁴ Datacentrum, 2011

²³⁵ Source: NADSME, 2013, Financing of Micro-enterprises and Start-ups

²³⁶ Slovakia's average is 9 %

²³⁷ The proposed model of business centres providing services as points of first contact for new businesses combines a number of advantages. The scope of activities and services provided by the centres will be more comprehensive and will include incubation services, as well as cover a broad scope of information and consulting services, hence offering support for a potentially larger range of businesses than business/technology incubators. Depending on their needs, start-ups entering the centre will be provided a variety of services combining financial and non-financial support, which for some of them may involve the provision of premises for their activities, as well as other incubation services. The business centres will form part of a network managed by a single institution (the Slovak Trade Agency), which has deep knowledge and experience of the Slovak business environment. This will be ensured by professional and competent staff who will receive regular training, which was not the case in the incubators existing previously. At the same time, the business centres will be created in cooperation with and active participation of regional entities, such as universities, regional agencies, regional government authorities, in whose activities they will be involved, especially with regional technical universities, or R&D institutions and analytical expert structures (the so-called think-tanks), which have the capacity to manage the development of technology-based companies. This will make it possible to ensure the involvement and engagement of local stakeholders (not involved in the incubators created previously), hence ensuring efficient support for SMEs. Subsequently, the funding for activities of the business centres will come from various sources, including the EU/public support, projects, regional funds and private sector contributions, and will be allocated to diverse activities

²³⁸ The system of developing incubators will be based on a uniform concept that will take into account the needs, regional specificities and sectoral focus of a future national network of incubators in all areas

chains, project cooperation or via other means to other regions of the SR, thereby creating a spill-over effect transferring the potential of this key economic centre of the country. In terms of dispersion of economic activities to the region's territory, as well as support for the development of regional and sub-regional centres, greater support needs to be given to SMEs in all sectors of the economy, with a focus on local specificities, realities, conditions and potentials.

1.1.7.2 Infrastructure for economic growth and job creation

Concentration of activities based on the endogenous potential of the Bratislava Self-governing regions that are essential to the economic growth and employment has considerably changed the structure and intensity of traffic. This change must also be considered in a traffic infrastructure policy for this region to be able to address specific needs of freight and public transport. The underutilised potential of the existing transport network reduces economic interaction of the region's endogenous sources. In this respect, a sustainable mobility model in the region requires interventions to ensure interoperability of different modes of transport, safety of the most vulnerable groups of road traffic participants, capacities capable of ensuring free flow of traffic even in the case of its high intensity and a smart traffic system to provide information to traffic participants.

1.1.7.2.1 TO7: Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

A significant shift of transit transport onto transport corridors of national importance has created a need to modernise 2nd and, where applicable, 3rd class roads to ensure freight transport services at the regional level where constraining freight transport is not advisable due to economic reasons.

According to an assessment of the state of road infrastructure in the BSR conducted in 2012, as much as 76.9 % of the total length of 2nd class roads administered by the BSR is in an adverse condition (non-compliant and critical condition)²³⁹. The number is even higher in the case of 3rd class roads administered by the BSR, where as much as 87.7 % of roads are in bed conditions. This unfavourable situation is caused by traffic overload resulting from the fact that this region is a major interregional and transnational transport corridor. The fact that the average number of passenger cars per capita in the BSR in 2012 exceeded the Slovak average by 54 % and reached 0.5 vehicles per capita does not help the situation. The traffic intensity in this road category is three times the Slovak average²⁴⁰, but no funding support was provided to the regional road network in the 2007 - 2013 programming period.

Rail transport is a backbone of the integrated transport system in the BSR, and its accessibility has gradually increased by building a complementary structure of PPT and coordinating performance of transport services providers. Ensuring links to rail transport, comprising the infrastructure of PPT (such as integrated terminals, transfer stops, information systems) and non-motorised transport, is boosting the effectiveness, competitiveness and attractiveness of the ITS. An increase in individual transport at the detriment of the public transport, traffic congestions on main roads entering the Slovak capital of Bratislava and ineffective commuting have adverse impacts on the quality of air and mobility of citizens.

With a view to the need to phase out conventionally fuelled cars from urban traffic, the promotion of a more extensive use of cycling and pedestrian and PPT will be a challenge for the future, especially in Bratislava and its periphery.

²³⁹ Overview of the state of 2nd class roads by self-governing region in 2012, SSC 2013

²⁴⁰ Source: Bratislava Region Master Plan, p. 86

1.1.7.3 Human capital development and improved participation in the labour market

The pace of the BSR's economic growth, with gross domestic product per capita in PPS at 188 %²⁴¹ in 2010 compared to 2001 and annual net investment in long-term assets at 240 %²⁴² compared to 2001, greatly widened the gap between the degree of development of the private and public sectors. The dynamic growth of the private sector is influenced by demographic developments (e.g. net migration, natural population growth, retirement-age population growth) and labour market developments (e.g. new skill requirements, internationalisation, lifelong learning), which requires structural changes in the systems of education and social services that have a significant effect on the rate of human capital development in the region.

Approximately 12 % of Slovakia's workforce commutes for work to a different region. Of that, 57% commute to the BSR²⁴³. The reasons include higher wages, better career development opportunities, and large and stable employers. Also, a high number of universities concentrated in Bratislava turn out high numbers of graduates who decide to stay after they find a job here. The BSR is considered the most developed Slovak region which also provides education and job opportunities to people from less developed regions.

Since 2006, positive natural population growth can be observed in the BSR. The net rate of migration was positive throughout the 2001 - 2011 period. On the other hand, according to this forecast²⁴⁴, the working-age population (15-65 years) is expected to gradually decline by 2025, which will be most pronounced in the capital city of Bratislava, where it will decrease by 8.5 % compared to 2011, and the retirement-age population (65+) is expected to grow relatively rapidly by 2025. Due to increase in the retirement age and population ageing, as well as due to the ever-increasing demands for education in relation to labour market requirements, further training, as part of lifelong learning, is a key factor in the development of the Slovak society.

1.1.7.3.1 TO8: Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility

The number of women in employment in the BSR has been gradually decreasing since 2008, from 158.9 thousand to 150.8 thousand in 2012. With natural population growth up at 2.91 in 2012 from -1.57 in 2001²⁴⁵, imbalance between private and working life creates additional costs in the case of a prolonged period of parental leave at the expense of employment. The negative economic impact manifests itself markedly especially in a dynamically growing region with an inadequate increase in the capacity of childcare facilities.

It is crucial that care services for children up to three years of age are supported in the BSR to increase availability of quality, sustainable and affordable solutions, especially in the provision of children's care services, with the aim to also increase employment in other regions through the possibility of finding a job in the BSR.

From a regional point of view, the BSR has great potential in the culture and creativity sector (hereinafter referred to as the "CCS"), which is characterised by significant territorial concentration of businesses and organisations pursuing activities in the sector. These could work intensively towards creating clusters with other regions of the SR (e.g. with the European Capital of Culture - Košice, substantially dominated by the areas of human capital and regulatory measures to promote creativity). Around 42.5 % of all CCS enterprises are based in the BSR, of which 91 % is located directly in the city of Bratislava. In addition, the

²⁴¹ Source: Regional database of the Statistical Office, 2012, own calculations

²⁴² Source: Regional database of the Statistical Office, 2012, own calculations

²⁴³ Source: Statistical survey on cost of labour ISCP (MLSAF SR) 1-04, Calculations: TREXIMA Bratislava

²⁴⁴ Source: Statistical Office, 2011, Forecast of Demographic Developments in the Districts of Slovakia by 2025, Demographic Research Centre, INFOSTAT, 2008

²⁴⁵ Source: Regional database of the Statistical Office, 2012

majority of art schools and universities with art and creativity curricula are located here. In order to ensure promotion of job creation in the CCS, a completely new type of physical infrastructure needs to be developed (e.g. creative centres, hubs, etc.) as a spot encouraging creative work, testing and innovation in services. Also related to this is the systematic support for activities to promote employment and investment in self-employment (self-employed persons or free-lance artists) and SMEs.

1.1.7.3.2 TO9: Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination

The imperfect system of social services and substitute care for children is often the cause of social exclusion of people with disabilities, senior citizens and children in substitute care. Due to a high degree of institutionalisation, the system of social services and substitute care in the BSR cannot deliver the fundamental solution, that is, to facilitate full social inclusion of recipients of social services and persons in substitute care. The dynamic economic development significantly affects the price level of basic living necessities for the population in the BSR (e.g. in 2012, household expenditure for rental housing in the BSR was 85.2 % higher, transport services expenditure was 15 % higher and food expenditure was 13 % higher than the Slovak average)²⁴⁶, which requires significantly higher investment in services that facilitate social inclusion, independence and full-fledged life of largely low-income groups of population. The measures are designed to provide support to persons at risk of social exclusion or those with limited ability to integrate socially and deal with their problems independently so that they can stay in their home environment, live independently, be active and participate socially. In terms of projections of population age structure, the share of retirement-age population in the total population of the BSR in 2025 will be 21.8 %²⁴⁷, which is an 8 % increase compared to 2011. The changes in the age structure of the population, the high cost of living and the development of socio-pathological phenomena in the metropolitan region will increase the risk of social exclusion, thereby creating higher demand for social services in order to deal with unfavourable social situation due to severe disability, unfavourable health or due to reaching retirement age. The need to promote de-institutionalisation of substitute care, which is under way throughout Slovakia, and the development of socio-pathological phenomena (such as crime, drug abuse, etc.) in the BSR require strong support for changes in the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship in this region. Promoting active social inclusion, de-institutionalisation, prevention and elimination of violence and children's care services with the BSR, as well, represents benefits for the entire community and directly affect employment, or employment of people on the labour market, boosting Slovakia's economic growth and competitiveness.

1.1.7.3.3 TO10: Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning

A slow social progress dependent on investment in the public infrastructure for education, in particular, has resulted in insufficient utilisation of human capital in the BSR, reflected in low participation of children in pre-primary education (70.1 %)²⁴⁸, bad results in international comparison surveys on the quality of education, long-term unemployment (2.49 %²⁴⁹ in 2012), a low level of participation of Slovakia's population in lifelong learning (3.1 %²⁵⁰ in 2012), and youth unemployment, which was around half (17.5 % in 2012) that of the national level (34 % in 2012)²⁵¹ in the BSR. The above issues are mainly due to the

²⁴⁶ Source: Statistical Office, 2012 http://portal.statistics.sk/files/ru_publicacia_2012.pdf

²⁴⁷ Source: Demographic Research Centre

²⁴⁸ Source: Eurostat <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00179&plugin=1>

²⁴⁹ Source: Eurostat <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tgs00053&plugin=1> note: it should be taken into account that the total unemployment rate in the BSR was 5.7 % in 2012, which means that long-term unemployment accounted for almost half of the total unemployment in the region

²⁵⁰ Source: Eurostat <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdsc440&plugin=1> note: Data for the region were not available

²⁵¹ Source: Eurostat <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdec460&plugin=1>

declining standard of the education system and justified pressure from the private sector on the level of knowledge, innovation and creativity. The situation in the BSR further deteriorated in the 2007-2013 programming period during which only a minimum of funds was spent on pre-primary, primary and secondary education²⁵².

Investments in education in the BSR are based on the utilisation of positive urbanisation effects that allow for the creation of specialised infrastructure (centres of vocational education and training), specialised services (lifelong learning for the elderly), new industries and knowledge (acquiring experience with technologically advanced facilities). The spillover effect on less developed regions will result in the provision of services that they will be subsequently able to utilise without input costs, thereby increasing their competitiveness and providing them with an opportunity to invest the resources in other areas of the economy in need of them. In addition, the promotion of the centres of vocational education and training is part of the national initiative to support a system of dual education in secondary vocational schools that will provide top-level training for students and lifelong learning for teachers from all over Slovakia subject to compulsory participation by the private sector.

The objectives specified for individual areas of education are pivotal from the perspective of the Slovak education system as a whole, because aligning education with labour market demands must be done irrespective of territorial coverage. The insufficient linking of education system outputs with labour market requirements has been criticised by employers throughout the whole of Slovakia.²⁵³ Such key capabilities as ICT skills, knowledge of foreign languages and economic skills which are necessary in order to succeed on the labour market are taught to children already at primary schools. Slovak pupils are average scorers in PISA testing, with a downward trend, irrespective of the territory they come from.²⁵⁴

A co-ordinated system for the participation of employers in vocational training and education must be implemented nation-wide, taking into account regional specifics and needs. Universities located in the BSR provide tertiary education to people across the whole of Slovakia; it means these universities cover the educational needs for entire Slovakia. By region, the BSR has the highest density of universities. According to the data from the central register of students available as at 31 October 2012, full-time students at public and state universities from outside the BSR accounted for 76.1 % of the total number of students. After graduation, students transfer the knowledge and skills they obtain to less developed regions.

1.1.7.4 Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources

The main sources of air pollution are point sources of industrial activity (Slovnaft, Volkswagen, Holcim and others), but also mobile sources - car traffic. Sources of pollution are concentrated mainly in the districts of the BSR.

1.1.7.4.1 TO4: Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors

One of the important pillars for improving the standard and availability of housing is the renovation of the existing housing stock with the aim of reducing its energy intensity, increasing the safety of residential buildings and preserving the housing stock, and this, as a matter of priority, in apartments built using mass construction methods, with an emphasis on apartments built using the concrete panel technology. In the 1955 - 1992 period, around 757 thousand apartments were built in Slovakia using this technology, of which over 20 % are located in the BSR (155 thousand apartments). Of this number, around 20 to 25 % of

²⁵² Source: www.NSRF.sk; in the 2007 - 2013 programming period, EUR 10.4 million was allocated for ESF activities under the OP Education;

²⁵³ Results of the first survey on employment http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-SlovakRepublic/Local%20Assets/Documents/np14/sk_Vysledky_z_prieskumu_1.pdf

²⁵⁴ Results of a nation-wide testing of grade 9 primary school students in 2012/2013 http://www.nucem.sk/documents//26/testovanie_9_2013/vysledky/Vysledky_T9-2013_F.pdf

apartments have been renovated so far, which means that further funding is needed to renovate around 75 % of apartments. In absolute terms, this is almost 120 thousand apartments in the BSR.

Promotion of the construction of electricity generation installations using small renewable energy sources, such as photovoltaic power plants (hereinafter referred to as “PVPP”), photovoltaic water heating and small wind turbines is also of considerable importance for the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources. This also includes the construction of heat production installations using RES, such as solar panels, biomass boilers and heat pumps. Support will be provided to systems producing electricity or heat in a small source for the use of RES with preference given to maximisation of consumption in the place of production. The support for small RES for multi apartment buildings will be possible only after having submitted an energy audit which will take into account energy saving measures implemented from the ESI Funds or own resources. Small renewable energy sources are planned to be supported in particular with respect to family houses. Measures aimed at increasing the share of RES in gross final energy consumption to the target level need to be implemented throughout the territory of the SR. The target group comprises approx. 856 thousand occupied housing units in family houses, around 65 thousand, i.e. 7.6 %, of which are located in the BSR. The BSR has a 4.2 % share in the total area of the SR. Due to the geographical location, it is especially advisable to focus the support for installations in the BSR on the use of solar energy and energy taken from the environment by means of heat pumps.

Gradual replacement of conventional sources by dispersed production from RES reduces the carbon footprint of the energy sector, contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and reduces dependence on imports of primary energy sources. The solution is innovative in that proposed conditions for the construction of small sources and the criteria for financial assistance have been formulated in such way that they motivate individuals to cover only their own consumption, thereby minimising the risk of reverse flow of power from take-off nodes to the grid²⁵⁵. The solution has a positive impact on the stability of the transmission grid.

The envisaged allocation for the BSR will ensure uniform distribution of RES in Slovakia’s grid, thereby preventing undesirable concentration of sources in other regions. At the same time, equal opportunities for all Slovakia’s citizens for the production of green energy will be ensured.

1.1.7.5 Modern and professional public administration

1.1.7.5.1 TO11: Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration

Support for activities in the territory of the BSR will be based on the underlying premises of the reform of public administration in Slovakia and the action plan for the BSR. Activities will be directed at optimisation of policies, systems and processes in the context of support for the implementation of the public administration reform, in a manner complementary to the activities implemented in the rest of the SR. Hence, they will contribute to achieving the objective of the national public administration reform, which is a client-oriented and transparent public administration, providing fast, effective and quality services in the interest of promoting sustainable growth, job creation and social inclusion.

Given the scale of the envisaged public administration reform and its horizontal nature, it is necessary to enhance the standard and efficiency of public administration services in a uniform manner, in all segments of public administration throughout the SR. Strengthening of the position of all relevant partners (institutional, social and economic partners and the civil society) in policy-making and development of

²⁵⁵The draft concept for the development of electricity production from small renewable sources approved through Government Resolution No. 347 of 3 July 2013, (as a follow-up to the approved concept, a support study was elaborated) “Effects of small photovoltaic power plants on the grid”

services that concern them by creating a single system of governance will result in development and ensure implementation of a pro-growth policy based on synergies and harmonious interaction at all levels of public administration, from central to local, including policies and services guaranteed by local governments. In this context, public administration reform cannot be implemented without involving actors in the BSR, which would result in a dual system of governance.

It also needs to be taken into account that part of the competencies of the government has been conferred on local (specialised) government agencies, whose services and quality also need to be optimised in all priority areas of the reform.

Assistance in the BSR will also be directed at authorities and government institutions operating exclusively in its territory. Mutual cooperation between all relevant partners in the BSR is a vital prerequisite for ensuring coordination between activities implemented in less developed regions and those implemented in the more developed region. All of the specific conditions of assistance in the BSR will be taken into consideration, while account will also be taken of the specificities and needs of the region, the need to further shape the policies for services for specific target groups, etc. Mutual coordination will be achieved by means of full and uniform optimisation with services introduced in the rest of the SR.

1.1.7.6 Envisaged use of financial instruments in the Bratislava Self-governing Region

The relevance and effectiveness of the use of resources in the form of financial instruments in the BSR will lie in two main aspects. The first aspect is that financial instruments should be used in the implementation of those activities for which this form of support from the ESI Funds has proved to be more effective than support in the form of grants, in areas such as business environment conducive to innovation (TO1, TO3), infrastructure for economic growth and job creation (TO7), human capital development and improvement of labour market participation (TO8, TO9 and TO10), sustainable and efficient use of natural resources (TO4), and strengthening of the institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and an efficient public administration (TO11), which also create positive impact on less developed regions. In the case of economically viable projects, which are expected to provide returns or cost savings, financial instruments are a more appropriate form of support, which only leads to little or no market distortions and thus does not interfere with competition, which is particularly important in a region as developed as the BSR.

The second aspect is the attractiveness of the BSR to private capital, which finds this region less risky compared to other regions, and the consequent possibility of increased leverage of resources. This results in a greater volume of resources not only for the Bratislava region itself, but also for the whole territory of Slovakia, thereby increasing the efficiency of the use of the ESI Funds. It is also necessary to attract additional capital in view of the fact that the amount of funding from the ESI Funds is not sufficient to cover all investment needs.

The use of financial instruments in the Bratislava region, the relevant areas of support, specific activities, the appropriate amounts of resources and conditions for the implementation of particular financial instruments, including the possible multiplication of allocated funds and their combination with other forms of support, will be based on the results of the additional ex-ante evaluation for financial instruments for the whole territory of the SR required under the legislation for the 2014 - 2020 programming period. A number of projects have been identified within the BSR, such as motorways, bypasses, expressways, increasing energy efficiency in buildings and businesses, use of RES, promotion of small and medium enterprises, waste treatment, revitalisation of urban areas, etc. According to preliminary analyses, the potential for financial instruments in the BSR lies especially in sectors such as infrastructure, energy, waste management, SMEs, R&I and urban development.

1.2 Summary of the key findings of the ex-ante evaluation of the PA

The PA SR is a logically structured, methodically founded and comprehensive approach to the issue of defining national priorities and methods of achieving them with assistance from the ESI Funds. The ex-ante evaluation of the PA SR focused on five main areas of policy issues:

AREA	EVALUATION
<i>Is the PA SR in this form a document that clearly analyses problems and suggests the most appropriate solutions on the basis of analyses?</i>	Consistency between the focus and scope of the analyses is appropriate and sufficient and the suggested solutions are well anchored in them.
<i>Will the PA SR be effective in that its clear and well-defined objectives can be realistically achieved?</i>	The objectives are adequately defined and justified. However, their feasibility is subject to good implementation, absorption capacity and mechanisms of coordination. Considerable risks exist in these areas.
<i>Will the PA SR have the intended effects and create and promote the necessary changes in the economic, social and environmental areas?</i>	The intended interventions can be expected to promote the objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The depth of the changes during implementation and sustainability of the envisaged trends may be a problem.
<i>Does the PA SR provide an efficient framework for coordination of interventions and a synergistic effect?</i>	The regional impact and coordination of interventions towards synergistic effects has been identified as the greatest challenge for the process of effective implementation of the PA SR.
<i>Do the thematic objectives comply with the priorities for funding and is there consistency between the planned financial allocations and the thematic objectives?</i>	The thematic objectives comply with the priorities for funding and according to the ex-ante evaluation, financial allocations reflect the complexity of the individual thematic objectives.

While in terms of its main directions the PA SR under evaluation is a document which conforms to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, there are several problematic areas and risks that will require closer attention in the final stages of preparations for implementing the ESI Funds and, subsequently, in the implementation phase.

Smart growth: The identification of priorities in the PA SR mainly concerns the sectors of research, development and innovation, where more attention needs to be paid, in particular, to identification and, subsequently, development of the key sectors. Creating links between support for education and R&I is an important issue. More than a half of the research base and 70 % of science and research output are concentrated in the BSR and the PA SR defines the importance of the need to transfer 3 % of the total national allocation between categories of regions, nevertheless, within the PA SR, a more detailed description of the key areas that will be subject of this support would be helpful. The PA SR focuses on possibilities for links between the ESI Funds and other sources of funding, such as other EU funds (e.g. science and research funds) and private investment, yet fails to provide more coherent information about how these links should be stimulated and ensured. The plan to gradually reduce budget contributions that should be compensated for by private investments entails considerable risks. Achieving the objective to invest 1.2 % of GDP in R&D (by 2020) also involves risks. It is unclear how the planned volume of private investment, which should be stimulated in the process, will be achieved, while RIS3 talks about 1.2 % of GDP, up to two thirds of which should come from private sources.

Sustainable growth: The PA SR is on track to meet the energy-climate objectives as set for 2020. Meeting the objectives in waste management (in particular reduced landfilling and recycling of municipal waste) will be a challenge. Considering that this issue is a cross-cutting theme concerning not only environmental protection, but also science and research, eco-innovations, transport, low-carbon economy, consumption and precautionary approach to the labour market (e.g. green jobs), better links between these areas are

lacking. In the implementation stage, it will be important to underscore the role of sustainable growth as a competitive advantage in a long-term perspective. Stronger support for the introduction of economic instruments and the “polluter pays” principle will also be important. A key challenge is the link between the envisaged measures, regional development and social inclusion of marginalised areas with the aim of ensuring the creation of better links between the various measures that relate to regional development and the labour market.

Inclusive growth: Slovakia’s priority is to increase the competitiveness of the economy with an emphasis on its knowledge part and labour productivity with the highest added value possible. At the same time, Slovakia is facing the serious problem of long-term unemployment of persons with low qualifications. Therefore, it should be considered, as a supporting and temporary measure, how to make use of projects for creating work habits and integrating people into the labour market. In the follow-up programmes for the 2014 - 2020 period, the effects of the planned measures on human resources need to be elaborated further. For example, in public administration, the planned measures aimed at increasing performance will lead to a reduction in overall employment. This will affect especially older employees, who currently make up the majority of public administration workers. Job creation should be a cross-cutting priority. Interventions should be implemented in such a way that, where possible, they primarily create jobs. In order to achieve the objective of inclusive growth, the regional dimension will be the main problem. The proposed interventions will need to be implemented in the programmes for 2014 - 2020 in such a way that they give top priority to mitigation of regional disparities in Slovakia and to a differential approach to the individual types of regions. The follow-up programmes should also include a separate analysis of regional problems, identification of development opportunities of regions and regionally differentiated strategies.

The territorial dimension of the PA SR has been proposed on the basis of territorial concentration of interventions into the individual types of centres of population (the CTDS system). This system should be elaborated into targeted regional thematic objectives in the programmes for 2014 - 2020. The integrated approach to territorial development is based on involvement of regional and local players in conflict resolution, which is an important element of endogenous development. Youth employment and an integrated approach to the inclusion of MRCs will be two key challenges for Slovakia. The PA SR identifies these priorities, however, under the current settings, difficulties may arise with regard to the interest to increase employment, especially in relation to disadvantaged groups (mainly Roma, young people, long-term unemployed, and people living in regions with high unemployment). In order to achieve the objective of increasing employment, consideration should be given to how to make employment one of the main criteria for every operation under the programmes for 2014 - 2020. One possibility is the planned incorporation of the social aspect in public procurement by means of contract performance provisions aimed at promoting employment of MRCs. The ex-ante evaluation identifies sustainability of the created jobs after funding has come to an end as a key challenge in the implementation.

Evaluation using the HERMIN model focusing on quantification of the effects of the use of the ESI Funds by Slovakia in the 2014 - 2020 programming period gives the ex-ante evaluation an estimate of the expected effects and impacts (due to the very rough data on the allocation of resources, it is complemented by a number of estimates). According to the estimate, additional GDP over the whole period will amount to 14.3 % and the cumulative multiplier will be at 1.6, which is roughly at the standard level of Cohesion countries. From the perspective of the developments in more detailed indicators, the signals are less favourable. The ex-ante evaluation comes to the conclusion that as a result of the use of the ESI Funds, employment will be successfully increased, however, this will come at the cost of a decline in productivity dynamics and real wages, i.e. at the cost of real convergence. An increase in capital without significant dynamics may indicate that investment in transport infrastructure will not bring about massive secondary investment in production over the projection horizon. Similarly, there may also be stagnation in additional tax revenues. If allocations from the ESI Funds follow the proposed structure, it is expected that the average annual GDP growth rate in the 2014 - 2016 period will be 1.6 % at constant prices. In the next two periods under evaluation, the average annual GDP growth rate will increase to 1.7 % and 1.8 % compared to the baseline scenario.

A clear division of competences and a clear decision-making hierarchy between regional self-governments, municipalities, partnerships at the level of regions (RITS) and the Managing Authority for the Integrated Regional Operational Programme (hereinafter the “IROP”) will be an important factor for a successful implementation of the planned measures. Quantification of the effects of the use of the ESI Funds, together with other identified problem areas, point to the need for strong management and coordination of the implementation process. In this context, the main recommendation of the ex-ante evaluation is to implement an effective evaluation system, which would continuously assess (based on defined measurable indicators and selected statistical data) the degree to which the objectives of the planned interventions have been achieved and the effects of the interventions provided and help coordinate the synergistic effects between the individual measures, while supporting their sustainability even after funding has come to an end.

1.3 Summary of selected thematic objectives and summaries of the main results expected for each ESI Fund under each of the selected thematic objectives

1.3.1 National priority: Innovation-friendly business environment

1.3.1.1 TO1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation

1.3.1.1.1 Baseline

Due to underfunding in the past twenty years, Slovakia has a “technological gap” in the equipment of research institutions for the needs of research, development and innovation. Although this technological gap narrowed due to focused activities during the 2007 - 2013 programming period, they should only be viewed as the first stage in its closing. Therefore, it should be followed up by activities in the 2014 - 2020 programming period. One of the important aspects of support for RD&I activities is their continued support also within the BSR.²⁵⁶

During the 2007 – 2013 programming period, innovation was supported within the framework of several OP²⁵⁷. Their common key deficiency, which prevents the necessary intensity of absorption, lies in the complicated and non-transparent implementation system, including PP, and the insufficient quality of medium-term strategies. A particularly problematic area, which impairs the effectiveness of support, is the current configuration of rules under the OP “Research and Development” which does not enable the use of project results for commercial purposes. The support for innovations focusing primarily on the OP “Competitiveness and Economic Growth” lacks a more comprehensive and effective approach towards company innovations and a preference for them²⁵⁸.

The main problem of Slovakia lies in the low performance of the public R&D institutions and their detachment from the needs of the market, low degree of internationalisation, and insufficient legislative framework for the protection of intellectual property. Other problems include insufficient cooperation between the academic and private sectors, low level of private investments in innovation, low impact on the economy, low level of financing, and fragmented focus in terms of substance. The structure of companies in Slovakia has also a significant impact, with 96.7 % of companies being micro-enterprises; since more and more companies fall from bigger size categories down to the micro-enterprise category (marginalisation), the number of companies with over 10 employees between 2008 and 2012 declined by

²⁵⁶ Page 38, Chapter 2.5.6., Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Slovak Republic

²⁵⁷ OP Research and Development, OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, OP Education, OP Informatisation of Society and OP Bratislava Region

²⁵⁸ A typical example is the exchange of an old manufacturing line for a new one, or an exchange of a public lighting system which, in the absence of other structural changes, fail to generate the necessary effects in term of value added or sustainable jobs.

more than a half²⁵⁹.

1.3.1.1.2 Reasoning for selection

Slovakia belongs to the group of the so-called moderate innovators with the second lowest innovation performance within the group²⁶⁰.

In order to meet the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, Slovakia must put in place quality infrastructure and an efficient system for RD&I and human resources development, as well as efficient tools for innovation and support for innovation projects in line with RIS3²⁶¹, the results of which are marketable.

In line with the country-specific recommendations of the Council²⁶² it is necessary to improve the quality of higher education and the cooperation between the business sector, research community and educational institutions to help develop a well-functioning “knowledge triangle” and increase the performance of the RD&I system, as well as to stimulate private investment in RD&I in order to enhance the innovation capacity of the Slovak economy. It is necessary to devise tools for the creation of a functional system from excellent research to innovation in line with RIS3. It is necessary to support high-quality RD&I because it is a necessary precondition for technologically advanced innovations. It is also necessary to continue building up a quality RD&I infrastructure, train and develop human resources, create an attractive and stimulating environment for the tertiary level of education and subsequent placement of young researchers in RD&I entities.

In the light of the objectives contained in the NRP, it is necessary to increase expenditures on R&D by the year 2020 to 1.2 % of GDP. In order to meet the RIS3 objectives, it is necessary to anchor the key industrial sectors which increase value added, namely through cooperation of local supply chains, and support their mutual networking, creating a dynamic, open and inclusive innovative society. It is also necessary to reform RD&I system in order to streamline the institutional setup of the public R&I base. It is equally important to support effective transfer of know-how and scientific knowledge from public institutions to private sector, as well as the introduction of various types of innovations into practice and the building of R&I capacities in Slovak companies. Also essential is to create ample conditions for cooperation between the private sector or non-profit sector and public research organisations, support the setting up of new start-ups, spin-offs and clusters through administrative support for the transfer of technologies from public institutions and the linking of R&D and technology incubators.

Within the framework of R&I support, it is necessary to put in place effective and mutually interlinked instruments of support for cooperation between the research and business communities, where the programmes coordinated by businesses will be implemented in partnership with the R&I sector and vice versa, in compliance with RIS3. The organisation of the R&I sector needs to be streamlined and the joint accreditation of all research entities in Slovakia implemented; based on the results of the accreditation exercise, the system of institutional support for all R&I institutions in Slovakia needs to be made transparent and objective.

The economic growth in rural areas needs to be fostered through the use of advisory services and support for the training of advisors in the area of innovation. The transfer of knowledge through advisory services provided to entities in rural areas will increase the economic and environmental performance of their business. It is necessary to increase agricultural productivity and sustainability by strengthening linkages between research results and rural factors, doing so in line with the objectives of European Innovation

²⁵⁹ Register of organisations of the Statistical Office of the SR, as of 31 December 2012 49 %

²⁶⁰ European Innovation Scoreboard 2013

²⁶¹ “Through Knowledge to Prosperity” – Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Slovak Republic, approved by Government Resolution No 665/2013 of 13 November 2013

²⁶² Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012-2016 (recommendation No. 4)

Partnership (EIP) on agricultural productivity and sustainability.

1.3.1.1.3 Expected results

As a result, the building of the 1st and 3rd pillar of the NRP will be supported through the creation of an environment which stimulates actors to intensively innovate. This will increase the RD&I performance of Slovakia, increase the competitiveness of the economy, and generate new and attractive jobs in all regions of the country. The support from the ESI Funds pursuant to RIS3 in the defined areas of specialisation²⁶³ from the viewpoint of available R&D capacities will also have a positive effect on tackling broader societal challenges, such as the adaptation of young people to changing conditions, population ageing, quality of life, marginalised groups and social inclusion, emissions reduction, protection and better utilisation of natural resources (mainly soil, water and forests), adaptation to climate change, etc.

ERDF investments

- complete the development RD&I infrastructure which is effectively used by the academic, private and non-profit sectors;
- enhancing research excellence;
- increasing the share of contracted research, applied research, development and scientific-technological services;
- improving the protection and utilisation of intellectual property and increasing the number of patent applications;
- increase in publication activities;
- optimisation and performance-oriented processes of support for RD&I;
- increasing private investment in and expenditures on academic science and research by creating partnerships between R&D institutions and industry;
- enhancing cooperation and exchange of knowledge with R&D institutions within the ERA and European R&I programmes and initiatives (e.g., Horizon 2020);
- increasing R&I activities in the energy sector²⁶⁴;
- increasing R&I activities in the environmental sector and facilitate the development of new innovative technologies (eco-innovations) aimed at increased efficiency in the utilisation of resources;
- increasing the number of cooperating businesses in the supply chain by creating networks, clusters and innovation centres, including cooperation between SMEs and large companies;
- enhancing private sector competitiveness in the international innovation arena, also in the form of technological upgrades;
- increasing the number of sustainable job opportunities for creative, skilful and educated people in R&I;
- increasing the international mobility of Slovak R&D specialists and university graduates.

EAFRD investments

- Making the system of advisory services accessible to rural entities;
- Strengthening innovation capacity and cooperation of actors within the “knowledge triangle” of education-research-innovation with business sector;
- Strengthening linkages between agriculture, food industry and forestry with R&I through cooperation and transfer of knowledge;
- Creating conditions for the formation of operational groups within the EIP on Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability.

²⁶³ Page 53 at seq. Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Slovak Republic

²⁶⁴ Increase in the number of new, innovative RES/low-carbon technologies

1.3.1.2 TO2: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of ICT

1.3.1.2.1 Baseline

Slovakia is one of the fastest growing exporters of ICT services in the EU and the ICT sector in Slovakia employs more and more people. The projects implemented currently will ensure the provision of eGovernment services at the transaction level. The new eID card, launched on 2 December 2013, enables on-line authentication and authorisation of citizens. The basic registers are being centralised and the common modules of the central eGovernment portal are under implementation; the portal will serve a single point of access to all eGovernment services. These services will also be provided in an assisted manner at integrated service points. The implementation of such an extensive change is not without problems, but Slovakia has gained valuable experience and developed the necessary capacities and competences which are essential to improve the e-processes further.

One of the activities designed to ensure broadband Internet coverage during the 2007 - 2013 programming period was an action under OP 'Informatisation of society' (OPIS, priority axis 3) aimed at covering the white and grey spots. However, this action has been implemented only up to the stage of project documentation. In the 2007 - 2013 programming period, the RDP allocated approximately EUR 6.6 million from public funds for investment into the so-called white spots located in the territory of the PSR and the BBSR. As a result of this investment, at least 15,000 inhabitants in eligible municipalities are expected to gain access to the Internet.

1.3.1.2.2 Reasoning for selection

In order to meet the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and of the NRP, Slovakia needs to develop services supported by the opportunities introduced by new technologies (social networks, smart mobile equipment, open and interlinked data, etc.). One of the objectives is to reduce public expenditure and ensure a much higher standard of eGovernment services.

In line with the Digital Agenda²⁶⁵ it is necessary to stimulate private investment in R&I and introduce broadband Internet solutions so that ICT can be used across all industrial sectors with particular focus on standard and open platforms for new products and services. It is necessary to develop a common infrastructure for ICT research and innovation clusters in order to enhance the electronic infrastructure, in particular between public administration, business sector and scientific sector.

At the same time, it is necessary to support the priorities and objectives in line with the Strategic Document for Growth of Digital Services and Infrastructure of a New-Generation Access Network²⁶⁶ focusing on improved services to citizens and businesses in the development of e-services, use of open data sources, the support for businesses in eEconomy and support of eInclusion. One of the main prerequisites for the functioning of a modern information society is the development of broadband Internet infrastructure and its comprehensive territorial coverage enabling data transfer at the speed of least 30 Mbit/s. The broadband internet infrastructure will be built fully in line with the Strategic Document for Growth of Digital Services and Infrastructure of a New-Generation Access Network (2014 - 2020)²⁶⁷. In connection with country-specific recommendations of the Council for Slovakia²⁶⁸, in order to increase the cost-effectiveness of the health-care sector, investments should also be routed to eHealth²⁶⁹. It will also be necessary to focus

²⁶⁵ Digital Agenda for Europe <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0245:FIN:SK:PDF>

²⁶⁶ Draft strategic document for the growth of digital services and infrastructure of a new generation access network, <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23177>

²⁶⁷ Strategic Document for Growth of Digital Services and Infrastructure of a New-Generation Access Network (2014 - 2020), <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23177>

²⁶⁸ Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012–2016 (recommendation No. 1)

²⁶⁹ Draft Strategic document for digital growth and new generation access network infrastructure (2014-2020) <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23177>

on the development of ICT products and services, e-business, e-commerce, process optimisation, enhanced IS security, particularly in the area of industry and knowledge-intensive services, ICT technologies, smart industrial transport, technologies for smart consumption management and knowledge-intensive business services (“KIBS”) in order to increase their share in GDP and increase the share of KIBS in the overall output of the business sector.

This will contribute, in a complementary manner, to the implementation of the RIS3 Strategy.

1.3.1.2.3 Expected results

ERDF investments

- enhancing the quality, standard and availability of eGovernment services for entrepreneurs;
- enhancing the quality, standard and availability of eGovernment services for citizens;
- enhancing the overall accessibility of eGovernment data in the form of open data and support to the principles of open management;
- enhancing the innovation capacity of entrepreneurs in DE;
- enhancing the digital skills and inclusion of marginalised individuals into the digital market;
- modernising, streamlining and developing the analytical capacities of public administration through ICT;
- streamlining the operation of information systems through eGovernment cloud;
- strengthening cyber-security in society;
- expanding broadband coverage in the white and grey spots, including in rural areas, with connection over 30 Mbit/s by 2020.

EAFRD investments

- supporting the so-called ‘last-mile’ projects in municipalities with up to 500 inhabitants in order to increase broadband Internet coverage (connections with over 30 Mbit/s in rural areas by 2020)
- increasing ICT products and services used in rural economy and communities, supporting e-commerce projects and increasing demand for ICT.

1.3.1.3 TO3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, of the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)

1.3.1.3.1 Baseline

SMEs are currently affected by the on-going economic crisis and, in parallel, by changes in the business environment. As a consequence, they have been stagnating on long-term basis. SME survival rate is very low²⁷⁰, SMEs are becoming marginalised, their business activity is stifled, the number of their employees continues to decline and their economic viability is at risk. At the same time, their orientation on services sector is increasing²⁷¹.

The key problem of Slovakia lies in the low competitiveness and flexibility of SMEs caused, inter alia, by the insufficient sources of funding and support to innovative enterprises. The economic structure of SMEs is dominated by sectors involving the provision of less knowledge-intensive services. The other major problems include undercapitalisation, declining profitability of SMEs and the ensuing low tax revenues, and the insufficient access of SMEs to financial resources.

Slovak agriculture is characterised by low value added and low revenues per hectare of agricultural land in comparison with other Member States. Many companies are in the red figures and the output of the plant

²⁷⁰ Slovakia ranks among the last six places within the EU, source: Eurostat

²⁷¹ Register of organisations of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, as of 31 August 2013 50.6 %

and, in particular, animal production continues to shrink. Orientation towards primary production, causing fluctuations on global commodity markets, largely affects the income of Slovak farmers. Driven by the effort to reduce costs, SMEs reduce number of employees and, consequently, their output. Given the currently fragmented supply from primary producers and processors, the value added from the adaptation to the international standards of trading in agricultural and food products is shifting to the benefit of transnational companies, while local demand for fresh and processed foodstuffs is covered by imports.

Apart from the conventional (normal) risks, the agricultural sector is particularly vulnerable to the so-called catastrophic risks which, albeit low in terms of incidence, are bound to inflict considerable damage on large numbers of agricultural holdings in the region or country affected. These include various types of natural emergencies affected by climate change²⁷²: climatic events (hail, floods, soaked and flooded soil, long-lasting drought periods, storms, etc.), pest-inflicted damages (snails, insects, etc.) and epizootic diseases (foot and mouth disease, swine fever, etc.). Given their disastrous nature (low likelihood but heavy damages), these risks are difficult to manage at a level of individual holdings or through conventional market instruments. The catastrophic risks in agriculture cannot be insured against on a commercial basis (e.g., drought and some animal diseases and/or mass infections).

SMEs are also represented in the sectors of aquaculture and fish processing, but their financing resources are limited and so is their ability to compete on the market. Ponds and aquaculture facilities are mostly located in rural areas where they create job opportunities for the local population.

1.3.1.3.2 Reasoning for selection

In order to meet the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, including the 1st and 3rd pillar of the NRP, it is necessary to improve business environment, i.e. improve Slovakia's position in the Doing Business chart by at least 15 places by 2025 and continue reducing the administrative burden to ensure that Slovakia, measured by the OECD's Product Market Regulation Indicator, reaches the OECD average (1.45). It is also necessary to improve Slovakia's standing in the SBA which is, in almost all areas monitored, either below or near the EU average²⁷³. With a view to meeting the RIS3 objectives, potential exists mainly on the SME categories (above 10 employees). It is therefore necessary to overcome the systemic barriers to SME development and focus on improving business start-up conditions and expanding business activities. It is also necessary to eliminate the lack of information in the SME community. This can be addressed through the introduction of comprehensive advisory institutions (one-stop-shops). Only in this way it will be possible to stimulate the growth of micro-enterprises and create the potential necessary to induce innovation, including non-technological innovation, in the services sector, enhance the energy efficiency and utilisation of the RES; the same applies to the R&I sector in the area of new technologies facilitating the climate change adaptation. At the same time, conditions must be put in place to increase the innovation performance of SMEs.

For aquaculture and fish processing, it is essential to foster competitiveness through modernisation of production processes, increase value added, build new aquacultural facilities, introduce innovations and develop additional activities as part of the diversification effort. Equally important is to enhance consumer awareness and improve the image of the products of aquaculture and of the entire sector.

In the agricultural sector, it is necessary to enhance – in line with Commission Communication COM(2012)60 on a Bioeconomy for Europe - the efficiency of all production factors and increase the value added generated by agricultural holdings, including the diversification of their activities. It is also necessary to support easier access to the sector for small agricultural companies and young farmers who have a better potential of innovation, as well as new ways of marketing and diversifying their activities in primary

²⁷² In the case of EAFRD, the term emergencies affected by climate change covers the terms “disaster” and “catastrophic event” pursuant to Article 2 of Regulation No 1305/2013

²⁷³ http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/performance-review/files/countries-sheets/2013/slovakia_en.pdf

agricultural production. At the same time, it is necessary to support farming on farmers' own land, for which the consolidation and settlement of land ownership titles is a must, in order to increase the chances and access for those who would like to farm their land. For domestic food processors, it is essential to maintain their position on the domestic market; local and regional markets are becoming increasingly important in terms of their sales. It is desirable to increase the share of value-added domestic production (advanced processing), also through high-quality products, innovation, regional and local specialties, bio-products, etc. Support for animal welfare will create opportunities for the promotion of high-quality animal products.

Within the framework of support of the food chain organisation, it is necessary to ensure cooperation of entities and advanced vertical integration. In the context of vertical integration, it is necessary to increase the utilisation of all domestic processing capacities, including the canning and freezing facilities²⁷⁴. It is desirable to support the short-supply chain organisations and the direct sale of farm products.

In order to minimise the damages caused by emergencies affected by climate change in agriculture, it is necessary to put in place a new system for the insurance of farmers' risks in the form of mutual insurance funds which can work as an alternative to the current commercial insurance products the coverage of which presently excludes the so-called "uninsurable events" (for example, drought and certain diseases). This will eliminate the current gaps on the insurance market. At the same time, the new system will make the purchase of farmers' insurance policies more attractive and financially viable due to the extended insurance coverage and increased support from public funds. On a complementary basis, it is also necessary to support preventive investments that avert the main risks brought about by the climate change, such as a high volatility of precipitation during the vegetation period.

This will, in a complementary manner, contribute towards the implementation of the RIS3 strategy.

1.3.1.3.3 Expected results

ERDF investments

- increasing the share of SMEs in market innovations;
- improving SMEs access to financing/venture capital;
- increasing the rate of SMEs survival;
- increasing the number of SMEs with more than 10 employees;
- increasing the motivation of SMEs to invest in their development potential aimed at enhancing their competitiveness on global market;
- creating new jobs for qualified labour;
- increasing the share of SMEs in foreign trade.

EMFF investments

- increasing the output of aquaculture and fish processing;
- setting up and developing local markets through support to direct sales;
- developing additional forms of revenue by diversifying the activities of aquaculture enterprises;
- increasing domestic per capita consumption of fish.

EAFRD investments

- enhancing economic performance of agricultural undertaking and facilitating their restructuring and modernisation, particularly in order to increase their market participation and agricultural diversification;
- facilitating generational change in the agricultural sector by supporting young farmers;

²⁷⁴ According to Eurostat surveys, Slovak canned food is least represented in the Slovakia's retail network. According to the latest statistical data, domestic production in Slovakia is represented at less than 50 %, compared with over 85 % in Poland and over 70 % in Hungary.

- enhancing the competitiveness of primary producers through their better integration into the agri-food chain; higher productivity through adding value to agricultural products;
- improving promotion on local markets and creation of short supply chains;
- creating market opportunities for high-quality animal products by supporting animal welfare;
- introducing an effective and functional risk management system in the agricultural sector;
- reducing the negative consequences of droughts, floods and soaked soil for agricultural production;
- increasing the share of domestic production in the Slovak market.

1.3.2 National priority: Infrastructure for economic growth and employment

1.3.2.1 TO7: Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

1.3.2.1.1 Baseline

The key problem for Slovakia lies in non-existent or low quality transport infrastructure, in particular rail and road transport, as well as insufficient safety, reliability, availability and effectiveness of transport. This is primarily, on one hand, due to high costs of transport infrastructure construction and insufficient public funds for its maintenance and development on the other.

In many cases the transport infrastructure passes through mountainous terrain with many tunnels and bridges, the construction of which is costly and extraordinarily difficult from the technical point of view. Due to the natural conditions in Slovakia, there are also conflicts with the system of protected areas. Naturally, the aspects above are factoring into the cost of investments in infrastructure.

Progress made in the construction of transport infrastructure is now significantly lagging behind the dynamism in economic development and the growing transport demands. Therefore, rather than being conducive to economic growth, the transport infrastructure is slowing it down, and does not even facilitate the integration of economically weaker regions into wider territorial and economic relations.

1.3.2.1.2 Reasoning for selection

The goal is to support the building of the 4th pillar of the NRP strategy which will contribute to increasing the quality of life in Slovakia because good condition of road and railway networks is important for improving the accessibility of economic centres and for increasing Slovakia's competitiveness. In terms of environmental efficiency of traffic with respect to road and railway infrastructure, it is necessary to focus primarily on the implementation of projects designed to support sustainable regional and urban mobility. The greening of the public passenger transport fleet and the building of infrastructure for integrated urban transport systems could contribute to the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing the share of alternative energy sources, and improving energy efficiency of the transport system in Slovakia. The Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 represents a strategic basis for the implementation of activities and projects and identifies the key bottlenecks in Slovakia's transport system while proposing measures to remove them. The implementation of these measures will considerably contribute to improving the current state of play from the viewpoint of transport, economy or the environment. The Strategic Plan for the Development and Maintenance of Roads at Regional Level represents a strategic basis for investments in regional roads.

Slovakia needs to build and modernise transport infrastructure along the approved routes of multi-modal corridors (the TEN-T network) and to complete the transport infrastructure of international importance in order to connect the Slovak infrastructure to the European transport network and to make Slovak regions more accessible. As part of increasing the accessibility of regions and ensuring economic, social and territorial cohesion of regions, it is necessary to modernise and encourage measures aimed at increasing

the safety of regional roads, i.e., 2nd and 3rd class roads, in the context of improving connectivity to the TEN-T network and centres of economic importance. Interventions will primarily focus on the modernisation and development of 2nd class roads. 3rd class roads will only be supported in exceptional and duly reasoned cases where, in the absence of higher-category road infrastructure in the given territory, 3rd class roads will provide connection to the TEN-T network or centres of economic importance. In Slovakia, the provision of traffic information and the use of telematics is still in its infancy. The roads are not equipped with traffic telematic solutions and technologies that would make the monitoring of operating conditions and the actual traffic management possible. The implementation of modern technologies can in fact significantly help increase the capacity of existing road network, reduce congestion and improve the safety and free flow of road traffic. Traffic telematics (variable message signs, traffic management and surveillance systems, weather stations, CCTV cameras) will be deployed in sections with the heaviest traffic and at frequent accident spots, be it outside or within the built-up areas municipalities, where capital construction projects²⁷⁵ are not envisaged in the medium term.

Because of the need to make railway transport more competitive, it is necessary to establish a comprehensive and interoperable system by investing into infrastructure and rolling stock and through integrating various modes of transport (intermodal transport).

This will contribute, in a complementary manner, to the implementation of the RIS3 Strategy.

1.3.2.1.3 *Expected results*

CF investments

- increasing the quality of the transport link and the homogeneity of the TEN-T network, while at the same time improving the safety, reliability, as well as environmental and financial efficiency;
- increasing the share of railway and waterway transport in freight and passenger transport services;
- increasing the environmental and energy efficiency of Slovakia's transport system;
- promoting sustainable urban mobility;
- completing the motorway and express way sections, modernising and reconstructing the railroads of Community importance ensuring connection with the neighbouring countries;
- increasing the safety of transport by road;
- encouraging the development of services and applications of intelligent transport systems for road transport allowing interconnection with other modes of transport.

ERDF investments

- increasing the quality of transport services between regions by making investments into rail and road infrastructure, including the safety and continuity of traffic on 1st class roads;
- increasing the accessibility of the TEN-T network and centres of economic importance by modernising or, in justified cases, constructing selected regional roads, i.e., 2nd class and 3rd class roads, with a view to increasing the social and economic cohesion of regions;
- increasing the environmental and energy efficiency of Slovakia's transport system;
- increasing the share of railway transport in freight and passenger transport services;
- increasing the attractiveness of public passenger transport including urban public transport and reducing the environmental burden on urban areas.

²⁷⁵ Traffic telematics will be deployed in line with the needs identified in the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (<http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132>)

1.3.3 National priority: Human capital growth and improved labour market participation

1.3.3.1 TO8: Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility

1.3.3.1.1 Baseline

Hitting the 9 % mark, Slovakia's long term unemployment rate is among the highest in the EU-27. In comparison with other EU countries, Slovakia has a relatively low employment rate of older people and women, as well as a high unemployment rate, in particular that of young people and low-skilled workers. During the 2007 – 2013 programming period, the obstacles in the labour market, in particular those faced by disadvantaged groups such as the long term unemployed, young people, older people, women and people at risk of social exclusion, as well as persons facing multiple disadvantages in the labour market, were not removed. In this regard, it is necessary to continue to promote the building of administrative capacity for social dialogue, business environment and employment support in order to improve the business environment, employment and social peace.

Gender inequalities, such as traditional gender roles, insufficient awareness of one's own rights and the gender equality agenda, the deficiency of countervailing measures, insufficient social services which would enable better reconciliation of family and work life, represent problems that are still to be addressed in Slovakia.

Experience gained in the implementation of the Rural Development Programme of the SR for 2007 – 2013 in the agriculture sector has shown that investments in support for projects (with the exception of the creation of new jobs) helped maintain employment or moderated the decline in employment. In the case of agriculture as a whole, it holds that the number of jobs lost is higher than the number of newly created jobs.

In the 2007 – 2013 programming period, the ESF funds were allocated in particular for the implementation of active labour market measures. These funds secured the job opportunities for disadvantaged jobseekers and allowed low-income workers to keep their jobs. Furthermore, these funds were spent for support to increase the employment of disadvantaged jobseekers and incentivise employers to create new jobs, as well as maintain the existing jobs. At the same time, they focused on supporting an increase in the employment of jobseekers through contributions for commuting to work and for moving to work, as well as on supporting jobseekers in the labour market.

1.3.3.1.2 Reasoning for selection

Pursuant to the Specific Recommendation of the Council for the SR²⁷⁶, it is necessary to adopt measures to enhance the capacity of the provision of public employment services to jobseekers through more individualised services and to strengthen the link between activation measures and social assistance. At the same time, it is necessary to address long-term unemployment by means of activation measures and individualised training. The provision of care services for children, in particular those aged three years and less, must be improved as well. Furthermore, effort should be stepped up in addressing high youth unemployment, for instance, through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, as well as in addressing the long-term unemployment rate of the members of Roma communities. In connection with the Europe 2020 strategy and the NRP, it is necessary to implement measures to promote employment and labour mobility in order to meet, until 2020, the 72 % employment rate target among individuals aged 20 to 64 and the 3 % long-term unemployment target. It is also inevitable to support the capacities in the area of social dialogue which effectively contribute – through their suggestions for the implementation of

²⁷⁶Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012 – 2016 (recommendation No. 3 and No. 4)

measures – to the implementation of policies aimed at supporting entrepreneurship, employment and identifying unemployment.

In order to balance supply and demand in the reconciliation of work and family life, support should focus on building and developing facilities providing care for children below three years (social service) and the provision of child care allowance to parents. Under TO8, ESI funds will be used to support activities for building and developing child care facilities and the provision of child care allowance. Under TO9, ERDF funds will be earmarked to support the construction and reconstruction of buildings for the purposes of establishing and enlarging child care facilities (community-based social service). By adopting legislative framework through an amendment to the Act on Social Services, the rules for the financing of child care facilities for children below 3 years will be established.

Under programmes supporting employment, efficient instruments for increasing employment and employability and reducing unemployment should be created with a special emphasis on long-term unemployed, low-skilled and older persons, as well as persons with disabilities. It is equally necessary to increase employment by supporting the creation of new jobs, mobility for employment, adaptability of workers and enterprises, sustainable self-employment, start-up companies and agricultural and non-agricultural activities in rural areas. Instruments should be created for raising the quality and capacity of public employment services to an adequate level in relation to the changing needs and requirements of the labour market and transnational labour mobility; the involvement of partners and private employment services in addressing the problems in employment should be increased as well.

In order to support job-friendly growth, it is necessary to develop endogenous cultural potential of the regions, including the conversion of the declining industrial areas and the development of cultural resources. These objectives require the support from cultural and creative industries through smart growth actions in the areas of creativity, knowledge and technology transfer, development of digital and entrepreneurial skills in creative industries, the development of specific infrastructure from the production, distribution to the consumption of creative products and services, as well as measures aimed at enabling access to the financing of successful outcomes from creative work, and support for new types of business models, including innovative ways of capitalising on the intellectual property potential.

Employment in rural areas depends on the number and stability of local business entities present in rural areas. Promoting the creation and development of non-agricultural activities of micro and small-sized enterprises in rural areas, including the diversification of agricultural and forestry enterprises, will facilitate their stability and, on the other hand, support for young farmers to start new farms, including support for small farms, will increase the number of business entities, thus raising the employment rate. Support for rural economy will focus on tapping the potential for the development of rural tourism, the provision of municipal services and social services and, as regards agricultural and forestry enterprises, also on the processing and marketing of non-agricultural products. Employment in rural areas will also be increased by encouraging investments in forestry technologies, as well as the processing, mobilisation and marketing of forestry products.

This will contribute, in a complementary manner, to the implementation of the RIS3 Strategy.

1.3.3.1.3 Expected results

ESF investments

- increasing the employment, reducing the unemployment and the long-term unemployment of vulnerable groups, in particular low-skilled young and older people, persons with disabilities, MRCs including their integration into the labour market;
- increasing the mobility for employment, adaptability of workers and enterprises, and the support for sustainable self-employment;
- enhancing the quality, capacity and development of human resources in public employment services for the purposes of delivering individualised employment services and the implementation of policies in the area of employment, entrepreneurship and social dialogue;

- reinforcing measures aimed at high-quality, sustainable and affordable solutions in terms of care for children of 3 years;
- increasing the employment of young people, in particular NEET.

ERDF investments

- supporting cultural and creative industries to facilitate creation of environment conducive to creativity, new products and services development with a view to increasing employability.

EAFRD investments

- increasing the number of business entities operating in rural areas through the diversification of economic activities falling outside the agriculture sector;
- increasing rural employment through the provision of start-up support for the commencement of activities for agricultural micro-enterprises and small-sized enterprises;
- diversifying the economic environment in rural areas.

1.3.3.2 TO9: Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination

1.3.3.2.1 Baseline

The unemployment rate and regional disparities, which translate into growing poverty, social exclusion and overall reduction of the living standards, are increasing in Slovakia also due to the economic crisis. This is reflected in an increasing number of disadvantaged groups at risk of poverty and social exclusion, such as migrants, refugees, drug addicts and vulnerable children). Several regions are witnessing significant local concentration of long-term unemployment and poverty, as well as the formation of geographically concentrated marginalised communities. The measures geographically targeted on the marginalised communities will require measures of inclusive nature so that, where possible, parallel structures are not created where mainstream structures exist.

The current state of play, which is significantly influenced by long-term unemployment, calls for streamlining (modernising) the existing tools and for introducing new tools for the provision of financial support to individuals and family members which will improve their access to the labour market, housing, education, child care, use of services, etc.

Along with the cross-cutting implementation of the horizontal principles of non-discrimination and equality between men and women, it is equally necessary to allow specific and targeted support for population groups facing the risk of all forms of discrimination (e.g., on grounds of health condition, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender or age).

The health condition of the population is an accompanying symptom of poverty and social exclusion. Poor health of the Slovak population (chronic diseases, disabilities) is one of the causes of social exclusion and poverty (in particular due to the subsequent loss of job and income). The indicator of healthy life years at birth of the Slovak population is lagging significantly behind the OECD average.

The social exclusion also poses a threat to people receiving social services or foster care, and in particular those placed in care institutions, the character of which does not allow them to lead an independent and fulfilling life. Also absent are community-based social services – facilities for reconciliation between work and private life (childcare facilities for children below three years). Local communities are facing different challenges, in particular as regards reducing social and economic backwardness, increasing the quality of life and improving the infrastructure of local services in rural areas.

By supporting the municipalities, as well as through the development of local communities and their integrated territorial development strategies, from the Rural Development Programme of the SR for the 2007 – 2013 programming period through the LEADER approach, the quality of life and employment in rural areas is improving.

1.3.3.2.2 Reasoning for selection

In accordance with the Specific Recommendation of the Council for the SR²⁷⁷, it is necessary to improve access to and the quality of child care institutions, in particular for children aged three years and less, and to step up efforts aimed at improving access to high-quality and inclusive schooling and pre-school education for marginalised communities, including Roma. At the same time, pre-primary education represents a preventive element against the misplacement of pupils without special educational needs into special-needs schools and classes, because one of the reasons why children without mental disorders are placed in special-needs classes or schools probably lies in insufficient diagnostics during enrolment, insufficient knowledge of the state language, as well as the fact that Roma language is not used in the tests or other expert activities carried out during the diagnostic process²⁷⁸. With an increase in the school attendance rate of children, in particular those from MRC, there will be less children and pupils placed in special-needs schools and classes. Simultaneously, it is necessary to adopt measures conducive to the reconciliation of family and work life, in particular as regards the provision of childcare services for children below three years. In terms of social exclusion and poverty and in line with the Europe 2020 strategy and the NRP, the risk of poverty or social exclusion target of 17.2 % should be met by 2020. At the same time, it is necessary to change the welfare system in terms of social services and other measures applicable to social inclusion²⁷⁹ and increase the availability of housing for vulnerable groups²⁸⁰. In combating poverty and social exclusion, special attention should be paid to the integration of marginalised Roma communities²⁸¹. By supporting community centres for vulnerable groups, it is necessary to improve access to job opportunities and encourage the development of communities and community-based services.

Social economy entities²⁸² seem to represent a very suitable instrument to support the employment of the MRC. Rather than generating profit, their primary purpose is to bring non-market social benefits, such as increasing employment of jobseekers from disadvantaged groups, integration of marginalised individuals and communities with the broader society, the development of backward regions, etc. Given the fact that social economy entities represent business entities, this type of support for social objectives is one that does not rely on public funding in the long term. Even though enterprises of this type do not primarily pursue their activities in order to generate profit, such support could bring more benefits than a mere one-off improvement of the social situation.

As regards support for people with disabilities, it is imperative to lay the groundwork for the application of equal opportunities, adoption of measures aimed at preventing and overcoming various types of disadvantages and combating discrimination²⁸³. In the sector of healthcare and public health, the provision of health services should be integrated and streamlined in order to improve access to quality healthcare, including preventive healthcare and health education²⁸⁴. Specific measures in the form of outreach activities focusing on health education are needed in particular by MRC. The health quality level of the members of marginalised Roma communities depends, to a large extent, on hygienic standards. Access to potable and sanitary water helps create the conditions for the full-fledged participation of marginalised Roma communities in the life of society.

²⁷⁷ Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012 – 2016 (recommendation No. 3 and No. 4)

²⁷⁸ Report on the state of education in Slovakia and on systemic steps aimed at fostering its development, 2013, <http://www.minedu.sk/data/att/5250.pdf>; FRA and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), 2012

²⁷⁹ <http://www.employment.gov.sk/strategia-deinstitucionalizacie-systemu-socialnych-sluzieb-a-nahradnej-starostlivosti-v-sr.html>

²⁸⁰ <http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=81554>

²⁸¹ http://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/romovia/dokumenty/StrategiaSR_integraciaRomov.pdf

²⁸² Social economy entity is an enterprise, the main purpose of which is to bring positive social impacts rather than generating profit for its owners. Its activities involve the commercial and innovative provision of goods or services for the markets, while using its profit primarily for attaining its social goals. It is managed in a responsible and transparent manner by involving, in particular, its employees, consumers and stakeholders who are affected by its business activities.

²⁸³ <http://www.employment.gov.sk/dohovor-osn-o-pravach-osob-so-zdravotnym-postihnutim.html>

²⁸⁴ Healthcare Strategic Framework for 2013 – 2030

The deinstitutionalisation process must be gradually implemented in order to reduce the at-risk-of social exclusion rate for persons receiving social services or placed in foster care. As the final outcome of this process, social services and foster care should be provided within communities, thus allowing more independence and respect for human rights of individuals receiving social services or placed in foster care in comparison with the institutional form of care.

Local development plays an important role in increasing the competitiveness of regions. By making use of endogenous resources controlled by the local community, the quality of life and employment will increase. The “bottom-up” approach implemented through the CLLD/LEADER initiative will allow rural communities to put forward their own solutions that will fully tap their local development potential and will be implemented by local people; such solutions would also be sustainable in the long term.

The quality of life in rural areas will also increase as a result of creating the conditions for the development of local basic services for people, with a focus on strengthening the cultural identity, social capital and the protection of natural heritage. Investments in local infrastructure, including tourism infrastructure and promotion, will make rural areas more attractive and accessible; this will have a positive impact on the improvement of the business environment. Along with investments into the use of RES, they will also contribute to achieving the programme objectives in the area of environmental protection.

This will contribute, in a complementary manner, to the implementation of the RIS3 Strategy.

As far as investments in local roads financed from the EAFRD are concerned, such investments will be allowed to a limited extent and only if they contribute directly to the regeneration of a deprived rural community area where their implementation can improve connectivity between rural areas and the wider transport network, or if a project is justified by its contribution to local economic development. These investments can be supported only if they are in line with the development plan of a municipality or an association of municipalities.

1.3.3.2.3 Expected results

ESF investments

- enhancing the employability of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the labour market;
- intensified provision of community-based social care through a transition from institutional to community-based care;
- improving access of children from socially disadvantaged background to high-quality and desegregated education;
- better employability of disadvantaged unemployed people in the labour market by improving access to housing;
- better provision of information concerning discrimination and the possibilities of effective protection;
- improving access to healthcare and public health for marginalised groups, including preventive health care and health education by extending the network of outreach workers specialising in health education;
- improving access to high-quality healthcare and preventive healthcare, with an emphasis on primary care and the integration of healthcare services.

ERDF investments

- improving access to care in kindergartens;

- improving access for children from MRC to education and care in kindergartens in municipalities with the presence of MRC;
- increasing employment by supporting social economy entities²⁸⁵ in the territories with the presence of MRC;
- improving access to social infrastructure for members of marginalised Roma communities;
- increasing the quality of life for members of separated and segregated MRC by ensuring access to potable water and sanitary water;
- improving the availability of housing as a factor contributing to the higher quality of life in cities and urban areas;
- intensifying the transition from institutional to community-based care;
- building childcare facilities for children below three years to support reconciliation between family and work life of parents and higher employment of women;
- improving the integration of health services through innovated health infrastructure;
- increasing the interest of public and private entities in local needs and opportunities by promoting community-led local development;
- intensified creation of jobs through the development of local-level entrepreneurship and innovation;
- improved sustainable relations between rural development centres and their partners in public services and public infrastructure.

EAFRD investments

- increasing the quality of life in rural areas through investments into small infrastructural projects and local services;
- increasing the interest of public and private entities in local needs and opportunities by supporting local, community-driven development;
- improving the business environment in rural areas, including the related local infrastructure;
- improving the conditions for the development of rural tourism and the creation of jobs.

1.3.3.3 TO10: Investing in education, training and vocational training, skills and lifelong learning

1.3.3.3.1 Baseline

One of the causes of high structural unemployment is inadequate education system which is not capable of responding to the needs of the labour market flexibly enough. Young people constitute the largest age group in the structure of jobseekers. The key problem for Slovakia is that its education system is not sufficiently matched to the requirements of the labour market and employers, which translates into a growing share of unemployed graduates. The quality of education is insufficient at all stages of education, which is primarily due to the quality of educational processes and low-quality content that does not fully match the needs of the labour market and the requirements of employers. The negative trend is that majority of students attending secondary and tertiary schools focus on social sciences and humanities; however, the labour market is already saturated with jobseekers of this kind. Secondary education should primarily focus on natural sciences and technology in cooperation with pedagogical and professional staff that will be capable of flexibly responding to the labour market requirements and sufficiently motivated to

²⁸⁵According to OECD definition, social enterprise is any private activity conducted in the public interest, organised with an entrepreneurial strategy but whose main purpose is not the maximisation of profit but the attainment of certain economic and social goals, and which has a capacity of bringing innovative solutions to the problems of social exclusion and unemployment.

Gabriela Korimová: Social economics and social entrepreneurship, 2008. ISBN978-80-89241-22-4, p. 81: Social enterprise is a business entity which conducts its business in a competitive environment of goods and services, primarily employs persons with disabilities or socially disadvantaged people and its main purpose is not the financial maximisation of profit, but the culture of giving as an added social value and the social inclusion of its employees. Its profit, if any, is proportionately reinvested in the development of its social-economic objectives.

pursue the teaching profession. At the same time, it is necessary to support programmes aimed at increasing literacy, motivating young people to pursue entrepreneurship, and supporting the development of key skills (languages, entrepreneurial way of thinking, ICT skills) at all stages of the education system. Insufficient premises (kindergartens in particular), logistical background (primary and vocational schools) of educational establishments, including the conditions for inclusive education, remain a problem.

Based on experience gained in the implementation of the OP Education for the 2007 – 2013 programming period, support should be targeted at results-oriented education, teachers, non-discrimination and accessibility of education and its forms. The implemented measures have caused a shift towards quality education and focused on supporting investments in educational content with the use of ICT in the teaching process, both as regards students and teachers, as well as teaching aids, and on facilitating the improvement of the skills of pedagogues while introducing changes in education and the way it should respond to the needs of the labour market. The inclusive dimension to education is facilitated by the role played by teaching assistants. However, their number in kindergartens and primary schools does not reflect the real need.

1.3.3.3.2 Reasoning for selection

In line with the Europe 2020 strategy targets, it is necessary to reduce the school drop-out rate in the relevant target groups (marginalised Roma communities in particular) by intensifying the application of an inclusive education model, and to increase the share of individuals aged 30 to 34 with tertiary educational attainment from 31% to at least 40%. According to the national target, early school leaving rate should be reduced to 6 % by 2020 and the proportion of 30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 40%. As regards country-specific recommendations of the Council for Slovakia, vocational education should include a greater share of practical training directly in companies, higher education should see the launch of programmes more oriented at the labour market, and it is also necessary to encourage the exchange of knowledge through cooperation between universities, research community and the business sector. In all areas and stages of education, the focus will also be on high-quality inclusive education. In the above area, inclusive education at regional schools (primary and secondary education) will be linked to measures implemented during the 2007 - 2013 programming period which represent an efficient instrument of support for the educational needs of pupils with special needs, in particular pupils from socially disadvantaged background, including marginalised communities such as Roma. Implementation of an inclusive education model at schools, e.g., by means of inclusive instruments such as whole-day education, participation of pedagogical assistants and expert staff in the teaching process, constitutes an inclusive element in the education system. This type of support also has a positive impact on reducing the placement of pupils from socially disadvantaged background, including MRC, to special-needs schools and special-needs classes at primary schools and also separate classes in standard primary schools.

Pre-primary education²⁸⁶ as the first stage of education will be supported under TO9 and TO10 through ESF and ERDF interventions. In the case of TO9, this involves, for the most part, support for children from MRCs. TO10 will support ERDF investments focusing on strengthening the capacity of pre-primary schools and ESF funds will be used to support pedagogical and expert staff at pre-primary schools.

In relation to the Specific Recommendation of the Council for the SR²⁸⁷ and the Position Paper of the EC, Slovakia should improve access to lifelong learning and give more weight to educational systems to satisfy the needs of the labour market. In this context it will be inevitable to reinforce the verification of professional qualifications and introduce a system for the verification of the quality of consultancy services, as well as create a system for forecasting and monitoring the needs of the labour market in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and

²⁸⁶State Educational Programme ISCED 0 – pre-primary education http://www.statpedu.sk/files/documents/svp/ms/isced_0.pdf

²⁸⁷Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012–2016 (recommendation No. 4)

Family. . In order to make the teaching profession more attractive, it is necessary to adopt measures aimed at bringing in the young people and increasing the quality of future pedagogues, and also at encouraging higher professional skills and expertise of pedagogues in practice, including ICT skills. In vocational education and training, the focus should be on the introduction of dual apprenticeship elements and on the provision of practical training directly in employers' premises. In higher education, bachelor study programmes oriented at particular professions should be created and supported. Another goal is to step up effort aimed at improving access to quality inclusive education by improving the content and forms of education, as well as the preparation of pedagogical and expert staff.

In order to bring education to a higher level and, therefore, increase employability, it is important to make investments in education at all stages of training linked with practice, as well as lifelong learning responding to the needs of the labour market.

In accordance with the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the SR (RIS3), investments will be targeted on increasing the employability of secondary and tertiary school graduates and reinforcing the link between education and practice, increasing the cross-sectoral mobility of workers and supporting the international research-innovation teams. The provided education should focus on fields that are vital for the priority areas identified in RIS3.

In terms of rural development in Slovakia, it is necessary to reinforce institutional links between vocational education and the labour market, research, business and public sector, as well as NGO sector and to focus on targeted education which will be tied closely with pre-identified needs of the potential beneficiaries. Support will be targeted equally in favour of people working in the agriculture sector, food industry and forestry, as well as in favour of other undertakings operating as SMEs in rural areas. Through educational and information activities, the key abilities of rural population will be strengthened to allow personal growth and develop entrepreneurial spirit (including digital literacy).

This will contribute, in a complementary manner, to the implementation of the RIS3 Strategy.

1.3.3.3.3 Expected results

ESF investments

- more intensive application of the inclusive education model at schools;
- introduction of dual education elements in the system of vocational education and training, including increased participation of students in practical training directly in employers' premises;
- higher number and increased quality of bachelor study programmes with occupational orientation matching the needs of the labour market;
- more intensive cooperation of centres which are linking universities with the business sector and are oriented at solving specific tasks and assignments from practice;
- improved support for the education of students, postgraduates and young scientists at universities and in research;
- increased participation of adults in lifelong learning with a special emphasis on people who need to improve or renew their qualification, as well as low-educated or low-skilled people, with a view to ensuring their sustainable inclusion in the labour market in line with labour market needs;
- setting up a system of compatibility and permeability between the sectors of formal, non-formal and informal education (validation of results);
- revising and updating, on an ongoing basis, the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications System in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework
- increasing the expertise of pedagogical and expert staff and putting in place systems for the assessment of quality of education.

ERDF investments

- increasing the quality and availability of pre-primary education, including inclusive education;

- increasing the quality of primary schools with targeted investments in skills-related equipment in material and technical capacity of classrooms, including languages, sciences, technical and ICT and polytechnic training, allowing the pupils of primary schools to improve their skills;
- increasing the quality of education at vocational education schools for the needs of the labour market;
- intensifying the cooperation of the academia and research communities with key industries and increased involvement of companies in education..

EAFRD investments

- increasing the number of workers and managers of various types of agricultural enterprises who will be trained in areas focusing on the need of higher value-added production and higher quality production which will strengthen the competitiveness of the agriculture sector, food industry and forestry, while at the same time supporting the market with new distribution channels, short chains, regional marketplaces, etc.

1.3.4 National priority: Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources

1.3.4.1 TO4: Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors

1.3.4.1.1 Baseline

At present, renewable energy is predominantly generated by large hydroelectric power plants and from biomass which has the highest energy potential of all types of renewable energy sources. In the 2007 – 2013 programming period, energy intensity declined substantially in industry, for the most part, through the deployment of innovative technologies and an increase in the share of higher added value sectors of industry. Mandatory use of the system of energy audit schemes and the application of low cost measures identified in these audits also contributed significantly to the reduction of the need for energy in industry. The heat consumption has dropped as a result of improved thermal and technical properties of buildings; by 2020, approximately one half of the existing buildings will be equipped with thermal insulation. In Slovakia, the absence of action plans focusing on sustainable energy sector remains an important factor, even though public and expert awareness of energy efficiency is gradually increasing. Electricity generation and heat supply is characterised by a low share of renewable energy resources, technically and economically obsolete technologies for the production of energy, as well as heat distribution and supply methods. Even though primary energy savings due to cogeneration have been gradually increasing, the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions is not following the curve of primary energy savings which is mainly attributable to the share of gas, nuclear fuel and biomass in the total primary energy savings. In heat generation, the highest share is generated from individual heat sources, i.e., natural gas, because Slovakia has an extensive gas distribution network. Other primary energy sources such as biogas, solar and geothermal energy, account for less than 1 % of heat generated from individual sources.

1.3.4.1.2 Reasoning for selection

Pursuant to the Specific Recommendation of the Council for the SR²⁸⁸, it is necessary to improve energy efficiency particularly in buildings and the industry.

According to Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency²⁸⁹, primary energy consumption should drop by 20 % against the baseline scenario until 2020. These savings should be made in all areas of energy consumption, including conversion, transmission and distribution of energy. At the same time, it will be

²⁸⁸Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012 – 2016 (recommendation No. 5)

²⁸⁹Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:315:0001:0056:SK:PDF>

necessary to ensure savings in high-efficiency cogeneration of power and heat and effective district heating systems.

The Europe 2020 strategy sets out five key measurable objectives, one of which is related to climate and energy – “20-20-20” (i.e., a 20 % reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels or a 30 % reduction under favourable circumstances; increasing the share of energy consumption produced from RES to 20 %, and a 20 % improvement in the EU’s energy efficiency). As far as Slovakia’s non-ETS emissions (transport, agriculture, population, waste management, non-ETS energy and industrial sources) are concerned, the NRP allows an increase, by 2020, by a maximum of 13% against 2005 while adhering to the set annual limits. Another objective under the NRP is to increase the share of RES in the final energy consumption to 14 % and achieve savings amounting to 11 % of the average final energy consumption between 2001 and 2005 in line with the methodology under Directive 2006/32/EC. In connection with the updated energy efficiency policy presented by the new Directive 2012/27/EU, Slovakia’s target has been updated for the 2014 –2020 reference period and its value, i.e., reducing the final consumption of energy against the PRIMES 2007 baseline scenario, represents 23 %²⁹⁰. As required by Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, each Member State should start renovating public buildings as of 2014. This renovation will apply to buildings not meeting the minimum requirements for the energy performance of buildings under Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings²⁹¹. In terms of energy efficiency, it will be necessary to renovate, every year, such buildings that will bring energy savings corresponding to the renovation of 3 % of the total floor area of buildings with the total useful floor area over 500 m² (or 250 m² later on) in connection with the minimum requirements under Act No 555/2005 Coll. on the energy performance of buildings, as amended. The SR plans to meet the energy saving target under Article 4 of Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency – which has been set as the equivalent of 3% renovation of central government public buildings (“mandatory” or “relevant buildings”), which represents 52.17 GWh/year – in an alternative manner, i.e., by supporting the implementation of energy saving measures in public buildings outside the BSR.

In industry, the focus should be on activities related to support for the preparation of energy audits in SMEs and support for the implementation of measures which will be proposed by qualified persons – energy auditors within a set of optimal measures (energy, economy and environmental assessment). The support will have to primarily focus on measures with the biggest potential for energy savings, such as improving energy efficiency in industrial buildings, reducing energy intensity of energy installations, introducing measurement and control systems, including energy and environmental management systems, or other measures contributing to the reduction of primary energy consumption.

The support for RES projects is necessary in order to meet the mandatory target of 14 %. This requires the support for new technologies to address the integration of decentralised electricity generation. In case of heat generation, such technologies will be used in district heating systems and, in case of biomass, they will also address the issue of PM10 while at the same time replacing less efficient heating systems. When providing support to facilities generating energy from renewable energy sources, it is necessary to prevent negative impacts on the environment²⁹².

As part of support for energy efficiency, the use of RES and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, it is necessary to raise awareness of the impacts and benefits of such types of activities. The deployment of continuous awareness-raising systems for entities involved in the implementation of low-carbon technologies will make it possible to regularly monitor energy consumption by the relevant stakeholders and create an environment conducive to the implementation of measures focusing on energy savings and the use of RES. The extension of the existing energy efficiency monitoring system will ensure access to the

²⁹⁰ National Reform Programme of the SR 2013, p. 19

²⁹¹ Directive 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the energy performance of buildings, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:153:0013:0035:SK:PDF>

²⁹² Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment and on amendments to certain acts as amended

relevant information on measures in the area of energy efficiency and the use of RES.

Support will be provided to new functionalities and to adapting the energy efficiency monitoring system operated by the Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency to the existing data collection systems in accordance with relevant legislation. The support will primarily focus on reducing the administrative burden on the providers of data on energy consumption, implementation of energy efficiency measures and the use of RES. The cooperation between managing authorities, intermediate bodies and the monitoring system operator will create conditions to improve the monitoring of targets set in the energy efficiency action plans, including through a possible access of representatives of managing authorities and intermediate bodies to the system and through verification of the data entered by the monitoring system operator, as well as by providing data import and export options between relevant systems that are currently in use.

In rural development, it is necessary to encourage an increase in the use of RES, increase in energy efficiency and energy savings, modernisation and upgrading of obsolete low-efficiency machinery and technologies, as well as investments in energy transformation of biomass, i.e., biomass which is cultivated on unutilised agricultural land, and waste biomass. By the same token, it is necessary to promote the plantation of fast growing trees only on land that is not included in the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) and in areas not suitable for agricultural production. On top of that, farmers should be familiarised with the targeted reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, hand in hand with increasing their motivation to reduce emissions.

This will contribute, in a complementary manner, to the implementation of the RIS3 Strategy.

1.3.4.1.3 Expected results

ERDF investments

- increasing the production and distribution of energy from renewable energy sources;
- improving energy efficiency and the use of energy from renewable energy sources in companies by means of energy audits;
- reducing energy consumption and increasing the share of RES used in buildings while taking account of the minimum requirements in their deep renovation, including the reduction of energy consumption in residential premises;
- increasing the use of RES, improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions for all types of territories through regional and local sustainable energy action plans and the development of energy services;
- increasing the support for energy efficiency, the use of RES and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by deploying continuous awareness-raising systems;
- increasing energy savings by deploying regional and local action plans for sustainable energy;
- reducing energy losses in district heating systems by reconstructing and modernising heat distribution systems.

EAFRD investments

- increasing the use of RES, by-products, waste, residues and other non-food raw materials for the purposes of bioeconomy, including increasing energy efficiency;
- enhancing the effective use of resources and transition towards a climate change resistant low-carbon economy in agriculture, food industry and forestry
- reducing the volume of agriculture-produced emissions of greenhouse gases and ammonia;
- promoting the use of RES;
- increasing the energy efficiency in agriculture and food production.

1.3.4.2 TO5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

1.3.4.2.1 Baseline

The Slovak national climate change reports indicate that the climate change will bring along a more

frequent occurrence of heat waves with average air temperatures above 24°C as well as more frequent and longer periods of draught. Among the major measures towards active climate change adaptation are the activities aimed at ensuring effective water management, namely through ensuring the use of effective irrigation systems (irrigation elements) to continue agricultural operations, facilitate water retention in the countryside, as well as flood prevention measures. Such actions also involve adequately combining preventive technical measures on water courses and on agricultural and forest lands, as well as utilisation of green infrastructure in the country.

There is a large number of slope deformations and numerous closed and abandoned mining waste deposit sites in Slovakia which, given the type of waste deposited on those sites, represent a serious risk to human health and the environment, in the case of floods in particular. Rehabilitation of landslides along with reclamation of closed and abandoned mining waste repositories contribute, therefore, to eliminating serious climate change related risks. The missing human health protection measures contribute to an increased vulnerability of population and its lower adaptation ability. The consequences of the climate change and their impact on the Slovak economic performance will be typical of the future development and are likely, over the long term, to have a substantial effect on the country's development potential and sustainability. Based on the projections of future development, a failure to implement adaptation measures could result in a deceleration of the Slovak economy at a level of 0.4-0.7 % of annual GDP over the long term (2050). Slovakia currently has no sufficient and effective climate change risk management system in place. In addition, it has insufficiently developed means to address specific risks, ensure resilience against emergencies affected by climate change and implement an emergency management system to protect the lives, health and property of its people, as well as to protect infrastructure and enhance resilience of the country and its economy and provide essential conditions to ensure sustainable growth.

1.3.4.2.2 Reasoning for selection

In compliance with the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change²⁹³, it is therefore necessary to identify preliminary measures to foresee, prevent or minimise the causes of the climate change and mitigate its adverse effects, and to ensure these measures are effectively implemented. The main adverse effects of the climate change felt in Slovakia include floods²⁹⁴, landslides, long-lasting periods of draught and heat waves, decrease in soil humidity, and forest fires. An urgent need for Slovakia is to enhance its preparedness to apply the principles of minimising investment risks caused by the climate change, as well as to implement measures to prevent, mitigate and manage climate change related risks. A solution is to encourage investments in climate change adaptation projects, including ecosystem-related approaches, as well as in creating "green" jobs and public health protection, and to support investments to address specific risks, ensure resilience against emergencies affected by climate change and develop emergency management systems.

In agriculture, support is necessary for the activities aimed towards improving the land quality management, increasing the organic content in soil in particular, eliminating the compaction of soil, etc., which lead to enhancing the soil's water retention capacities and water retention in the countryside. Equally important is to avert the continuing degradation of soils that causes a substantial damage every year, in particular through erosion (by water and wind), compaction of soils, loss of organic content in soil, and consequent deterioration in biological activity and soil water regime. Equally important is to respond to the intensifying consequences of droughts on the agricultural sector caused by the on-going climate change and to support investments in advanced and economical irrigation technologies, along with the drainage elements essential to ensuring active discharge of excess water in the case of torrential rains. In forestry,

²⁹³ Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change <http://www1.enviroportal.sk/dohovory/dohovory-detail.php?dokument=2>

²⁹⁴ Preliminary flood risk assessment for Slovakia prepared pursuant to Article 4 and 5 of Directive 2007/60/EC and §5 of Act No 7/2010 Coll. on flood prevention as amended

afforestation of wind-thrown areas needs to be supported in order to restore the proper functioning - soil and water protection functions - of the newly afforested areas as soon as possible. The primary task, however, is to restore forests damaged by the climate change, as well as to prevent such damage.

As far as climate change related risk prevention and management is concerned, preventive measures need to be reinforced in all areas related to the impacts of the climate change, preparedness to adverse events improved, effectiveness of an adverse event management system enhanced. In the area of agricultural risk management, it is necessary to support investments in hydroamelioration and drainage systems that are capable of diverting as well as retaining flood waters (mitigation of consequences of external factors). Investments in irrigation and hydroamelioration systems are conditional upon approval by relevant authorities in order to ensure that their construction complies with the approved river basin management plans and do not endanger natural wetland localities. In areas with high nature value, the hydromealioration systems are a means to preserve stable saturation of soil with water as the key condition to preserve these extremely sensitive biotopes.

1.3.4.2.3 Expected results

CF and ERDF investments

- mitigating the negative effects of the climate change through the implementation of adaptation measures, especially preventive measures with respect to floods, landslides and the protection of public health;
- increasing the quality of planning instruments and documents for flood-related and other risk management;
- strengthening the means to address specific risks and emergency management systems;
- improving the system for collection, analysis and monitoring of objectively verified up-to-date data on risks at the local, regional and national level;
- building an effective civilian protection system and emergency capacities of rescue services for emergencies affected by climate change and pending threats;
- increasing public awareness of protection against emergencies affected by climate change, risk management and involvement of communities, volunteers and public in the prevention and management of emergency situations;
- creating instruments to increase effectiveness in risk management and mitigate the risks related to climate change.

EAFRD investments

- restoring and enhancing effectiveness of ecosystems in agriculture and forestry;
- improving effective utilisation of water in agriculture and providing advisory services on water utilisation;
- building more effective irrigation systems;
- completing the regulatory water drainage systems from the countryside;
- mitigating negative impacts of the farming land wetting and flooding;
- creating instruments to eliminate emergencies affected by climate change in forests;
- improving water retaining capacities in forestry, and/or slowing water outflow;
- implementing fire prevention systems in forests;
- creating instruments for effective monitoring and management of forest eco-systems by means of forest care plans.

1.3.4.3 TO6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

1.3.4.3.1 Baseline

In the area of environmental protection, completing and improving the quality of the environmental

infrastructure is still necessary, along with the conservation and quality improvement in individual components of the environment and a more efficient utilisation of natural resources. As regards waste management, Slovakia has so far made little progress towards reducing its waste landfilling rates. Landfilling is the prevailing method in municipal waste management while waste recovery and recycling remain on the periphery. The share of alternative fuels produced from waste has gradually increased. A majority of municipalities have a separate waste collection system in place, yet its effectiveness is below the required parameters. The major problem with surface water pollution is non-treated and/or insufficiently treated municipal waste waters. Technologies used for drinking water treatment and distribution to the public are obsolete, not complying with the current requirements and trends in this area. As far as the protection and restoration of biological diversity is concerned, an increased attention still needs to be given to achieve a favourable status for habitats and species of EU importance. Slovakia is still facing an unfavourable situation with respect to air pollution caused by certain pollutants (dust particles in particular). In addition, Slovakia has yet failed to implement all the necessary measures to remove old environmental burdens and related permanent risk of their adverse impacts on human health and the environment. In order to boost the overall economic growth, not enough attention has been paid to developing the potential of available technologies with respect to the environmental protection. Equally important is to encourage and promote activities aimed at providing more information to the public and raising public environmental awareness in order to reinforce environmental protection and promote resource efficiency.

The aquaculture sector and the environment are intertwined. The quality of waters, degree of their pollution, intensity of agricultural and industrial activities are crucial factors affecting the quality and quantity of production, or, to be more precise, the very prerequisite to the presence of any aquatic fauna. On the other hand, the aquaculture affects the face of the landscape, water conditions, composition of the fish gene pool, as well as the fauna and flora present in the proximity of water bodies.

1.3.4.3.2 Reasoning for selection

A strategic objective under Slovakia's waste management policy is to ensure waste management in keeping with the waste hierarchy, that is, to reduce waste landfilling and encourage waste recovery, with focus on recycling. In water management, the goal is to create conditions to achieve the good-status objective for waters in Slovakia, with one of the most important conditions being to provide for waste water purification and drainage in compliance with the "environmental acquis". It is also necessary to implement measures to eliminate point sources of water pollution in order to protect ground and surface waters. With respect to the drinking water supply and distribution, measures are necessary to ensure the required quality of drinking water, especially through intensification of the existing surface water treatment facilities and a more effective water supply and distribution system, including the elimination of losses from the piping system. The obstacles existing on water courses need to be cleared to improve the ecological status of waters. In keeping with the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020²⁹⁵, the status of habitats and species of EU importance must be improved. With respect to air quality protection, Slovakia needs to adopt measures to implement relevant EU regulations to ensure further reduction in air pollutant emissions and achieve improvements in the quality of air. Under national objectives for the reduction of air pollutant emissions, investments must be supported in technologies and facilities that are sources of pollution in compliance with BAT requirements and measures to improve air quality must be implemented. In the field of environmental infrastructure, within the project selection process the innovative aspect of technologies going beyond EU standards will be considered when applicable on the basis of the applicable legislation, or

²⁹⁵ The EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/factsheets/biodiversity_2020/2020%20Biodiversity%20Factsheet_SK.pdf

possibly within the project selection process that solutions will be favored which enable to approach or to meet the most ambitious standards under EU legislation on the respective field in case the EU legislation defines the range of compliance values. In order to eliminate the risks of environmental burdens to the environment and public health, measures must be taken to remove such burdens and to rehabilitate and further utilise reclaimed or unused areas. In order to improve the quality of the environment, the building of green infrastructure elements in urban areas must also be encouraged.

One of the key objectives of the action plan implemented under the EU Strategy for the Danube Region is “to restore at least 15 % of degraded ecosystems, including degraded soils, by 2020”²⁹⁶.

Sustainable and effective use of resources in aquaculture is prerequisite to further development of the aquaculture sector and fish processing in Slovakia. Support also needs to be provided to the introduction of environmentally friendly fish farming methods and fish farming and processing technologies that will mitigate their adverse effects, or reinforce their positive impact on the environment. As a follow-up to the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (hereinafter only referred to as “CFP”), collection of data, control and traceability of fish production and aquaculture outputs must be ensured in compliance with Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

In the agriculture and forestry sectors, the activities aimed at biodiversity protection must continue, especially in the NATURA 2000 areas and in areas of a high nature value. Equally desirable is to ensure soil and water protection, in particular by means of environmentally friendly agri-environmental practices and ecological farming and through investments in safe handling of waste water and agricultural fertilisers. By the same token, agricultural activities need to be preserved in areas with nature and other specific constraints. In order to implement these practices, training and education, advisory and dissemination of good practice examples need to be supported for farmers and forest managers.

1.3.4.3.3 *Expected results*

CF and ERDF investments

- ensuring waste management operations in compliance with the waste hierarchy and for the purposes of meeting the requirements under the “environmental acquis”;
- creating conditions to achieve the good-status objective for waters in Slovakia;
- ensuring the fulfilment of Slovakia’s pre-accession commitments towards the EU with respect to municipal waste water purification and drainage;
- improving the quality of drinking water supply for citizens;
- ensuring the conditions for the preservation of biological diversity;
- completing and enhancing the quality of the information, monitoring and reporting system in the area of nature and landscape protection;
- improving air quality and reducing air pollution, as well as enhancing the air quality monitoring system;
- installing technologies and implementing technical measures to ensure that requirements under the EU directives for air pollutant emissions and air quality are met;
- reducing environmental pollution through the implementation of waste water drainage systems;
- ensuring the removal of environmental burdens in urban areas, abandoned industrial sites and conversion areas, as well as ensuring the rehabilitation of abandoned sites and facilities to match the needs of the affected area.

EAFRD investments

²⁹⁶ The steps necessary for the proposed recovery are incorporated in the Prioritised Action Framework for NATURA 2000 in the Slovak Republic for the 2014-2020 programming period.

- preserving agricultural activities in areas with nature and other specific constraints;
- protecting and preserving biological diversity, especially in the NATURA 2000 and HNV sites;
- implementing environmentally friendly farming practices;
- implementing water and soil protection practices;
- enhancing water and air quality and protection and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions produced by agricultural activities.

EMFF investments

- implementing environmentally friendly farming methods, including innovative technologies for fish farming and processing;
- data collection and supervision under the CFP.

1.3.5 National priority: Modern and professional public administration

1.3.5.1 TO11: Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration

1.3.5.1.1 Baseline

Capacity building, effectiveness of public administration and enhancing the effects of public policies were covered by the OP Employment and Social Inclusion in the 2007 - 2013 programming period. The support was limited to the management and development of human resources on the side of public service providers through training and education, partnership development, information exchange and dissemination, implementation of policy- and strategy-making and strategic planning tools, and introduction of quality management systems in public administration. E-Government activities were partially covered by the OP Information Society, with focus on ICT-enabled services, namely at the communication and/or transaction level of electronic services provided by selected central and territorial self-government sectors.

Pursuant to the World Bank data²⁹⁷ and the Commission evaluation²⁹⁸, Slovakia is among the least advanced countries as far as public administration is concerned. The Commission has proposed that EU funding be limited to the key priorities specified in the Commission's Position Paper²⁹⁹. National public spending should not only be used to co-finance but also to finance investments which are complementary and linked to EU funded projects in particular at regional and local level.

Public administration organisations and their processes are ministry controlled and vertically built. In addition to their core processes (relevant expert competences), the organisations also individually ensure a majority of support processes (cross-sectional and servicing processes - e.g., registers, IT, property management, budgeting and accounting, etc.) that are independent of their relevant expert competences.

Analyses³⁰⁰ indicate that crucial problems with the Slovak judicial system involve too complicated law enforcement caused by delays in judicial proceedings, low quality in courts' decision-making, low persuasiveness of judicial decisions and an unstable legislative environment.

Under the country-specific recommendations, the Commission recommends that Slovakia invest more EU

²⁹⁷ World Governance Indicators (WGI) database, World Bank, 2012; they assess 6 areas: efficiency of public administration, freedom, political stability, regulatory quality, law enforcement, and control of corruption

²⁹⁸ Excellence in Public Administration for competitiveness in the EU Member States

²⁹⁹ <http://www.nsrr.sk/sk/programove-obdobie-2014---2020/pozicny-dokument-europskej-komisie-k-partnerskej-dohode-a-programom-sr-na-roky-2014---2020/>

³⁰⁰ E.g., the 2014 EU Justice Scoreboard (under both the *perceived independence of the judiciary* and *time needed to resolve insolvency cases* indicators, Slovakia finished last of all EU Member States)

funds to increasing the effectiveness of public administration in the 2014-2020 programming period³⁰¹

1.3.5.1.2 Reasoning for selection

In line with the Country-specific Recommendation of the Council³⁰², measures need to be adopted, including amendments to the legislation on civil and public service, in order to reinforce autonomy of public service and improve HR management in public administration, to strengthen analytical capacities at key ministries, including with the aim of more effective and efficient use of national and EU funds, to strengthen analytical and audit capacities of financial authorities and to implement measures to improve the judicial system. In response to County-specific Recommendation of the Council³⁰³, implementation of an action plan to fight tax frauds needs to be sped up and key tax fraud prevention measures applied.

With respect to the meeting of NRP objectives, the public administration system requires a reform aimed at process optimisation to increase effectiveness and deliver better services to citizens and businesses, to encourage deployment of ICT-enabled processes and strengthen administrative capacity building across all public administration structures, and to create analytical capacities for policy-making and supporting reform implementation in the key segments, including in cooperation with civil society organisations. The key instrument for the implementation of the strategy for more effective public administration are e-Government projects implemented under TO2 which follow upon the public administration reform concept, and which will support individual stages of its implementation. In order to ensure the close linkage between TO2 (e-Government) and TO11 (redesigning processes) activities, relevant projects will be managed in a coordinated manner in order to ensure their complementarity.

The coordination mechanism is clearly defined in the document entitled System for coordination between the OP Integrated Infrastructure (hereinafter only referred to as "OP II") and the OP Effective Public Administration (hereinafter only referred to as "OP EPA"). The documents defined the basic principles for the coordination of investments to support the implementation of the public administration reform; these principles will be specified in more detail in managing documents for relevant programmes. At the same time, the document will make sure that the concepts for the reform of public administration at its individual levels proposed under the OP EPA precede proposals for investment under relevant specific objectives of the OP II. More details on the implementation of coordination between the managing authorities for the OP EPA and the OP II will be provided in both programmes. The OP II (Priority axis 7 *Information Society*) will cover projects under relevant specific objectives defined in the document to implement electronic services, tools and information systems that will create conditions for the implementation of reform policies and concepts, including specific system-level changes, proposed and approved under the OP EPA. The coordination mechanism is a crucial instrument to ensure an effective implementation of a comprehensive reform in public administration.

It will complement the implementation of the RIS3 strategy.

1.3.5.1.3 Expected results

ESF investments

- reinforcing the capabilities of public administration organisations to adopt optimising measures for the development of institutional capacities and increasing the availability and effectiveness of public administrations services with a focus on client-oriented approach in line with the public

³⁰¹ Document: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:217:0071:0074:SK:PD>

³⁰² Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2012 - 2016 (recommendation 2 and 6)

³⁰³ Council Recommendation on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Slovakia and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Slovakia, 2013 - 2014 (recommendation No. 2)

administration reform objectives³⁰⁴;

- ensuring more efficient management of public administration processes;
- building and strengthening activities of analytical capacities in public administration sectors;
- providing more effective human resources management;
- strengthening capacities and enhancing cooperation with social and economic partners and civic society;
- enhancing effectiveness, transparency and credibility of the justice system, law enforcement and use of alternative means of dispute resolution;
- enhancing effectiveness of the financial administration and public procurement, promoting anti-corruption measures and measures to promote an open and transparent public administration.

³⁰⁴ Page 13 “Basic outlines for public administration reforms in the Slovak Republic” was acknowledged by the Slovak Government at its 88th session on 18 January 2014

1.4 The indicative allocation of support by the Union by thematic objective at national level for each of the ESI Funds, as well as the total indicative amount of support foreseen for climate change objectives

Financial allocations by individual thematic objectives for each of the ESI Funds correspond to the allocation made to a particular programme. The volume of allocation for the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) national-level programmes represents EUR 223,367,272. With respect to climate change related objectives set under relevant programmes, the indicative allocation of EUR 3,361,063,315.98 was made in line with the Commission methodology³⁰⁵. A specific coefficient was assigned to relevant priority/category of intervention under a thematic objective to ensure a harmonised approach to monitoring climate change related expenditures in the areas of support for the relevant thematic objective. Slovakia will exceed the 20-percent objective, at an estimated level of 22.05 %.

Table 1: Indicative allocation for objectives related to climate change

Thematic objective	Total eligible climate change related expenditures
3. Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and the fisheries and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)	24,131,171.98
4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	1,119,171,222.00
5. Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	995,298,991.00
6. Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	513,154,665.00
7. Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures	654,348,556.80
9. Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	54,958,709.20
TOTAL:	3,361,063,315.98

*The objectives related to climate change is determined as % share of the total eligible costs of climate change in the total allocation at national level

Table 2: The indicative allocation of support by the Union by thematic objective at national level for each of the ESI Funds (EUR) (total Union support, including the performance reserve)

	ERDF	ESF	CF	EAFRD	EMFF	TOTAL
1.Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	1,797,792,387			51,333,136		1,849,125,523
2.Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT	805,516,752			20,166,840		825,683,592

³⁰⁵ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 215/2014 of 7 March 2014 laying down rules for implementing Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund with regard to methodologies for climate change support, the determination of milestones and targets in the performance framework and the nomenclature of categories of intervention for the European Structural and Investment Funds

3.Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, of the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)	398,984,150			502,981,310	12,670,020	914, 635,480
4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	1,050,275,034			68,896,188		1,119,171,222
5.Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	260,901,369		419,346,261	315,051,361		995,298,991
6. Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	88,328,116		1,441,766,000	326,181,901	2,167,880	1,858,443,897
7. Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures	1,187,989,455		2,307,139,166			3,495,128,621
8. Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility	215,860,548	918,099,996		55,598,250		1,189,558,794
9. Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	836,575,659	433,699,291		137,396,773		1,407,671,723
10. Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning	263,000,000	458,746,509		14,998,073		736,744,582
11. Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration		267,311,313				267,311,313
Technical assistance	455,071,912	89,737,971		52,669,012	947,100	598,425,995
TOTAL	7,360,295,382	2,167,595,080	4,168,251,427	1,545,272,844	15,785,000	15,257,199,733

Indicative allocations by TOTOs are net of allocations for technical assistance

Table 3: Information on the Youth Employment Initiative, which is programmed under thematic objective 8 “Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility” (EUR)

YEI specific allocation	72 175 259
ESF matching funding	72 175 259

Table 4: Information on the allocation for technical assistance, by category of region, where appropriate

Fund	Category of region, where appropriate	Allocation to technical assistance (EUR)	Share of technical assistance of total allocation (by Fund and by category of region, where appropriate)
ERDF	Less developed regions	447,861,412.00*	6.31 %
	Transition regions	N/A	N/A
	More developed regions	7,210,500.00	2.75 %
ESF	Less developed regions	86,642,011.00	4.12 %
	Transition regions	N/A	N/A
	More developed regions	3,095,960.00	4.64 %
CF	N/A	0.00	0.00 %
EAFRD	N/A	52,669,012.04	3.41 %
EMFF	N/A	947,100.00	6.00 %

* Including allocation for OP TA (EUR 159,071,912)

Table 5: The share of ESF of Structural Funds (ERDF and ESF)

Share of ESF in the Structural Funds (ESF and ERDF) resources for the operational programmes for the Convergence and Regional competitiveness and employment objectives in the 2007 – 2013 programming period	19.71 %
ESF minimum share in the Member State	20.9 %
The share of ESF of in the Structural Funds resources in the 2014 – 2020 programming period	22.75 %

1.5 The application of horizontal principles and policy objectives for the implementation of the ESI Funds

1.5.1 Arrangements for the partnership principle, including an indicative list of partners and a summary of the actions taken to involve those partners and their role in the preparation of the PA and progress report

The Government Office of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “Government Office”) is responsible for coordination of the use of the EU funds³⁰⁶. The preparation of the PA SR for 2014 – 2020 is ensured by the Central Coordinating Authority (hereinafter referred to as “CCA”), falling under the authority of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investments. CCA engages relevant partners in the preparation of the PA SR through the following working groups:

- a) the Government Council for Partnership Agreement 2014 – 2020 – coordination, advisory and initiative body of the Government on the issues related to the PA SR preparation (list of members in Annex),
- b) the “Partnership for the Cohesion Policy” working group – a platform for exchanging experience and views of experts on the EU Cohesion Policy beyond 2013 (list of members in Annex),
- c) working groups for the fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities - established at individual central government authorities responsible for EAC fulfilment in accordance with Government Resolution No 305/2012,
- d) working groups for the preparation of future programmes – established at individual responsible authorities³⁰⁷ in accordance with the CCA guideline for the preparation of OPs for 2014 – 2020,
- e) the working group for the drafting of the Territorial Agreement between the SR Government, regional self-government and local self-government for 2014 – 2020 (list of members in Annex).

MAs responsible for the preparation of future programmes, other central government authorities, as well as a wide range of partners from regional and local self-government, academic sphere, interest associations, representative professional associations, non-governmental organizations (responsible for promoting gender equality, non-discrimination, sustainable development and the environment), organizations in the area of rural development and fisheries and the European groupings of territorial cooperation are involved in the preparation of the PA SR. Cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development responsible for the rural development and fisheries is an integral part of the PA SR preparation process.

Relevant partners involved in the preparation of the PA SR were selected in accordance with Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the EP and of the Council and the Commission delegated regulation on the European Code of Conduct on Partnership³⁰⁸ to implement the partnership and multi-level governance principle throughout the entire process. Past experience of cooperation with partners from the programming period 2007 – 2013, active participation, outcomes of the relevant responsibilities and a need for coverage of all areas of the PA SR by relevant representative partners, have been taken into consideration. The CCA issued the guideline for the preparation of OPs for 2014 – 2020 for future MAs,

³⁰⁶ Pursuant to Act No 575/2001 Coll. on the organisation of the Government activities and on the organisation of central government authorities as amended

³⁰⁷ Managing Authorities under the Investment for growth and jobs goal and for the EARDF and EMFF were designated by the Government Resolution No 139/2013 on the proposal of the programmes structure supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds for the programming period 2014 – 2020. Authorities responsible for the preparation and implementation of programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation goal were designated by the Government Resolution No 604/2013 on the proposal for designation of authorities responsible for the preparation and implementation of programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal in the programming period 2014 - 2020 in Slovakia.

³⁰⁸ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 of 7 January 2014 on the European code of conduct on partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds

along with a proposal for a uniform statute for working groups involved in the preparation of individual Slovak programmes. The guideline includes an obligation to involve relevant partners in these working groups, including the entities representing Roma communities, civil society development, horizontal principles, representative non-governmental organisations, as well as NGOs for rural development and fisheries, and representatives of local action groups. The CCA also prepared a guideline on the involvement of NGOs' partners in the preparation of OPs³⁰⁹. Representative partners representing civil society are selected by the Government Council for non-governmental non-profit organisations. The same approach is also applied by the Partnership for the Cohesion Policy working group.

In the initial stage of the preparation process of the PA SR proposal, a comprehensive analysis of gaps and development needs and growth potential was conducted in collaboration with relevant partners, taking into account the thematic objectives and key actions defined in the EC Position Paper. The analysis took into account the NRP, country-specific Council recommendations, the EU and Slovak legislative and strategic documents and experience from the 2007 – 2013 programming period. The proposal of the analytical part of the PA SR was discussed at a meeting of the Partnership for the Cohesion Policy working group.

As a next step, the strategic part and ex ante evaluation of the PA SR were prepared. Partial outputs of the PA SR were continuously sent and consulted with relevant partners. Communication with partners was performed electronically, as well as through working groups of the Government Office. Expert inputs from the individual MAs were also incorporated, in relation to the parallel preparation of the OPs. The general public was also involved in the process of preparation of the PA SR, by means of a CCA questionnaire designed to collect public opinions and suggestions concerning the recent issues regarding the use of the EU funds in the 2014 – 2020 programming period³¹⁰. The information obtained through the questionnaire was considered in the selection of thematic objectives and investment priorities specified in the PA SR proposal. Suggestions from the public to reduce administrative burden have been incorporated in the relevant part of the PA SR, and serve as a significant input for the preparation of the ESI Funds management and control system. The PA SR proposal was also discussed by the members of the Government Council for PA SR.

The comprehensive PA SR proposal was positively accepted by the relevant partners. They supported selected thematic objectives and priority areas for funding; the application of integrated approaches in the entire territory of the SR; the ambition to gradually establish electronic exchange of information and data between beneficiaries and authorities responsible for management and control of programmes and measures to reduce administrative burden for beneficiaries. Comments received from partners were mostly aimed at fine-tuning the text of the PA SR. Most crucial requirements which have been requested by partners and accepted by the CCA were: completion of the PA SR in accordance with RIS3, completion of analysis for the area of rural development and fisheries, disagreement with the unified management system, nor with a joint information system for the ESI Funds monitoring, the need for completion of territorial concentration and application of integrated approaches, reconciliation of parts 1.1 and 1.3 in the draft of the PA SR and revision of horizontal principle sustainable development.

The first proposal of the PA SR, including ex ante evaluation, was submitted to the EC for assessment by the end of June 2013 and published on the website of the CCA³¹¹. Also, in the process of consultation on the draft of the PA SR, the CCA organizes meetings with the authorities responsible for the preparation of the programmes, which communicate with the relevant partners in the specific areas, in order to incorporate the key open questions arising from submitted observations and from results of negotiations with the EC. The aim of the meetings was to resolve all key outstanding issues, which were mainly focused on territorial

³⁰⁹ CCA guidelines on the preparation of 2014 - 2020 operational programmes and on the involvement of NGOs' partners in the preparation of operational programmes were electronically sent to individual Managing Authorities

³¹⁰ <http://www.nsrr.sk/sk/programove-obdobie-2014---2020/dotaznik/>

³¹¹ <http://www.nsrr.sk/sk/programove-obdobie-2014---2020/negociacie-k-priprave-partnerskej-dohody-sr-a-op/>

development, thematic concentration, application of the integrated approaches, coordination between the mainstream programmes and other support instruments, linking activities of relevant programmes to the climate change measures and adjustment mechanism of the performance framework. In parallel, coordination of the fulfilment and assessment of fulfilment of EAC in Slovakia was provided by the CCA, in cooperation with responsible authorities involved. The partnership principle is ensured through commenting the draft PA SR by general public in the process of strategic environmental assessment (SEA)³¹².

To ensure the participation of a wide range of socio-economic partners within the SR, CCA has provided for up to the present, the possibility to reimburse travel expenses for partners from the civil society, interest and professional associations operating outside the place of meeting of the working group Partnership for Cohesion Policy working group.

In the information and publicity areas, CCA ensures that the general public is informed on the preparation of the programming period 2014 – 2020 through its website <http://www.nsrr.sk>, Information Centre "Structural Funds for the Slovakia" by sending newsletters to registered interested persons, as well as through the regular publications in the journal EUROKOMPAS. Communication with the general public takes place also via the e-mail address cko@vlada.gov.sk. Mobilization of relevant partners is also ensured by organization of conferences and trainings on the problem of using of EU funds. At the same time, CCA regularly submits information to the Government regarding the negotiation process on the proposed EU legislation for Cohesion Policy after 2013, including the information on preparation of the PA SR and the fulfilment of EAC in Slovakia in a six-month period. The document also includes a detailed overview of undertaken activities with the socio-economic partners in the preparation of the programming period 2014 – 2020. In the programming period 2014 – 2020, cooperation with partners will continue by involving relevant partners in the Working Group on Communication. CCA will place more emphasis on public awareness at all levels of implementation using a wide range of tools (use of integrated information network of regional information centres, establishment of the Information call centre, etc.), new ways of communication (connecting CCA website with ITMS, communication via social networks) and centralized system of education for the relevant partners involved in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the PA SR and programmes (trainings, seminars, workshops). The communication strategy will be also implemented on the basis of regular public opinion polls focused on identification of public awareness about the results of the support from the ESI Funds. In order to actively involve a wide range of partners in the implementing phase, series of workshops are planned to be organized in the regions of the SR. The partnership principle will also be applied in the implementation of integrated territorial approaches (ITI, CLLD, sustainable urban development).

In accordance with Article 5 Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the EP and of the Council, the partnership principle will also be applied in the implementation phase of the PA SR and the programmes. Cooperation with the partners will continue in a way which was already proven in the programming period 2007 – 2013, and that is by involving the partners in the work of the National monitoring committee for the ESI Funds and the monitoring committees of individual programmes established by MAs. Relevant partners, as full members of the monitoring committees shall be regularly informed on the state of play of implementation of the programmes and shall be involved in evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of the ESI Funds. In the implementation process of the programmes, the expert working groups will be set up by the MAs under monitoring committee involving relevant partners, who shall actively cooperate with relevant MA of the programme on the preparation of progress report.

³¹² A public discussion of the assessment report on a strategic document with country-wide impact "Partnership Agreement of the SR for 2014 - 2020" and the draft Partnership Agreement of the SR for 2014 - 2020 was held on 7 November 2013 at the Government Office of the Slovak Republic.

1.5.2 Promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination

The main objectives of the horizontal principle of promoting equality of men and women are defined according to the EU Fund, from which the programmes and their priority axes³¹³ are supported. The main objective of the ESF programmes is to ensure gender equality in the labour market and in its preparation, and the objective of other ESI Funds programmes is a reduction in horizontal and vertical gender segregation throughout the sectors of economy.

The main objective of the horizontal principle of non-discrimination for the ESF programmes is to ensure equal opportunities in the labour market and in its preparation and the objective for other ESI Funds programmes is to ensure equality in access and use of infrastructure and services. The people with disabilities require a special approach, for which it is necessary to create exceptional conditions of accessibility (e.g. barrier-free architectural environment, accessible information, etc.). These people cannot be integrated into society and the labour process unless such conditions are created in accordance with the United Nations Organisation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which became valid for the SR on 25 June 2010³¹⁴.

For the purpose of preventing discrimination and promoting equality between men and women, these principles will be applied across all programmes by means of implementation of positive action measures and activities targeted to support disadvantaged groups while taking into account the EMFF specifics. A description of activities to introduce temporary measures, comply with the principles of non-discrimination and promotion of equality of men and women, along with a final document prepared from an assessment procedure (in the case of accessibility) or a confirmation by a competent authority that the proposed activity, and/or a change in the proposed activity, complies with the principle of accessibility will constitute a mandatory annex to the application for financial contribution. This approach will be integrated into the ESI Funds programmes in 2014 - 2020 through their managing documentation (programme manuals, guidelines for applicants). The basic framework for identifying priority areas and objectives for applying the principle of preventing discrimination and promoting equality of men and women will be the National Strategic Document that will provide principle's application in the programmes implemented from the ESI Funds. For the effective application of the horizontal principle promoting equality of men and women and non-discrimination, disqualification criteria will be given in the I support application selection and evaluation process under the priority axes of programmes. At the same, a permit will also constitute a mandatory annex to the application for support from the ESI Funds even with respect to those activities for which the granting of such permit is not required.

The monitoring of fulfilment process of the horizontal principles will be monitored at the project level through monitoring reports, which include a separate output that contains information about the horizontal principles (i. e. a description of the activities undertaken, their results and evaluating their contribution in achieving the objectives of horizontal principles), as well as through control on the spot and subsequent evaluation of the contribution to the objectives of horizontal principles. The separate output, containing information on the application of the horizontal principles, will form the basis for the evaluation process of the ESI Funds contribution to the objectives identified in the National Strategic Document. Fulfilment of the achieved level of the objectives set in the National Strategic Document, including a proposal for corrective action and recommendations to achieve them will be submitted annually to the Government of the SR for discussion.

The MAs will submit regular report on fulfilment of the horizontal principles of promoting equality of men

³¹³ In the case of the EAFRD and EMFF, "priority axis" refers to a "Union priority".

³¹⁴ Article 1 (2) of the United Nations Organisation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines persons with disabilities as the people with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which may hinder in interaction with various barriers their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others

and women and non-discrimination to the responsible authority by means of the assessment of monitoring reports and on the spot control at regular intervals. Analytical, evaluation, strategic and legislative activity for the application of horizontal principles of promoting equality of men and women, non-discrimination and accessibility at the national level will be provided by the MLSAF SR, which is responsible for the state policy in these areas and will be responsible for defining the conditions for the provision of support to ensure the application of these horizontal principles of promoting equality of men and women and non-discrimination and the method of their verification, which will be binding for the MAs. MLSAF SR will also provide educational and training activities for the application of the principles of promoting equality of men and women and non-discrimination to the authorities involved in the ESI Funds implementation, as well as relevant socio-economic partners and evaluators. The horizontal principles of promoting equality between men and women and non-discrimination will be ensured not only by disqualification in the case of non-compliance with the conditions, but also during the evaluation and selection process in which relevant partners are expected to be engaged.

For efficient and effective application of those horizontal principles the number of employees who will ensure the implementation of the given activities will have to be increased, or optimized. The representatives of MLSAF SR responsible for implementation of the horizontal principles in promoting equality of men and women and non-discrimination will participate in all monitoring committees or working groups for preparation and implementation of programmes under the ESI Funds. A representative of the body in charge of the implementation of the horizontal principles will be responsible for defining a condition for the provision of support in connection with the implementation of the horizontal principles and the method of their verification, which will be binding for the MA.

In accordance with the partnership principle, relevant civil society institutions, representing gender equality, non-discrimination and the interests of disadvantaged groups will be involved in the preparatory process (e.g., through participation in working groups for OP preparation). A horizontal principle coordinator will also cooperate with relevant civic society institutions in the evolution of OP (or as expert evaluators invited by the coordinator), on-the-spot control of projects, as well as in training provided to MAs and beneficiaries. At the same time, the role of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights will be reinforced, which will be engaged, as a partner to the horizontal priority coordinator, in the regular monitoring of compliance with the horizontal principles and advising MAs, beneficiaries and project target groups, and will also cooperate through participating in HP coordinator's projects.

1.5.3 Sustainable Development

Programmes co-financed by the ESI Funds must also comply with the horizontal principle of sustainable development. The basis for sustainable development is three pillars: environmental, economic and social. The main objective of the sustainable development horizontal principle will be to ensure an environmentally sustainable social and economic growth with the special focus on the protection and improvement of the environment, taking into account the “polluter pays” principle³¹⁵.

³¹⁵ Slovak legislation does not include the definition of the “polluter pays” principle, however, this principle may generally be seen in the applicable rule under which anyone whose activity or non-activity can cause or have caused environmental pollution or damage should also bear the costs of preventive and corrective measures to avoid or prevent environmental pollution or damage. If corrective measures cannot be implemented so that the environment is restored to its original conditions, the polluter should bear such compensation for environmental damage or pollution which is proportional to its share in the extent of that environmental pollution or damage. A competent public authority can take the necessary preventive or corrective measures, however, it can only do so if the polluter is unable to take such measures on its own. The polluter pays principle comprises a preventive and corrective component. The preventive component means that anyone who can cause pollution, through its actions or omission to act, is required to take measures at its own costs to avoid environmental pollution or damage, or to reduce the adverse effects of its activities to the minimum level permitted under separate regulations (e.g., permissible limits of air, soil and water pollution, etc.). The corrective component means that anyone who have caused a severe environmental damage or environmental pollution is required, in compliance with a generally binding regulation and at its own costs, to remove such environmental damage or pollution and restore the environment into original conditions, or to such conditions that are least harmful to the environment and cause the least pollution to its

The “polluter pays” principle is part of the Slovak legislation: Act No 17/1992 Coll. on the environment, as amended, lays down the legal framework for the application of the preventive and corrective component of this principle in the Slovak legal system. In relation to the aforementioned legislation, both components of the “polluter pays” principles are subsequently incorporated in the specific laws covering a specific environmental medium (Act No 364/2004 Coll. on water and on amendments to Act of the Slovak National Council No 372/1990 Coll. on offences, as amended (the Water Act); Act No 223/2001 Coll. on waste and on amendments to certain acts, as amended; Act No 401/1998 Coll. on charges for air pollution, as amended; Act No 409/2011 Coll. on certain measures in the field of environmental burden and on amendments to certain acts, etc.), and in so-called cross-sectoral laws covering multiple environmental media (Act No 359/2007 Coll. on the prevention and recovery of environmental damage and on amendments to certain acts; Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment and on amendment to certain acts, as amended; Act No 39/2013 Coll. on integrated pollution prevention and control and on amendments to certain acts, etc.) Slovakia implements the “polluter pays” principle through a number of legislative and economic instruments so that obliged persons are encouraged to reduce pollution and all polluters are covered. Economic instruments, including taxes, charges, fines and payments, constitute an important part of Slovakia environmental policy. The funds collected, along with the revenues from the fines for the violation of environmental obligations, represent revenues of the Environmental Fund, and are again used to cover corrective measures in a relevant economic sector.

Under the “polluter pays” principle applied in Slovakia, two horizontal instruments are used - integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) These horizontal instruments will also be applied to the support provided from the ESI Funds.

The sustainable development principle will be integrated into the ESI Funds programmes in 2014 – 2020 through their managing documentation (programme manuals, guidelines for applicants). The basic framework for identifying priority areas and objectives for applying the principle of sustainable development will be the National Strategic Document that will provide principle’s application in the programmes implemented from the ESI Funds. For the effective application of the horizontal principle of sustainable development, disqualification criteria will be given in the grant application selection and evaluation process under the priority axes of the programmes. Investments made from the ESI Funds should not increase the environmental burden. In order to assess the level of environmental burden, the applicants will have to submit, prior to the conclusion of a grant contract, a final document assessing the proposed activities in terms of their expected environmental impacts in compliance with applicable legislation (i.e., a decision from the review procedure or a final position), or a statement by a competent authority that the proposed activity, or a change in the proposed activity, is not subject to environmental assessment. Accordingly, the applicant will also have to submit, prior to the conclusion of a grant contract, an integrated permit for those activities that are subject to such permit. Similarly, the integrated permit for the activities that are subject to such permit will also constitute a mandatory annex to the grant application, or prior to the conclusion of a grant contract with respect to the implementation of the “polluter pays” principle, expenditure spent on activities to comply with the requirements set by generally binding regulations covering the “polluter pays” principle will be considered ineligible. This principle will be incorporated in the conditions for the provision of support defined in a call for applications for support.

The monitoring of the fulfilment of the sustainable development principle will be monitored at the project level through monitoring reports (i. e., a description of the activities undertaken, their results and evaluating their contribution in achieving the objectives set under the horizontal principle), as well as through control of the project implementation on the spot and subsequent evaluation of the contribution to the horizontal principle objectives. The separate output, containing information on the application of the horizontal principle, will form the basis for the evaluation process of the ESI Funds contribution to the objectives identified in the National Strategic Document. Fulfilment of the achieved level of the objectives

individual media.

set in the National Strategic Document, including a proposal for corrective actions and recommendations to achieve them will be submitted annually to the Government of the SR for discussion.

Analytical, evaluation, strategic and methodology activities to implement the sustainable development horizontal principle at the national level will be provided by the GO SR. The MAs will regularly submit reports on the implementation of the sustainable development principle, in the form for monitoring report assessments and on-the-spot controls carried out at regular intervals, to the authority responsible for the implementation of this horizontal principle. A representative of the authority responsible for the implementation of the sustainable development horizontal principle will be responsible for defining the conditions for the provision of support with respect to the implementation of the sustainable development principle and the method of its verification, which will be binding for the MAs. In addition, he/she will also provide educational and training activities on the implementation of the sustainable development principles for stakeholders involved in the ESI Funds implementation, relevant social and economic partners, as well as evaluators of grant applications. For efficient and effective implementation of the sustainable development principle, the number of employees responsible for the delivery of aforementioned activities will have to be increased, or optimised, at the national level. The Government Office representatives responsible for the implementation of the sustainable development principle will participate in all monitoring committees and working groups for the preparation and implementation of the ESI Funds-financed programmes. In accordance with the partnership principle, relevant civil society institutions working in the area of sustainable development will be involved in the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the Slovak programmes. In order to mitigate adverse impacts on climate, reduce air pollution and pollution of other environmental media, as well as to promote energy efficiency, a “green” public procurement will be used for the ESI Funds-financed projects³¹⁶.

As regards the efficient use of resources in the waste management, efforts must be made to introduce means for prevention of waste and to build facilities for the preparation of waste for re-use and recovery, with focus on its recycling. In the water sector, the focus will be on meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (investments in reducing the harmful substances in water, sewer construction and equipment for waste water treatment, building water supply systems, etc.). In the field of air protection, technologies enabling higher level of environmental protection (beyond minimum requirements of BAT) will be supported as well as systemic measures that allow to reduce emissions and to ensure, inter alia, the compliance with the Directive on industrial emissions and also contribute towards meeting the requirements of the Directive on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants and the Directive on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe. In energy sector, the support of energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy, low carbon technologies and eco-innovative approaches are crucial. Raising awareness about the possibilities of saving energy sources, including information campaigns and events remains essential. Transition to a highly efficient heat and electricity production will be promoted, as well as systematic investment in long-haul heating/cooling networks, energy savings and optimization of energy use at local/municipal level by promoting low-carbon strategies/action plans for sustainable energy.

With respect to the support for biomass utilisation, the project evaluation and selection process should involve sustainability criteria in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Report from the Commission to the Council and the EP on the sustainability requirements for the use of solid and gaseous biomass sources in electricity, heating and cooling, as well as measures to limit production of particulate matter and minimise adverse impacts on the air quality (e.g., support for low-emission installations).

With respect to the active adaptation to the impacts of the climate change, Slovakia has prepared a comprehensive Strategy for Adaptation to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change³¹⁷. This Strategy suggests

³¹⁶ <http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-141217?prefixFile=m>

³¹⁷ Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Adaptation to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change, approved by Government Resolution No 148 of 26 March 2014 <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?IdMaterial=23364>

principles, based on which the adaptation processes should be followed, criteria for the selection of the priority measures, as well as a set of adaptation measures that should lead to a reduction of the negative social and economic costs. In compliance with the Council conclusions of February 2013, the activities concerning the climate change issue (mitigation and adaptation) were directly incorporated in relevant programmes, including indicative allocations for identified measures. Existing models that enable determining carbon intensity of individual activities implemented under various programmes (for example, the CO2MPARE model) can be used to systematically monitor the impacts of programmes on climate change.

Regarding the biodiversity and Ecosystems preservation the SR prepared a document entitled “Updated National Strategy of Biodiversity Protection until 2020³¹⁸”, which has already been approved. A key objective remains to halt biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation in the SR, ensuring their revitalization and rational use of ecosystem services in their most feasible extent. Biodiversity will be maintained through the combination of synergies with agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and tourism and strengthening of economic instruments and incentives.

The main activities of the SR in the area of natural disasters, risk prevention and management are flood prevention, prevention and management of risks arising from closed and abandoned mining waste repositories, issue of the risks of landslides and disaster prevention. Act No 7/2010 Coll. on flood protection, as amended by Act No 180/2013 Coll. on the organisation of the local state administration and on amendments to certain acts, established the obligation to produce and regularly update flood risk management plans, including preliminary flood risk assessment and drafting of flood hazard maps and flood risk maps. Preliminary flood risk assessment was carried out in the SR in December 2011. In order to address the issue of risks associated with closed and abandoned mining waste repositories, a basic planning document for mining waste repositories entitled “Programme of prevention and risk management in closed and abandoned mining waste repositories”³¹⁹ has been prepared. The document entitled “Programme of prevention and management of landslide risk”³²⁰ represents the basic strategic document for landslide risks.

1.6 The list of the programmes under the ERDF, the ESF and the Cohesion Fund, except those under the European territorial cooperation goal, and of the programmes of the EAFRD and the EMFF, with the respective indicative allocations by ESI Funds and by year

Table 6

³¹⁸ Updated National Strategy of Biodiversity Protection until 2020, approved by Government Resolution No 12 of 8 January 2014 <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23161>

³¹⁹ Programme of prevention and risk management in closed and abandoned mining waste repositories (2014 – 2020), approved by Government Resolution No 260 of 28 May 2014 <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23575>

³²⁰ Programme of prevention and management of landslide risk (2014 – 2020), approved by Government Resolution No 738 of 18 December 2013 <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23122>

Program me title	ESI Funds (ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund, EAFRD EMFF or YEI)	Total (EUR)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
OP R&I	EFRR	2,266,776,537	281,378,955	295,404,738	309,617,024	323,631,581	338,633,282	354,698,582	363,412,375
OP II	CF	2,307,139,166	285,026,708	300,192,830	315,522,069	330,075,029	345,013,576	361,643,484	369,665,470
OP II	EFRR	1,659,506,207	205,997,422	216,265,691	226,670,501	236,930,553	247,913,292	259,674,692	266,054,056
OP HR	ERDF	243,662,462	30,246,251	31,753,922	33,281,642	34,788,108	36,400,685	38,127,591	39,064,263
OP HR	ESF	1,889,145,796	234,598,760	246,255,687	258,067,772	269,716,367	282,184,138	295,534,501	302,788,571
OP HR	YEI	72,175,259	40,547,898	31,627,361	0	0	0	0	0
OP EQ	CF	1,861,112,261	229,924,017	242,158,152	254,523,870	266,263,384	278,313,942	291,728,879	298,200,017
OP EQ	ERDF	1,276,787,849	158,489,919	166,390,101	174,395,335	182,289,195	190,739,076	199,788,040	204,696,183
IROP	ERFD	1,754,490,415	218,148,261	228,882,942	239,760,933	250,490,765	261,971,427	274,260,955	280,975,132
OP EPA	ESF	278,449,284	34,564,399	36,287,317	38,033,145	39,754,683	41,597,480	43,570,932	44,641,328
OP TA	ERDF	159,071,912	19,745,876	20,730,141	21,727,493	22,710,970	23,763,720	24,891,109	25,502,603
OP F	EMFF	15,785,000	2,163,649	2,191,290	2,211,321	2,247,162	2,299,451	2,315,174	2,356,953
OP RD*	EAFRD	1,545,272,844	271,154,575	213,101,979	212,815,053	212,522,644	212,225,447	211,912,203	211,540,943
Total		15,329,374,99	2,011,986,6	2,031,242,1	2,086,626,1	2,171,420,4	2,261,055,5	2,358,146,1	2,408,897,89
		2	90	51	58	41	16	42	4

* after the transfer from the 2nd to the 1st pillar

The allocations also contain financial resources in the amount of at least 3 % of the ESI Funds (with the exemption of EMFF and EAFRD) resources which will be allocated for the implementation of financial instruments through the Slovak Investment Holding.

Table 7

Programme title	ESI Funds (ERDF, CF, EAFRD, EMFF or YEI)	Total (EUR)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
ETC	EFRR	223,367,272	11,079,190	16,177,117	23,101,946	41,976,097	42,815,620	43,671,932	44,545,370

1.7 Request for transfer of Structural Funds' allocations between categories of regions, where applicable

Table 8

Category of region	Financial allocation based on Commission decision (EUR)	Transfer to	Amount transferred (EUR)	Share of the allocation of the category of region from which funds are transferred (%)	Financial allocation after transfers (EUR)
Less developed regions	9,483,661,486	Transition region	0	3.00	9,199,151,642
		More developed regions	284,509,844		
Transition regions	0	Less developed regions	0	0.00	0
		More developed regions	0		
More developed regions	44,228,976	Less developed regions	0	0.00	328,738,820
		Transition regions	0		

1.8 Transfer from the European Territorial Cooperation goal to the Investment for Growth and Jobs goal, where applicable

Table 9

Transfer to	Amount transferred (EUR)
Less developed regions	0
Transition regions	0
More developed regions	0

1.9 Request for a transfer of technical assistance to the European Commission, where applicable

Table 10

Fund	Category of region	Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

1.10 Information on the allocation related to the performance reserve, broken down by ESI Funds and, where appropriate, by category of region, and on the amounts excluded for the purpose of calculating the performance reserve

Table 1

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
			Amounts excluded for the purposes of the calculation of the performance reserve				
Fund	Category of region	Total Union support (EUR)	Matching ESF support to YEI (EUR)	CAP transfers	Union support subject to the performance reserve (EUR)	Performance reserve (EUR)	Performance reserve as a share of the Union support subject to the reserve
ERDF	More developed regions	261,994,877			261,994,877	15,719,692.62	6 %
	Transition regions	0			0		
	Less developed regions	7,098,300,505			7,098,300,505	425,898,030.30	6 %
	Special allocation to outermost or sparsely populated regions	0			0		
TOTAL ERDF					7,360,295,382	441,617,722.92	6 %
ESF	More developed regions	66,743,943	0		66,743,943	4,004,636.58	6 %
	Transition regions	0	0		0		
	Less developed regions	2,100,851,137	72,175,259		2,028,675,878	121,720,552.68	6 %
TOTAL ESF					2,095,419,821	125,725,189.26	6 %
EAFRD	N/A	1,890,234,844		344,962,000	1,545,272,844	92,716,370.64	6 %
CF	N/A	4,168,251,427			4,168,251,427	250,095,085.62	6 %
EMFF	N/A	15,785,000			15,785,000	947,100.00	6 %
TOTAL (All funds)					15,185,024,474	911,101,468.44	6 %

2 Arrangements to ensure effective implementation of the ESI Funds

2.1 Mechanisms complying with the institutional framework to ensure coordination between the ESI Funds and other EU and national financial instruments and with the EIB

Coordination between the ESI Funds and other support instruments will be ensured by the following programme and project-level measures:

- ensuring harmonisation of the legal framework for the provision of support from the EAFRD and the EMFF and other ESI Funds in the SR, taking into consideration the specifics of support provided under the EAFRD and the EMFF;
- ensuring harmonised methodology to set up the process for the provision and control of support provided from the ESI Funds, in the form of the Management and Control System;
- ensuring harmonised conditions for the Management and Control System, including an arrangement for a separate management system for the EAFRD and inclusion of common mechanisms for monitoring and data collection for all the ESI Funds;
- development and operation of a uniform information system for the ESI Funds (excluding the EAFRD) and its link to the separate EAFRD information system in order to support implementation of individual programmes and collection and generation of the data necessary for monitoring, evaluation and reliable reporting to the EU and the public on the use of EU financial support. forwarding the data and information from the aforementioned information systems (hereinafter only referred to as "IS") and from the IS for other instruments of EU support into a separate central-level nation-wide information system in line with the OpenData and open governance principles will prevent double-funding of individual operations. The central information system will contain a separate module to prevent double-funding of operations, implemented under the supervision of the Government Office;
- active cooperation and guidance provided to entities involved in the provision of EU support with respect to setting the conditions for the provision of support at the level of individual programmes in the form of comments to key documents, methodological and expert support and establishment of a platform for uniform procedures to eliminate risks and address emergency situations. This will be delivered through the mandatory programme management in the form of plans for contracting, drawing of funds and achievement of results to be monitored and evaluated, and where not met, proposing and coordination the adoption of corrective measures; to be ensured by the CCA;
- establishment of a formal working committee that will meet at regular interval in order to ensure coordination between the key ESI Funds programmes as well as between the ESI Funds programmes and European Territorial Cooperation programmes, and other EU and national support instruments. The working committee will be led by the Deputy Prime Minister for Investments. Members of the working committee will also include representatives of entities responsible for the implementation of the ESI Funds programmes and identified EU and Slovak support instruments. The entities responsible for the implementation of the ESI Funds programmes will regularly submit time schedules of planned calls for applications for grants to the working group leader in order to identify their complementarity with the funds provided under other EU and Slovak support instruments. At the same time, they will send individual draft calls for applications for the working group leader to assess the complementarity of other EU and Slovak support instruments with the ESI Funds in the identified areas of support prior to their publication so that the planned time schedule for the publication of calls is not affected. If the proposed call for applications for grants does not comply with the identified complementarity, the working group will be entitled to request that the relevant application be modified as necessary. The aforementioned way of coordination will also ensure the mandatory cooperation between

representatives of entities responsible for the ESI Funds programmes and representatives of institutions responsible for the implementation of other, thematically corresponding support instruments not only during the preparation of a call, but also during related processes, including the adoption of corrective measures by the CCA;

- regular reporting the Government on the implementation of mechanisms for the coordination of the ESI Funds with other support instruments, including identification of irregularities and relevant corrective measures to improve this mechanism;
- joint activities in the area of information and publicity;
- organisation of regular training activities, workshops and conferences for representatives of relevant socio-economic partners at the national and regional level, including the exchange of experience and good practices with foreign partners;
- coordinating the provision of information and expert advice on the funding possibilities under the ESI Funds and other support instruments with the aim of providing a better public access to information. Under the planned measure, an analysis will be performed to assess the current situation concerning the provision of information by institutions that already operated at the regional level in the 2007 - 2013 programming period. The aim is to create a single centre that will provide comprehensive information on the possible use of EU and national support instruments (by creating a single information centre, a single web platform, etc.) and an optimal model of a network of regional information and advisory centres to provide assistance and consultancy services to applicants and beneficiaries under the ESI Funds programmes so that applicants/beneficiaries could obtain all necessary information in one place. The proposed measures will be implemented in close cooperation between EAFRD and EMFF representatives so that all information activities could be interconnected across all the ESI Funds;
- defining criteria to prefer such applications in a selection procedure which demonstrate the link between the funding of the ESI Funds programmes with other support instruments where the calls are appropriate and relevant to activities financed from other support instruments;
- creating ad hoc working groups to adopt concrete steps towards a coordinated approach in the implementation of programmes, as well as an obligation to establish working groups of experts under the MA's monitoring committee comprising representatives of other, thematically relevant support instruments;
- creating administrative and legislative conditions to prevent the impacts of a political cycle on the management and implementation of the ESI Funds.

Table 2: Areas of support where the ESI Funds funding will be used in a complementary manner

Thematic Objective/ESI Funds	ERDF	ESF	CF	EAFRD	EMFF
1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	✓			✓	
2: Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT	✓			✓	
3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, of the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)	✓			✓	✓
4: Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	✓			✓	
5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7: Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures	✓		✓		

Thematic Objective/ESI Funds	ERDF	ESF	CF	EAFRD	EMFF
8: Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility		✓		✓	
9: Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	✓	✓		✓	
10: Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning	✓	✓		✓	
11: Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration	✓	✓		✓	

Under TO1 and TO3, the ERDF, EAFRD and EMFF will be used in a complementary manner to strengthen the R&I by cooperation between the academic and business sectors and to increase the competitiveness of SMEs. In the case of projects in RD&I, rules will be introduced into practice concerning the preparation, evaluation, funding and implementation process of the projects so as to ensure synergies and complementarity with Horizon 2020 and other European initiatives in this area in line with the Commission's requirements.

Under TO2, complementarity through the ERDF and the EAFRD in the coverage of broadband and electronic services in the rural areas will be ensured.

Under TO5 and TO6, complementarity will be ensured through the ERDF, CF, EAFRD and EMFF in supporting priorities in the area of environmental protection and resource efficiency, risk prevention (flood-related, in particular), as well as in preventing adverse effects of, and adapting to, the climate change. A reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions will be achieved by supporting activities in the energy sector and a shift to low-carbon economy in general. The support towards TO5 from ESI Funds resources will create demand for labour, which will reflect in complementary funding for TO8 from the ESF.

Under TO7 complementarity through the ERDF and the CF improving the quality of transport infrastructure of the SR, as well as greening and improving the accessibility of PPT in urban areas will be ensured.

Within the thematic objective TO8, TO9 and TO10 the complementarity through the ERDF, ESF and EAFRD in the field of social inclusion, poverty reduction also in rural areas, creating of new jobs, enhancing access to high-quality healthcare services, improving the quality of education in kindergartens and school facilities, education in natural sciences and disciplines and enhancing natural science literacy, reducing unemployment of graduates and enhancing graduate and lifelong training will be ensured.

Under TO2 and TO11, complementarity will be ensured between e-Government development and public administration reform (ICT-enabled public administration processes). The basic framework to ensure complementarity will a coordination mechanism defined in the document entitled "System for coordination between the OP II and OP EPA". Details on the implementation of the coordination between the managing authorities for the OP EPA and the OP II will be further elaborated in both programmes. Under the OP II, investments will be made in the development of information society, which will contribute towards a public administration report and support activities under the OP EPA. The institutional system of coordination between OP II and OP EPA will consist of three basic institutional levels: policy level - represented by a monitoring committee; technical programme level - represented by an internal supervisory monitoring committee; and technical project level - represented by a steering committee for feasibility studies. Slovakia will make sure that the concepts for the reform of public administration at its individual levels proposed under the OP EPA precede proposals for investment under relevant specific objectives of the OP II.

Table 3: Areas of support where other support instruments will be used to complement the ESI Funds

Thematic Objectives	COMMUNITY INSTRUMENTS																	
	Horizon 2020	Joint Programming	Eureka and Eurostars	Initiatives under European Institute of Innovation and Technology	ESFRI	Others Initiatives under ERA	Erasmus+	Programme NER 300	Programme for Social Change and Innovation	LIFE +	CEF	ERF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund	Internal Security Fund	Fund for European Aid for the Most Deprived	COSME	Creative Europe	3rd EU Action Health Programme
1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation																		
2. Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT																		
3. Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, of the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)																		
4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors																		
5. Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management																		
6. Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency zdrojov																		
7. Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network																		
8. Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility																		
9. Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination																		
10. Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning																		
11. Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration																		

Table 4: Areas of support where the ESI Funds funding will be used in a complementary manner under Objective 1 and Objective 2

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES	Goal 2 - European Territorial Cooperation									
Goal 1 - Investment for growth and jobs	SR-CZ	SR-AT	SR_PL	SR_HU	Central Europe	ETC Dunaj	INTERREG	ESPON	INERACT	URBACT
Research and Innovations	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Integrated Infrastructure	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Human Resources	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Quality of Environment	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Integrated Regional OP	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Effective Public Administration	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Rural Development	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Fisheries	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Table 5: Areas of support where the ESI Funds funding will be used to complement national support instruments

Thematic Objectives	National Funding Recourses											
	Environmental Fund	State Building Fund	Research and Development Agency	Incentives for Research	National R&D programmes and Infrastructure Development	VEGA and KEGA	Departmental Grants for R&D	Institutional finance the operation of Universities	Institutional finance the operation of SAS	Institutional finance the operation of departmental research institutes	Support Programmes NADSME	Grants Programmes SIEA
Strengthening research, technological development and innovation												
Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, ICT												
Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, of the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)												
Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors												
Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management												
Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency												
Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures												
Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility												
Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination												
Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning												
Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration												

Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) allows the preparation and implementation of projects of common interest in the Trans-European Networks policy in the transport and energy sectors and telecommunications. In selecting projects eligible for funding, the Funds allocated to each EU Member State which were transferred from the Cohesion Fund to the CEF, should be respected until 31. December 2016. Subsequently after the deadline, all unused EU funds under cohesion part of CEF should be released also to others EU cohesion member states and move to new projects through new calls for proposals for projects. Based on the above, after 2013 the construction and modernisation of TEN-T transport infrastructure will be preferred, primarily through the CEF. The aim is making full use of allocated Funds to SR from European instruments. Through the CEF, will be implemented projects in the field of railway infrastructure primarily focused on the modernization of the TEN-T core network corridors and electrification of railways. In the area of road infrastructure, the CEF will focus on the construction of new sections of motorways and TEN-T core network which represent cross-border sections between the first urban nodes on both sides of the border. Funds will primarily be aimed at supporting the development of main transport corridors identified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 1316/2013 establishing the CEF³²¹. CEF funds should also be used on grants to support development of digital services infrastructure. These funds should be used to ensure the interoperability and to cover running costs of this needed infrastructure at the European level, which will connect with the infrastructure of other EU Member States. In the SR, the funds from the CEF can also be used to co-finance demand-orientated projects of building of access mobile and fixed NGN networks in local areas and as an additional source of funding the development of digital services.

Transport infrastructure projects planned to be funded from the CEF will be based on the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 and comply with the objectives defined by the Slovak transport sector and measures proposed in order to achieve them. In the 2014 – 2020 programming period the SR also plans to rely on advice from JASPERS experts in preparing applications for financial support, based on the experience and relationships built in the 2007 – 2013 programming period.

In relation to the CAP, the EAFRD is an integrated part of the CAP and complements measures within European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (hereinafter referred to as “EAGF”), under which the direct support is provided to the farmers and to the market measures. In connection with this support, the emphasis is placed on the introduction of environmental requirements. Under I. Pillar of the CAP a strong greening component is established through so-called “Greening” Scheme defined beyond the cross-compliance, result of which should be farming more environmentally and climate friendly. Cross-compliance is the basis for direct payments, under which the compliance of the relevant parts laid down in the Water Framework Directive is established. Along with the II. Pillar, this will contribute to the harmonisation with the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 due to the fact that cross-compliance and greening is a prerequisite for obtaining support also under the environmental measures.

With the help of the added value of the new base of support mechanisms of CAP measures which will increasingly complement the EAGF measures will substantially contribute to the achievement of synergies from the complementarity and balanced territorial development in rural areas. Based on the 2nd Pillar objectives the complementarity and synergies from the CAP’s 1st Pillar will be ensured with measures associated with the production and processing of certain products in primary agricultural production in order to increase their added value, diversification of agricultural activities and cooperation in development, production and marketing of products and services. A balanced territorial development will be ensured by increasing/retaining employment of rural population which is essentially associated with

³²¹ Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010; Annex I., Žilina – Košice – state border SK/Ukraine (Rhine – Danube Corridor) and Žilina – Bratislava (Baltic – Adriatic Corridor)

investments into economic infrastructure and development of agricultural and non-agricultural activities in rural areas.

Coordination with the EIB will be similar to that applied in the 2007 - 2013 programming period. After the preparations for the 2014-2020 programming period are finalised and programmes approved, the EIB will identify a possible amount of co-funding for projects to be implemented under individual programmes. Depending on the offer of financial conditions for taking a loan from the EIB, the actual co-funding provided by the EIB will be used by the state in the areas and sectors covered by the EIB mandate and will be coordinated by the relevant MA in consultations with the Ministry of Finance. A similar possibility exists to obtain co-funding from the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) in line with its mandate.

Financial instruments will be used to support implementation of those activities where the use of the ESI Funds resources in this form of support will prove more effective. Financial instruments will concentrate on supporting activities that cannot find market funding and/or cannot find adequate funding that could ensure their effective implementation. In addition to the possibility to re-use the funds in future periods, another benefit of financial instruments is the possibility to increase funds to achieve relevant objectives by attracting additional capital where these instruments are attractively set. Raising additional capital is also necessary due to the insufficient volume of the ESI Funds to cover all investment needs in relevant areas. Participation of private investors may also enhance the quality in project implementation, thus additionally contributing to an overall more effective use of financial resources. A Slovak Investment Holding initiative for the 2014 - 2020 programming period³²² is currently being prepared to cover implementation of several financial instruments in the SR through establishment of a fund of funds and its manager. At least 3 % of resources from the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund will be allocated for the implementation of financial instrument by the Slovak Investment Holding. Various financial products (e.g., loans, guarantees, capital injections, mezzanine financing, etc.) can be used to support relevant activities. Relevant areas for investment, specific activities, appropriate volume of funds and conditions for the implementation of particular financial instruments, including the possible multiplication of allocated funds and their combination with other forms of support, will be based on the results of an additional ex-ante evaluation for financial instruments as required under the applicable legislation for the 2014 - 2020 programming period. The ex-ante evaluation concerning the use of financial instruments in the SR in the 2014 - 2020 programming period is prepared in consultations with the EIB Group, and is expected to be finalised by 31 August 2014. Once the ex-ante evaluation is completed, in the 2014 - 2020 programming period, the cooperation with the EIB Group in the implementation of financial instruments in the SR may continue, namely in the form of consultancy services and co-financing. Several projects that meet the aforementioned criteria have been identified in Slovakia, such as motorway and road infrastructure construction projects, projects to improve energy efficiency of buildings and undertakings, the use of RES, SMEs support, waste processing projects, urban revitalisation projects, etc. Preliminary analyses have shown there are possibilities to use financial instruments especially in such areas as infrastructure, energy, waste management, SMEs, R&I and urban development.

In the 2014 - 2020 programming period, Slovakia will implement a programme to aid the most deprived persons, i.e. the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (hereinafter only referred to as the "FEAD").

The provision of food and primary material aid under the FEAD programme will enhance the possibility to support the most deprived persons in life emergencies. The proposed fund will serve to address the issue of food and material deprivation (covering the basic consumables for personal use) of the most deprived. The provision of non-financial aid will be complemented with accompanying social inclusion measures that should contribute to their social re-integration. The target group will include the most deprived, including individuals, families, households or groups of such persons, with respect to whom a need for assistance will be identified using the objective criteria adopted for the purposes of providing aid from this EU fund.

³²² <http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23125>

2.2 Information required for ex-ante verification of compliance with additionality rules

Public investments remain Slovakia's priority. Despite stringent budgetary objectives and ongoing consolidation of public finance, the general government's gross fixed capital formation (P.51) will amount to 1.5 % of GDP in 2014. Subsequently, in 2015, Slovakia will increase gross fixed capital formation to 2.1 % of GDP and retain this level until 2020. In the 2014 - 2020 programming period, total average public investments, measured by gross fixed capital formation (P.51), will exceed 2 % of GDP a year.

Table 6 – At the level of EU Member States in which less developed regions include at least 65 % of total population

Public spending as percentage of GDP	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
P51	1.5 %	2.1 %	2.1 %	2.1 %	2.1 %	2.1 %	2.1 %

2.3 A summary of the assessment of the fulfilment of applicable ex ante conditionalities at national level and of the actions to be taken, the responsible bodies, and the timetable for their implementation, where ex ante conditionalities are not fulfilled

Evaluation of the fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities

1. Cohesion Policy

A. Thematic ex ante conditionalities

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for the fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
1.1. Research and innovation: The existence of a national or regional smart specialisation strategy in line with the National Reform Program, to leverage private research and innovation expenditure, which complies with the features of well-performing national or regional R&I systems.	Partially	A national or regional smart specialisation strategy is in place that:	Yes		<p><i>Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the SR (RIS3)</i></p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-160513?prefixFile=m</p> <p>RIS3 was approved by Government Resolution No 665/2013 of 13. November 2013.</p> <p>RIS3 was consulted with EC experts and revised in line with their comments and recommendations.</p> <p>RIS 3 will be implemented through the Action plans. First one covers the period 2014 – 2016. It will be prepared by 30 November 2014. The most important areas and activities for a successful implementation and fulfilment of all criteria under the thematic objective, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - completion of financial frameworks with indicative allocations by individual measures, sources of funding and types of financial Instruments , - completion of the monitoring system for compliance with RIS 3 objectives and with measurable indicators (the monitoring system is being prepared and will be designed to provide early identification of the need to make necessary adjustments, if any, to objectives and actions set under RIS3 so that they could better reflect the current needs and developments), completion of the links between the proposed specialisation areas, - SK Roadmap for building the ESFRI which will identify the existing national facilities of infrastructure suitable for participation in the ESFRI, including a critical analysis (which R&D centres, centres of competence and centres of excellence are sustainable in the long term and can become
		- is based on a SWOT or similar analysis to concentrate resources on a limited set of research and innovation priorities;	Yes		
		- outlines measures to stimulate private RTD investment;	Yes		
		- contains a monitoring mechanism.	No		
		A framework outlining available budgetary resources for research and innovation has been adopted.	No		

					part of ESFRI projects). The possibility of creating links between the RIS3 in the priority industry and participation in ESFRI initiatives will be an important aspect.
1.2 Research and Innovation infrastructure. The existence of a multi-annual plan for budgeting and prioritisation of investments.	No	An indicative multi-annual plan for budgeting and prioritisation of investments linked to Union priorities, and, where appropriate, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) has been adopted.	No		Investment prioritisation is included in the RIS3. The indicative multi-annual plan for budgeting as well as a list of investments will be included into the RIS3 Action Plan to be submitted to the Government by 30 November 2014.
2.1. Digital growth: A strategic policy framework for digital growth to stimulate affordable, good quality and interoperable ICT-enabled private and public services and increase uptake by citizens, including vulnerable groups, businesses and public administrations including cross border initiatives.	Yes	A strategic policy framework for digital growth, for instance, within the national or regional smart specialisation strategy is in place that contains:	Yes	<i>Strategic Document for Digital Growth and Next Generation Access Infrastructure</i> http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23177 The Government acknowledged the document on 8 January 2014.	The strategic document sets out the strategy for e-Government development for the 2014 – 2020 programming period, while meeting the objectives contained in the Commission position paper and implementing measures under the Digital Agenda for Europe. The Strategic Document serves as the basis for the preparation of the OPII (priority axis Information Society). Strategic document defines the strategic objectives for e-Government development in Slovakia until 2020 and their correlation with proposed priorities. Priorities and specific objectives for further development of information society in Slovakia are: Services for citizens and businesses - development of electronic services - use of open data - supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in the digital economy - promoting e-Inclusion Effective public administration - establishing the e-Government innovation centre - promoting processes of effective public administration - Introducing e-Government cloud - security Broadband/NGN - deployment and use of broadband.
		- budgeting and prioritisation of actions through a SWOT or similar analysis consistent with the Scoreboard of the Digital Agenda for Europe;	Yes	Chapter 5: SWOT analysis and recommendations for Slovakia, Chapter 7.5.2.1: Targeting investments, Chapter 7.1.2: Funding instruments, Chapter 3: Situation and trends in information society in the world compared to Slovakia.	
		- an analysis of balancing support for demand and supply of ICT should have been conducted;	Yes	Chapter 3: Situation and trends in information society in the world compared to Slovakia, Chapter 4: Operational Programme Information Society, Chapter 5: SWOT analysis and recommendations for Slovakia, Annex I.	
		- indicators to measure progress of interventions in areas such as digital literacy, e-inclusion, e-accessibility, and progress of e-health within the limits of Article 168 TFEU which are aligned, where appropriate, with existing relevant sectoral Union, national or regional strategies;	Yes	Chapter 7: Proposed priorities for a further development of information society in Slovakia	
		- assessment of needs to reinforce ICT capacity-building.		Chapter 3: Situation and trends in information society in the world compared	

			Yes	to Slovakia, Chapter 4: Operational Programme Information Society, Chapter 5: SWOT analysis and recommendations for Slovakia, Chapter 6: Vision and strategic objectives for information society. Chapter 7: Proposed priorities for a further development of information society in Slovakia
2.2. Next Generation Network (NGN) Infrastructure: The existence of national or regional NGN Plans which take account of regional actions in order to reach the Union high-speed Internet access targets, focusing on areas where the market fails to provide an open infrastructure at an affordable cost and of a quality in line with the Union competition and State aid rules, and to provide accessible services to vulnerable groups.	Yes	A national or regional NGN Plan is in place that contains:	Yes	<i>Strategic Document for Digital Growth and Next Generation Access Infrastructure</i> http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23177 The Government acknowledged the document on 8 January 2014.
		- a plan of infrastructure investments based on an economic analysis taking account of existing private and public infrastructures and planned investments;	Yes	Chapter 3: Situation and trends in information society in the world compared to Slovakia, Chapter 5: SWOT analysis and recommendations for Slovakia, Chapter 7: Chapter 7: Proposed priorities for a further development of information society in Slovakia.
		- sustainable investment models that enhance competition and provide access to open, affordable, quality and future-proof infrastructure and services;	Yes	Chapter 7: Proposed priorities for a further development of information society in Slovakia
		- measures to stimulate private investment.	Yes	Chapter 7: Proposed priorities for a further development of information society in Slovakia
3.1. Specific actions have been carried out to underpin the promotion of entrepreneurship taking into account the Small Business Act (SBA).		The specific actions are: - measures have been put in place with the objective of reducing the time and cost involved in setting up a business taking account of the targets of the SBA;		<i>Act No. 547/2011 Coll.</i> http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2011-547 Time for incorporating a company in the business register is shortened from 5 to 2 working days. With effect from 1 January 2014. The measure for reducing the cost of setting up a company was fulfilled through

	Partially		Yes	<p>the processing and publication of standardised forms for small and medium-sized enterprises, if the company is established by a sole partner or shareholder. The necessity to address legal professionals in the set-up issues and all changes in a company was thus reduced.</p>	
		<p>- measures have been put in place with the objective of reducing the time needed to get licenses and permits to take up and perform the specific activity of an enterprise taking account of the targets of the SBA;</p>	Yes	<p><i>Act No 392/2011 Coll. on the marketing of defence industry products</i></p> <p>http://www.nrsr.sk/web/Default.aspx?sid=zakony/zakon&ZakZborID=13&CisObdobia=5&CPT=456</p> <p>The Act reduced the time for the issuance of trade license from 5 to 3 days, and extended the functionality of the Single Points of Contact (SPC). SPC allow those interested in setting up a business to perform all acts necessary for the issuance of a trade licence, or to perform acts related to setting up a company, in one place.</p> <p>Electronic functionality of the SPCs has been fully operational since 1 January 2012, i.e., it is possible to register a trade licence electronically, which also applies to the processing of changes and the filing of requests for registration in the business register, including the payment of court and administrative fees.</p> <p><i>Slovak Government Resolution No 153/2013 on the Report on business environment in the SR with proposals for improvement.</i></p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Uznesenie-13242?prefixFile=u</p> <p>The tasks for streamlining the use of services provided by the Single Points of Contact and for extending their functionality</p>	

				have been approved.	
		- a mechanism is in place to monitor the implementation of the measures of the SBA which have been put in place and assess the impact on SMEs.	No		<p>The ME SR established a Task force for the SBA which is composed of the representatives of the Government of the SR and business organizations. It is devoted to monitoring and evaluation of progress in implementing the SBA, it will participate in dissemination of information related to SME policies and best practices exchange in this area. The aim of the task force is to prepare recommendations for improving the implementation of the SBA – i.e., the implementation of the particular principles in the SR and thereby to assist SMEs in their business activities and to create conditions for continuous improvement of the business environment.</p> <p>As far as the introduction of the SME test in the SR is concerned, preparation of the methodology and introduction itself of the SME test in practice is within the new strategy for SMEs prepared by NADSME (full name: Strategy for the development of small and medium enterprises in the SR with an emphasis on increasing regional employment).</p> <p>In the strategy, which is directly linked to the individual SBA principles, the Centre of better regulation and the Centre for SBA implementation in the SR are planned to be established within the NADSME. The aim of these proposals is a systematic approach to the problems of SMEs in Slovakia, comprehensive solution to regulatory and administrative burdens issues, including a specific approach to SMEs in the form of SME test and integration of the principle "Think Small First" in the legislative process and policy making process.</p>
4.1. Actions have been carried out to promote cost-effective improvements of energy end use efficiency and cost-effective investment in energy efficiency when constructing or renovating buildings.	Yes	The actions are:	Yes	<i>Act No 555/2005 Coll. on the energy performance of buildings as amended.</i> http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=83478	<p>The Act applies to all buildings undergoing major renovation, in so far as this is technically, functionally and economically feasible; the minimum energy performance requirements for new buildings must also be met by an existing building following the completion of its major renovation.</p>
		- measures necessary to establish a system of certification of the energy performance of buildings consistent with Article 11 of			

		Directive 2010/31/EU; - measures to ensure strategic planning on energy efficiency, consistent with Article 3 of Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council;	Yes	?ids=83478	requirement for the energy performance of buildings based on the conditions specified in Decree No. 364/2012 of the MTCRD SR. The above STN standard specifies the requirements applicable to low energy buildings as of 1 January 2013. The above recommended requirements will be applicable to the new construction of buildings after 1 January 2016 and the target recommended requirements will be applicable to the new construction of buildings after 1 January 2021 and for public buildings as of 1 January 2019.
		- measures consistent with Article 13 of Directive 2006/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on energy end-use efficiency and energy services to ensure the provision to final customers of individual meters in so far as it is technically possible, financially reasonable and proportionate in relation to the potential energy savings.	Yes	<i>National Reform Programme 2013</i> http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=22344 Approved by the Slovak Government on 24. April 2013. <i>The study Technical and economic aspects of cost-optimal measures to ensure energy performance of buildings</i> By letter No. 08307/2013/B610-SV-28312, the study was notified by the Government Office of the SR.	<i>The NRP 2013</i> set a national indicative target of energy efficiency in line with the requirements under Article 3 of Directive 2012/27/EU. The target values are specified in the NRP 2013 in the table in Chapter 2.2 of the main body of the document. Given that, these targets are indicative only, with no data available for 2012 yet, it is not possible to set a fixed reference value. In setting the target, national circumstances affecting primary energy consumption were taken into account. The currently applicable minimum requirements were compared with the calculated cost-optimal energy efficiency levels pursuant to Directive 2010/31/EU. All input data and assumptions used in the calculation, the results of calculations, data on reference buildings for different categories of buildings with a differentiation between new buildings and existing buildings subject to major renovation were processed according to the requirements of Annexes of Delegated Regulation supplementing Directive 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the energy performance of buildings by establishing a comparative methodology framework for calculating cost-optimal levels of minimum energy performance requirements for buildings and building elements.
4.2. Actions have been carried out to promote high-efficiency co-generation of heat and power.		The actions are: - Support for co-generation is based on useful heat demand and primary energy savings consistent with Article 7(1) and points (a) and (b) of Article 9(1) of Directive 2004/8/EC. Member States or their competent bodies have evaluated	Yes	<i>Act No 309/2009 Coll. on promotion of renewable energy sources and high-efficiency combined generation</i> http://www.mhsr.sk/obnovitelne-zdroje-energie-a-kombinovana-vyroba/130978s	<i>Act No 309/2009</i> defines useful heat in compliance with the Directive 2004/8/EC and, because heat production is a network industry in the SR, the rules are determined by Act No 657/2004 Coll. on Heat Energy as amended and by Act No 276/2001 Coll. on Regulation in Network Industries and on amendments to certain acts as amended.

	Yes	<p>the existing legislative and regulatory framework with regard to authorisation procedures or other procedures in order to:</p> <p>(a) encourage the design of co-generation units to match economically justifiable demands for useful heat output and avoid production of more heat than useful heat; and</p> <p>(b) reduce the regulatory and non-regulatory barriers to an increase in co-generation.</p>	<p>Decree of the ME SR No 599/2009 Coll. implementing certain provisions of the Act on promotion of renewable energy sources and high-efficiency combined generation</p> <p>http://www.siea.sk/materials/files/poradenstvo/legislativa/tepelna_energetika/8_1_2009_599_vyhlaska_MHSR.pdf</p> <p>Act No 657/2004 Coll. on Heat Energy as amended</p> <p>http://www.google.sk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&e src=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CD AQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.economy.gov.sk%2Fzakon-o...%2F128085s&ei=9d7OUqLVGYa0yAOu4l GYBw&usg=AFQjCNHp8WDz1Y6KI0L1W bE Pk4qv7VqEw&sig2=i Xy5ar03CWRcMl uUP 1nw</p>	<p>Only such amount of electricity is supported by an additional payment that is produced from high-efficiency cogeneration and corresponds to the amount of useful heat.</p> <p>Electricity from high-efficiency cogeneration is calculated in accordance with Decree No 599/2009 Coll. of the ME SR.</p> <p>Pursuant to §21 of Act No 657/2004 Coll., the holder of the permission for the heat transfer is required to take heat for set or approved price, in order to ensure contractual heat supply, from the holder of the permission for the production of heat that is produced from renewable energy sources or in the facility for combined heat and electricity generation under the conditions stated in this act.</p>
4.3. Actions have been carried out to promote the production and distribution of renewable energy sources.	Yes	<p>- Transparent support schemes, priority in grid access or guaranteed access and priority in dispatching, as well as standard rules relating to the bearing and sharing of costs of technical adaptations which have been made public are in place consistent with Article 14(1), Article 16(2) and 16(3) of Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.</p> <p>- A Member State has adopted a national renewable energy action plan consistent with Article 4 of Directive 2009/28/EC.</p>	<p>Act No 309/2009 Coll. on promotion of renewable energy sources and high efficiency combined generation</p> <p>http://www.mhsr.sk/obnovitelne-zdroje-energie-a-kombinovana-vyroba/130978s</p> <p>Decree of the Regulatory Office for Network Industries No 225/2011 Coll. laying down price regulation in the electricity industry.</p> <p>http://www.urso.gov.sk/sites/default/files/vyh1_225-2011.pdf</p> <p>National Renewable Action Plan.</p> <p>http://www.google.sk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&e src=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CD AQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.economy.gov.sk%2Findex%2Fopen_file.php%3Fext_dok%3D135435&ei=0uHOUtjEKSEyAPN8ICg Bw&usg=AFQjCNGdavfYnNP ZkLndhaerLuf OQKDzw&sig2=cCftbXqjznv6FBi7YEBcQ</p>	<p>The transparent support schemes are introduced by Act No 309/2009 Coll. Electricity producer eligible for support has the right to use priority connection to the distribution network, priority transmission of electricity, priority distribution of electricity and priority supply of electricity, if the electricity production facility complies with the technical requirements of the system operator pursuant to a separate regulation and if it does not pose a threat to the safety and reliability of network operation, the priority transmission of electricity does not apply to electricity transmission through interconnectors.</p> <p>Decree of the Regulatory Office for Network Industries No 225/2011 Coll. lays down the standard rules for bearing and sharing costs for technical adaptations.</p>

<p>5.1. Risk prevention and risk management: the existence of national or regional risk assessments for disaster management taking into account climate change adaptation</p>	<p>Partially</p>	<p>- A national or regional risk assessment with the following elements shall be in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a description of the process, methodology, methods, and non-sensitive data used for risk assessment as well as of the risk-based criteria for the prioritisation of investment; 	<p>No</p>	<p>Fulfilled tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The existence of the territorial analysis for possible emergencies affected by climate change at national and regional level, the existence of human protection plan at regional level, The Act on civilian protection of the population: § 12 through 14 of Act No 42/1994 Coll. on civilian protection of the population as amended Responsible organisation: MI SR Deadline: 15 March 2013 2. Analysis of available methods and procedures for risk assessment Responsible organisation: MI SR Deadline: 15 March 2013 3. Selection of appropriate procedures, modification and adaptation to set targets Responsible organisation: MI SR Deadline: 12 April 2013 4. Supplementation of risk quantifiers Responsible organisation: MI SR Deadline: 12 April 2013 5. The development of selected risk assessment methodology at national level The methodology is available at the website of the MI SR: http://www.minv.sk/?Dokumenty_na_stiahnutie_CO 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slovakia processes and regularly updates, once a year, the Territorial Analysis for Possible Emergencies Affected by Climate Change. The document is available at the Crisis Management Section of the Ministry of the Interior. The comprehensive document is not publicly accessible because it contains sensitive information. At the same time, Slovakia processes and updates, on an annual basis, the Human Protection Plan. Because of sensitive information contained in the human protection plan, this document is confidential and is available at the Crisis Management Section at the MI SR. 2. Analysis of available methods and procedures consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of general principles of risk management: • Analysis of Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment methods including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • types of the environmental vulnerability (population, critical infrastructure, environment); • scope of vulnerability quantifiers; • data collection and processing methods; • risk assessment mechanism • social, economic, environmental and political impacts on the population are assessed in an impact analysis. 3. Selection of appropriate procedures, modification and adaptation to the objectives Relevant methods and solutions for assessment of vulnerability were selected from analysed risk assessment tools with regard to concrete risks; these were used for the creation of a model. Emphasis on complex risk assessment regarding possible threats including potential consequences of emergencies affected by climate change caused by several risks and combination thereof (domino effects, synergy effects). Quantitative definition will be the output of the risk assessment, which enables simple confrontations and specification of priorities, identification of most vulnerable sites in SR with regard to natural risks as well as presumption of possible consequences of emergencies affected by climate change in specific environment, etc. 4. Supplementation of risk quantifiers MEN SR provided necessary materials for the specification
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				<p>approved by Government Resolution No 738/2013. Its purpose is to provide address the issue of slope movement and landslide risks in a comprehensive manner.</p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-161227?prefixFile=m_</p> <p>A strategic planning document has been prepared for the prevention and management of risks related to mining waste repositories - Programme for prevention and management of risks related to closed and abandoned mining waste repositories (2014 - 2020) The document was submitted for an inter-ministerial review procedure on 25 April 2014. The document is expected to be submitted to the Slovak Government for discussion in May 2014. Within the framework of the implementation of Directive No. 2007/60/EC, flood hazard and flood risk maps have been completed. (http://www.minzp.sk/sekcie/temy-oblasti/voda/ochrana-pred-povodnami/manazment-povodnovych-rizik/povodnove-mapy.html).</p> <p>The Flood Risk Management Plans are being prepared in line with the schedule approved by the management of the MEn SR. During a control day held on 16 December 2013, the MEn SR checked the status of the preparation of the first flood risk management plans, presenting the results of the formulation of objectives under flood risk management plans and the working proposals of measures to attain them, including an estimate of costs of their preparation, operation, maintenance and repair over the entire expected lifespan.</p> <p>Directive No 2007/60/EC is implemented in compliance with relevant provisions governing the timeframe..</p>
		- a description of single-risk and multi-risk scenarios;	<p>Yes</p> <p>Identification of the expression of risk scenarios, including consideration of synergies and the domino effect.</p> <p>The methodology is available at the website of the MI SR:</p> <p>http://www.minv.sk/?Dokumenty_na_stiahnutie_CO</p> <p>http://www.minv.sk/?Dokumenty_na_stiahnutie_CO&subor=175547</p>	<p>Possible scenarios of risks are identified and incorporated into the model as environmental vulnerability quantifiers. This includes a list of potential impacts of concrete risks taking into account domino effects and synergy effects associated with the particular risks. The outputs are incorporated in the proposed risk evaluation methodology.</p>

				<p>Responsible organisation: MI SR</p> <p>Deadline: 30 June 2013</p>	
		<p>- taking into account, where appropriate, national climate change adaptation strategies.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Adaptation Strategy of the SR to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change</p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23364</p>	<p>The elaboration of the Adaptation Strategy of the SR to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change represents the key condition for the fulfilment of the ex ante conditionality.</p> <p>In July 2013 the input documents were provided by sub-coordinators for each area, drafts were commented simultaneously.</p> <p>The draft of the Adaptation Strategy of the SR to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change was published on the web page of the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute, as well as on the web page of the MEn SR as from 28 August 2013, with the possibility to submit comments by 13 September 2013.</p> <p>Taking account of submitted public comments, the draft of the Strategy has been amended. The Adaptation Strategy of the SR to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change also includes a set of preventive adaptation measures for monitored areas/sectors.</p> <p>The document was submitted for an inter-ministerial review procedure with the completion date scheduled for 26 February 2014. The submitted comments have been evaluated and incorporated, if found relevant. On 26 March 2014, the document entitled "Strategy of Slovakia's adaptation to adverse impacts of climate change" was discussed and approved by the Slovak Government (Resolution No 148/2014).</p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/RokovanieDetail/737</p> <p>As a follow up to the Strategy, the results of geological environmental exploration (survey of environmental burdens) will be implemented in the territorial analysis in cooperation with the Geology and Natural Resources Section.</p> <p>The issue of climate change adaptation in the SR will also</p>

					be presented at a seminar organised within the LIFE Programme (2014 – 2020) by the European Commission in cooperation with the MEn SR in the course of 2014 (depending on the date to be set by the Commission).
6.1. Water sector: The existence of a) a water pricing policy which provides adequate incentives for users to use water resources efficiently and b) an adequate contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services at a rate determined in the approved river basin management plan for investment supported by the programmes.	No	In sectors supported by the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, a Member State has ensured a contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services by sector consistent with the first indent of Article 9(1) of Directive 2000/60/EC having regard, where appropriate, to the social, environmental and economic effects of the recovery as well as the geographic and climatic conditions of the region or regions affected.	No	<p>Act on Waters: §78a of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on water and on amendments to Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No 372/1990 Coll. on offences, as amended (the Water Act), as amended http://jaspi.justice.gov.sk</p> <p>Government Regulation No.755/2005 Coll. laying down the amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use, as amended by Government Regulation No 367/2008 Coll. amending Government Regulation No 755/2005 Coll. laying down the amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/755-2004-z-z.p-8366.pdf</p> <p>Pricing policy in the field of water economy approved by Government Resolution No 17 of 12 January 2011 https://lt.justice.gov.sk/Attachment/vlastn%C3%BD%20materi%C3%A1l.doc.pdf?instEID=1&attEID=29620&docEID=144483&matEID=3384&langEID=1&tStamp=20101129113946687</p> <p>Regulatory policy for regulatory period 2012 – 2016 http://www.urso.gov.sk/?q=content/urad-regulacna-rada-regulacna-politika</p>	<p>With regard to the EC guidance on the fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities, a partially not-fulfilled item of the criterion fulfilment within “principle of the refund of costs for water services” has been identified.</p> <p>The principle of costs reimbursement for all water management services is fulfilled with the exception of adequate contribution for service connected with water taken-off for irrigation, which is in the stage of legislative proposal amendment to the Act on Waters , followed by an amendment to Government Regulation No 755/2005 Coll. laying down amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use.</p> <p>The above draft amendment to the Act on Waters is subject to the legislative process which will be completed in full (it must be discussed again by the Slovak Government and, subsequently, by parliamentary committees and the Parliament).</p> <p>The amendment to the Act on Waters has a positive impact on <u>general protection of waters with a focus on groundwater</u> in protected water management zones and aims to increase the protection of aquatic resources in the territory of the SR while determining the procedures for the use of water due to its strategic importance for the country and the public interest.</p> <p>In the SR, the regulation of prices is the responsibility of the Regulatory Office for Network Industries (RONI).</p> <p>At present, the prices in the water sector are regulated in accordance with the applicable legislation (Act No 250/2012 Coll. on Regulation in Network Industries and Decree No 195/2013 Coll.) The prices reflect the eligible costs and reasonable profit, new investments and their utilisation for the production and supply of drinking water by public water supply system and disposal and treatment of waste water through the public sewerage system, including social viability as one of the priorities of the regulation itself.</p>

				<p>Slovak Water Plan, Chapter 7, http://www.vuvh.sk/rsv2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=87&lang=sk</p> <p>Analysis of the progress made in implementing of the measures Programme included in the Slovak Water Plan, chapter 5 "Pricing of water services"</p> <p>http://www.vuvh.sk/rsv2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=58&lang=sk</p>	<p>One of the objectives of the approved Water Sector Regulatory Policy for 2012 - 2016 is to establish a legislative environment conducive to the application of a two-component price (fixed and variable component) on the basis of a thorough and objective analysis examining the rationale of its application while considering the social-economic impacts which currently represent the focus of RONI's attention.</p> <p>In Slovakia, all eligible costs related to any particular water service (including costs related to the repair, maintenance and replacement of assets) are included in the prices. The cross-subsidies in the prices for water supply and sewerage service through the public water system or, respectively, public sewerage system, have been discontinued in 2007 (i.e., cross-subsidies between potable and waste water, or between households and commercial customers).</p> <p>As regards point and diffuse sources of pollution, the point sources are currently addressed by means of fees for the discharge of purified waste water. The possibilities to cover the costs of diffuse sources of pollution from the agricultural sector are currently being analysed and will be coordinated with the approaches of other Member States.</p>
		The adoption of a river basin management plan for the river basin district consistent with Article 13 of Directive 2000/60/EC	No	<p>Slovak Water Plan, Chapter 5, 6 and 7 http://www.vuvh.sk/rsv2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=87&lang=sk</p> <p>The Slovak Water Plan comprises two river basin management plans:</p> <p>a) management plan of the national part of the Danube river basin administrative area (SÚPD), integrating the sub-basin management plans of partial river basins of this administrative area and</p> <p>b) management plan of the Vistula river basin administrative area (SÚPV).</p>	<p>The Commission submitted comments to the first Water Plan for Slovakia including the Management Plan for the national administrative territory of the Danube river basin and the Management Plan for the administrative territory of the Vistula river basin. The SR took these comments into account and prepares a new Water Plan for Slovakia and Management Plans for river basins. The monitoring of waters has been adjusted and amended and is being implemented as follows:</p> <p>With regard to the character of administrative territories of the river basins, reference conditions (values) for all relevant biological quality elements were defined in the period 2009–2012.</p> <p>All relevant biological quality elements including fish were included into the Monitoring Programme (2009–2012) of natural water bodies. In this period all priority substances (41) were monitored in rivers, including rivers with changed category (reservoirs, HMWB, AWB). Regular monitoring of sediments has been introduced in 2012. For three selected substances (mercury, hexachlorobenzene and hexachlorobutadiene), the monitoring in biota (fish) has been introduced in 2011. In 2009–2012 hydro-</p>

				<p>Slovak Government Regulation No 279/2011 Coll. announcing a binding part of Slovakia's Water Plan containing a program of measures to achieve environmental objectives</p> <p>www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/279-2011-z-z.p-34239.pdf</p> <p>Analysis of the progress made in implementing the Programme of measures contained in the Slovak Water Plan, chapter 5 „Pricing policy for water management services“</p> <p>http://www.vuvh.sk/rsv2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=58&lang=sk</p>	<p>morphological quality elements were included in the assessment of ecological status.</p> <p>The monitoring of selected biological quality elements was included in the Water Monitoring Programme (2010, 2011, 2012) with the aim to derive (verify and update) the classification schemes for the assessment of ecological potential in surface water bodies defined as HMWB and AWB. In relation to the updating of classification schemes for the assessment of ecological potential, sampling methods were tested, as well as suitability of societies and metrics for tracking the changes in selected HMWB and AWB.</p> <p>As no natural lakes according to the Water Framework Directive criteria are present in Slovakia, the SR did not participate in the inter-calibration exercise of lakes at the EU level – not relevant for the SR.</p> <p>The related national classification schemes for natural water bodies were subject to the inter-calibration exercise at the EU level (2009 - 2012) for all relevant biological quality elements.</p> <p>The inter-calibration of the ecological potential assessment methods for water bodies specified as HMWB and AWB was not performed at the EU level in 2009 - 2012. Exemptions related to hydro-morphological measures applied in case of technical non-feasibility with regard to the required date of implementation of proposed measures, i.e. by 22 December 2012 and due to economic reasons – non-availability of financial resources for the implementation of the necessary measures in the first planning phase). The implementation of actions proposed to eliminate hydro-morphological changes (to ensure the stream continuity) includes changes of existing constructions and adjustments or new constructions (such as construction of bio-corridors), which requires the preparation of necessary project documentation, and in case of new constructions, settling the property issues. Completion of these actions by 22 December 2012 was not feasible. Hydro-morphological measures are included in the proposal of main activities to be supported within the OP QE 2014 - 2020.</p> <p>All requested relevant information will be included in the second phase of River Basin Management Plans which are being prepared.</p>
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					<p>Being implemented in line with RSV requirement.</p> <p>The SR has elaborated an Action plan for the fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities in line with the Plan and timetable for the second phase of the preparation of River Basin Management Plans which is available under the following link:</p> <p>http://www.vuvh.sk/download/RSV/11_Harmonogram/VC_harmonogram2012_fin.pdf</p>
6.2. Waste sector: Promoting economically and environmentally sustainable investments in the waste sector particularly through the development of waste management plans consistent with Directive 2008/98/EC, and with the waste hierarchy.	Partially	- An implementation report as requested by Article 11(5) of Directive 2008/98/EC has been submitted to the Commission on progress towards meeting the targets set out in Article 11 of Directive 2008/98/EC.	Yes	<p><u>Fulfilled tasks:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaboration of the report in electronic form for years 2010, 2011, 2012 Report sent on: 26 September 2013 2. Elaboration of the report in line with the Article 11 of the Waste Directive. Report sent on: 26 September 2013 	<p>Fulfilment was ensured in line with Article 11(5) and Article 37 of the Waste Directive setting out the deadline by 30 September 2013.</p> <p>On 25 September 2013, information on progress in the implementation of targets set out in Article 11(2) of Waste Framework Directive for the monitored period between 2010 and 2011, including the report on the quality of data was sent electronically via eDAMIS to Eurostat waste data centre.</p> <p>The Sector Report for years 2010, 2011 and 2012 was submitted electronically to the Commission – DG Environment and to the Permanent Representation of the SR to the EU.</p> <p>On 27 September 2013, the receipt of the Report was confirmed by the Commission (Jutta Neusser).</p>
		- The existence of one or more waste management plans as required under Article 28 of Directive 2008/98/EC;	Yes	<p><u>Fulfilled tasks:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Waste Management Plan at national level: Waste Management Plan of the SR adopted by the Government of the SR by means of Resolution No 69/2012 of 22 February 2012 on the Waste Management Plan of the SR for the years 2011 - 2015. Deadline: 22 February 2012 http://www.minzp.sk/sekcie/temy-oblasti/odpady-obaly/poh/poh-2011-2015/ 	<p><u>1. Waste Management Plan at national level:</u></p> <p>The Waste Management Plan (WMP) of the SR for 2011-2015 was approved by Resolution No 69/20012 of the Slovak Government on 22 February 2012. On 23 March 2013 the WMP was published in the Official Journal of the MEn SR (part 2, year XX).</p> <p>In November 2012, the MEn SR sent the information on the fulfilment of requirements under the Waste Management Plan in accordance with Article 28 of Directive 2008/98/EC to the Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU and requested to forward that information to the European Commission.</p> <p><u>2. Waste management plans at regional level:</u></p>

			<p>2. Waste management plans at regional level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nitra region – generally binding decree (GBD) of the environmental district office in Nitra No 2/2013 of 17 June 2013 proclaiming the binding part of the Waste Management Plan of the Nitra region for the years 2011 - 2015. Deadline: 30 September 2013 http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/vestnik/vestnik- vlady-sr/vydanie-3-2013 - Nitra region - notification of an amendment to the strategic document. Deadline: 25 October 2013 http://www.enviroportal.sk/sk/eia/detail/pr ogram-odpadoveho-hospodarstva- nitrianskeho-kraja-na-roky-2011-2015-z - Košice region – generally binding decree of the district office in Košice No 1/2013 of 14 October 2013 proclaiming the binding part of the Waste Management Plan of the Košice region for the years 2011 - 2015. Deadline: 14 November 2013 http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/vestnik/vestnik- vlady-sr/vydanie-4-2013 - <u>Banská Bystrica region - DECREE of the Banská Bystrica District Office No 1/2014 of 10 January 2014 laying down the binding part of the Waste Management Plan of the Banská Bystrica region for 2011 - 2015</u> http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/vestnik/vestnik- 	<p>According to Act No 223/2001 Coll. on waste and on amendments to certain acts as amended (hereinafter as the "Waste Act"), regional waste management plans follow the Waste Management Plan at national level and are prepared by district offices in the region.</p> <p>In line with §5(5) of the Waste Act, the District Office is obliged to submit, within three months after the Program of the SR has been adopted, a draft plan for evaluation according to a special regulation. In accordance with Article 6 of the Waste Act, within four months after the district waste management plan is issued, municipalities and most waste producers are obliged to elaborate their own plans which will be submitted to the competent state administration authority responsible for waste management for approval.</p> <p>Part 2 of the WMP includes the number of facilities for waste recovery of each region as well as of the SR (part 2.4, page 29). The prognosis of waste production and treatment facilities are specified within regional WMP in line with Article 28 of Directive 2008/98/EC.</p> <p>All of the prepared regional WMPs have been verified to that effect and the relevant information has been identified.</p> <p>May 2013 - all concerned Environmental District Offices in the region submitted their proposals of the regional plan for the assessment procedure according to Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment.</p> <p>June 2013 – Public consultations have taken place in all eight regions of the SR as part of the strategic assessment.</p> <p>First quarter of 2014 – all eight district offices in the region issued the binding part of the region's WMP by means of a generally binding decree</p>
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				vlady-sr/vydanie-3-2014	
		- The existence of waste prevention programmes, as required under Article 29 of Directive 2008/98/EC;	Yes	<p>Draft Waste Prevention Program of the SR for the years 2014 - 2018 was approved by Government Resolution No 729/2013.</p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23114</p> <p>http://www.minzp.sk/files/dokumenty/vestnik-mzpvestnik-01-2014.pdf</p>	<p>At the 88th session of the Government of the SR which was held on 18 December 2013, the draft Waste Prevention Program of the SR for the years 2014 – 2018 was approved by Government Resolution No 729/2013.</p> <p>On 24 February 2014, the Waste Prevention Programme of the SR for the years 2014–2018 was published in Journal No 1/2004 of the MEn SR.</p> <p>On 5 March 2014, the MEn SR asked the Permanent Representation of the SR to send an official notification concerning the approval of the Waste Prevention Programme of the SR for the years 2014 – 2018 to the Secretary General of the EC.</p>
		- Necessary measures to achieve the targets on preparation for re-use and recycling by 2020 consistent with Article 11(2) of Directive 2008/98/EC have been adopted.	No	<p><u>Act No 343/2012 Coll. amending Act No. 223/2001 Coll. on waste and on amendments to certain acts, as amended, and on amendments to certain acts.</u> http://www.svps.sk/dokumenty/legislativa/nv_343_2012.pdf</p> <p><u>Act No 434/2013 Coll. amending Act No 17/2004 Coll. on charges for waste disposal as amended</u> www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/434-2013-z-z-p-35488.pdf</p> <p>Waste Management Programme of the SR for 2011 - 2015 (WMP) Resolution No 69/2012 of the Government of the SR of 22 February 2012 on the Waste Management Programme of the SR for the years 2011 - 2015.</p> <p>http://www.minzp.sk/sekcie/temy-oblasti/odpady-obaly/poh/poh-2011-2015/</p>	<p><u>Article 11 (2) of the Waste Directive specifies the targets as regards preparing for re-use and recycling which must be achieved by 2020 and leaves it up to the Member States to adopt the individual measures necessary for achieving such targets.</u></p> <p><u>When calculating the compliance with targets specified in Article 11(2) of the Waste Framework Directive, the SR will proceed in accordance with Commission Decision 2011/753/EC laying down four calculation methods for the objective related to municipal waste and a calculation method for the objective related to construction and demolition waste.</u></p> <p><u>In connection with the requirements under Article 11(2) of the Waste Framework Directive, the SR adopted measures related to legislative amendments in the area of waste management and the specification of objectives and measures in the Waste Management Programme.</u></p> <p><u>Amendment of the Act on Waste:</u></p> <p>Act No 343/2012 Coll. amending Act No 223/2001 Coll. on waste and on amendments to certain acts, as amended, and on amendments to certain acts. This act came into force on 1 January 2013. The amendment to the Act on Waste implemented the Waste Directive into the Slovak national legislation.</p> <p>Through the amendment to the Act on Waste, in order to ensure targets for re-use and recycling of waste, the SR has</p>

					<p>established the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the inclusion of new terms relating to re-use and recycling of waste into national legislation in accordance with Waste Directive (such as re-use, preparing for re-use, treatment, recycling, by-product and end-of-waste). - the introduction of the new waste hierarchy into national legislation in relation to Article 4 of the Waste Directive. Waste prevention represents the basis of waste management hierarchy. Preparing for re-use is a new element in the hierarchy. The hierarchy is mandatory and should be applied in order to prevent or reduce the adverse impacts of waste management and reduction of impacts of use of primary sources. - the setting of objectives of waste management in municipal waste and construction and demolition waste. Proposed objectives in the relevant area: "Increase in terms of municipal waste, by 2020, the preparing for re-use and recycling of municipal waste such as paper, metal, plastic and glass, to a minimum of overall 50 % by weight. In waste management in the field of construction and demolition waste, the target is to increase, by 2020, the preparing for re-use, recycling and recovery of construction and demolition waste, including backfilling operations using waste to substitute other materials, to a minimum 70 % of its weight; this target applies to waste listed in Group No. 17 of the Waste Catalogue [§ 68(3)(e)], except for hazardous waste and waste under part number 17 05 04." - the obligation for municipalities to introduce and ensure separate collection of municipal waste for paper, plastics, metals, glass and biodegradable wastes, other than those produced by restaurants and caterers. <p>As of 2010, Slovak municipalities are obliged to ensure separate collection for four components of municipal waste – paper, plastics, glass and metals; however, majority of the municipalities and cities had a separate collection system in place already before 2010.</p> <p>2. Amendment to the Act on charges for waste disposal:</p> <p>Act No 434/2013 Coll. amending Act No 17/2004 Coll. on charges for waste disposal as amended which came into force on 1 January 2014.</p> <p>Act No 17/2004 Coll. on charges for waste disposal was</p>
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					<p>amended in 2013 and, in addition to making landfilling a less advantageous option, it also incentivises the municipalities to put in place a separate collection system because the charge for the disposal of municipal waste is reduced if separate collection is in place, depending on the number of components of waste collected separately. The landfilling taxes should be gradually increasing until 2016 – in accordance with the amendment to the Act on charges, the landfilling tax for selected types of other waste (in particular biologically degradable waste and packaging waste) has been increased and should rise to EUR 30 in 2016. The landfilling tax for selected types of hazardous waste has been increased as well and should reach EUR 60 by 2016.</p> <p>The amount of the charge for the landfilling of municipal waste was set on the basis of respecting the partnership principle, i.e., on the basis of an agreement between the Slovak Government and social partners (in particular the Association of Slovak Towns and Villages) and corresponds to social viability and economy situation of the SR. (Note: The MEn SR proposed that the charge for the landfilling of waste be also increased for municipal waste, however, based on the Memorandum of Cooperation in implementing a budgetary policy oriented towards the financial stability of the public sector for 2013, which was signed by the Government of the SR and the Association of Slovak Towns and Municipalities, the proposal to increase the charges for the landfilling of waste was not supported because the Act on charges for waste disposal has been set, for the time being, adequately to economic development and economic situation of the SR.)</p> <p>3. WMP at national level:</p> <p>Waste Management Programme of the SR for 2011 - 2015, as approved by Government Resolution No 69 of 22 February 2012, represents an important conceptual instrument for the application of waste hierarchy. The WMP SR has been elaborated in line with the Waste Framework Directive and serves as the basic strategic document for waste sector, defining medium-term goals in waste management. It also includes objectives and measures for the disposal of biodegradable and municipal waste. The main objective is to reduce landfilling of municipal waste, to create the conditions for municipal waste recovery and increase the separate collection of waste.</p>
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					<p>Section 3.2.2 of the WMP SR specifies measures to promote re-use and recycling of municipal waste which will lead to the achievement of municipal waste treatment objectives in accordance with the Waste Framework Directive.</p> <p>4. The system of extended producer responsibility</p> <p>The extended producer responsibility (EPR) system has been partially enshrined in the national legislation since 2001, the year of adoption of the currently applicable Act on Waste. At the beginning, extended producer responsibility was implemented through the Recycling Fund and, gradually, a system of collective organisations has been created for the individual waste streams; based on association of producers, these organisations take care of the entire process of collection and recycling of individual commodities. The following waste streams are collected/recycled: packaging waste, batteries and accumulators, WEEE and end-of-life vehicles. The new Act on Waste which is being prepared (at present, the comments within the inter-ministerial review procedure are being assessed, and the Act itself is expected to enter into force on 1 January 2015) should specify in more detail the method for the implementation of extended producer responsibility and the existing EPR system will be amended in a way that it will also cover the responsibility of producers and importers of tyres, oils, paper and cardboard, plastics and glass. The proposed EPR system will also include an obligation to ensure the collection, recovery and recycling of waste also by means of separate collection of municipal waste in municipalities by involving waste collection companies and the whole network of recovery facilities.</p> <p>Also proposed under the newly prepared Act are more stringent rules for the landfilling of waste in order to restrict or prohibit the landfilling of certain waste streams, including separated biologically degradable waste and separated components of municipal waste which are subject to the extended producer responsibility.</p>
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7.1. Transport: The existence of a comprehensive plan or plans or framework or frameworks for transport investment in accordance with the Member States' institutional set-up (including public transport at regional and local level) which supports infrastructure development and improves connectivity to the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks.	Partially	The existence of a comprehensive transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks for transport investment which complies with legal requirements for strategic environmental assessment and sets out:	No	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I)</i></p> <p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p> <p>“Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020”</p> <p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p> <p>“Analysis of administrative, financial and technical capacities of beneficiaries in 2012”</p>	The draft Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I), as well as the draft Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020 are already prepared. The strategic documents are available at: www.telecom.gov.sk . The list of projects is part of both strategic documents.
		- the contribution to the single European Transport Area consistent with Article 10 of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, including priorities for investments in:	Yes		Note: Based on an agreement between the EC and the MTCRD SR, the preparation of the strategic plan was divided into two phases. The first phase is expected to be completed after the strategic plan is approved by the Government of the SR in the first half of 2014. Based on the submitted document, Slovakia is committed to proceed with the commenced activities and complete the transport sector strategy by incorporating the second phase no later than by the end of 2016. As requested by the EC, the MA for the OP Integrated Infrastructure will submit the Action Plan for the Fulfilment of EAC7.1 along with the draft OP II. The submission of the plan will make it possible to start the formal approval process for the OP II despite the fact that EAC 7.1 has not been formally fulfilled.
		- the core TEN-T network and the comprehensive network where investment from the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund is envisaged; and	Yes		The Strategic Plan, including the list of projects, should be the subject of further discussions with the EC. The MTCRD SR will arrange, in cooperation with applicants, the preparation of project description for each project proposed, in order to provide summary information on the particular project.
		- secondary connectivity;	Yes		Both strategic documents are currently assessed in line with Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment. The strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process is expected to be completed by 30 June 2014. Final versions of both strategic documents will be drawn up following the completion of the SEA process and after consultations with the EC and JASPERS. Complete fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities in the transport sector will be ensured by elaborating the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Phase II).
		- a realistic and mature pipeline for projects for which support from the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund is envisaged;	No		An update to the analysis is being prepared.
		Measures to ensure the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries to deliver the project pipeline.	No		

7.2. Railway: The existence within the comprehensive transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks of a specific section on railway development in accordance with the Member States' institutional set-up (including concerning public transport at regional and local level) which supports infrastructure development and improves connectivity to the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks. The investments cover mobile assets, interoperability and capacity- building.	No	The existence of a section on railway development within the transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks as set out above which complies with legal requirements for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and sets out a realistic and mature project pipeline (including a timetable and budgetary framework);	No	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I).</i></p> <p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p> <p>“Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020”</p> <p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p>	<p>The draft Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I), as well as the draft Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020 are already prepared. The strategic documents are available at: www.telecom.gov.sk. The list of projects is part of both strategic documents.</p> <p>The Strategic Plan, including the list of projects, should be the subject of further discussions with the EC. The MTCRD SR will arrange, in cooperation with applicants, the preparation of project description for each project proposed, in order to provide summary information on the particular project.</p>
		Measures to ensure the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries to deliver the project pipeline.	No	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I).</i></p> <p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p> <p>“Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020”</p> <p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p> <p>“Analysis of administrative, financial and technical capacities of beneficiaries in 2012”</p>	<p>Both strategic documents are currently assessed in line with the Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment. The strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process is expected to be completed by 30 June 2014. Final versions of both strategic documents will be drawn up following the completion of the SEA process and after consultations with the EC and JASPERS. Complete fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities in the transport sector will be ensured by elaborating the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Phase II).</p> <p>An update to the analysis is being prepared.</p>
7.3. Other modes of transport, including inland-waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure: the existence within the comprehensive transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks of a specific section on inland-waterways and maritime transport,	No	The existence of a section on inland-waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure within the transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks which:	No	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I).</i></p> <p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p>	<p>The draft Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I), as well as the draft Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020 are already prepared. The strategic documents are available at: www.telecom.gov.sk. The list of projects is part of both strategic documents.</p> <p>The Strategic Plan, including the list of projects, should be the subject of further discussions with the EC. The MTCRD SR will arrange, in cooperation with applicants, the preparation of project description for each project proposed, in order to provide summary information on the particular project.</p>
		- complies with legal requirements for strategic environmental assessment;	No	<p>“Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020”</p>	
		- sets out a realistic and mature project pipeline (including a timetable and budgetary framework);	No	<p>http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=147132</p>	

<p>ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure, which contribute to improving connectivity to the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks and to promoting sustainable regional and local mobility.</p>		<p>Measures to ensure the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries to deliver the project pipeline.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>“Analysis of administrative, financial and technical capacities of beneficiaries in 2012”</p>	<p>Both strategic documents are currently assessed in line with the Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment. The strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process is expected to be completed by 30 June 2014. Final versions of both strategic documents will be drawn up following the completion of the SEA process and after consultations with the EC and JASPERS. Complete fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities in the transport sector will be ensured by elaborating the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Phase II).</p> <p>An update to the analysis is being prepared.</p>
<p>7.4 Development of smart energy distribution, storage and transmission systems. The existence of comprehensive plans for investments in smart energy infrastructure, and of regulatory measures, which contribute to improving energy efficiency and security of supply.</p>	<p>Not relevant</p>	<p>Comprehensive plans describing the national energy infrastructure priorities are in place that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in accordance with Article 22 of Directive 2009/72/EC and of Directive 2009/73/EC, where applicable, and - consistent with the relevant regional investment plans under Article 12 and with the Union-wide ten-year network development plan in accordance with point (b) of Article 8(3) of Regulation (EC) No 714/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council and with Regulation (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council (7), and - compatible with Article 3(4) of Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council;. <p>Those plans shall contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a realistic and mature project pipeline for projects for which support from the ERDF is envisaged; - measures to achieve the 	<p>Not relevant</p>		

		objectives of social and economic cohesion and environmental protection, in line with Article 3(10) of Directive 2009/72/EC and Article 3(7) of Directive 2009/73/EC;			
		- measures to optimise the use of energy and promote energy efficiency, in line with Article 3(11) of Directive 2009/72/EC and Article 3(8) of Directive 2009/73/EC.			
8.1 Active labour market policies are designed and delivered in the light of the Employment guidelines.	Partially	Employment services have the capacity to, and do, deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personalised services and active and preventive labour market measures at an early stage, which are open to all jobseekers while focusing on people at highest risk of social exclusion, including people from marginalised communities; 	No	<p><i>National Reform Programme of the SR 2013</i></p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=22344</p> <p>Act No 96/2013 Coll. http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96</p> <p><i>Report on the current situation in the labour market in the SR and the measures for its improvement.</i> http://www.nrsr.sk/web/Dynamic/Download.aspx?DocID=382240</p>	<p><i>National Reform Programme of the SR 2013</i></p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=22344</p> <p>Act No 96/2013 Coll. http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96</p> <p><i>Report on the current situation in the labour market in the SR and the measures for its improvement.</i> http://www.nrsr.sk/web/Dynamic/Download.aspx?DocID=382240</p> <p>Pursuant to Act No 96/2013 Coll. (Amendment to the Act on Employment Services), the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family will be regularly preparing a report on the ALMP based on inputs from the individual labour offices. Individualized central database will be finalized and accessible. At present, a national project is being implemented: under this project, an umbrella strategic document - Employment Strategy of the SR (hereinafter the "Strategy") will be prepared to address issues related to employment. Emanating from the Europe 2020 Strategy, the Strategy and the National Reform Programme will represent two key strategic documents for employment, including employment services, for the 2014-2020 programming period.</p>
		- comprehensive and transparent information on new job vacancies and employment opportunities taking into account the changing needs of the labour market;	Yes	<p>Act No 96/2013 Coll. http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96</p> <p><i>Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family</i> http://www.upsvar.sk/volne-pracovne-miesta.html?page_id=12925</p>	Act No 96/2013 Coll. introduces a systemic active labour market policy instrument, i.e., the Alliance of Sectoral Council, sectoral councils and the national system of occupations. With the help of employers and educational institutions, the sectoral council is responsible in particular for updating the information system to reflect the developments in the labour market. The mandatory register of job vacancies is maintained by labour offices. In 2013, there were 68,107 job vacancies reported to the

				http://www.upsvar.sk/eures.html?page_id=13140 <i>Sectoral councils</i> http://sustavapovolani.sk/sektorove-rady	labour offices and 5,676 job vacancies were available on average.
		Employment services have set up formal or informal cooperation arrangements with relevant stakeholders.	Yes	<i>Act No 96/2013 Coll. on employment services</i> http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96/	<p>Amended <i>Act No 96/2013 Coll.</i> establishes the legislative framework of cooperation based on the individual active labour market policy instruments. The amendment to the Employment Services Act establishes Committees for Employment Issues that will consist of all relevant labour market representatives. Furthermore, partnerships are formed by municipalities, association of towns and municipalities, self-governing regions, civil associations, NGOs, foundations, banks and other persons participating in the activities of the project or programme. Cooperation between public employment services and schools focuses in particular on information and counselling services. With a view to ensuring the application of the active labour market policy, agreements between offices of public employment services, municipalities and local employers are commonplace in Slovakia. Furthermore, non-public temporary employment agencies (1,048 entities) are also involved in cooperation, in particular as regards placement of disadvantaged jobseekers onto the labour market; these agencies regularly provide the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family with reports on their activities.</p> <p>Cooperation is also taking place with other employment intermediaries (1,355 entities) and agencies of supported employment (58 entities). In 2013, labour offices organised in partnership with employers as many as 957 selection procedures where 47,975 jobs were offered to jobseekers. Within informal partnership with employers, three job fairs were organised in cooperation with 35 employers. In April 2013, in partnership with employers, educational institutions, providers of counselling services and training courses, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders, the Job Expo fair has been organised as every year; it was attended by 133 employers offering a total of 16,340 job vacancies, 19 expert partners and 27,850 clients. The Profesia Days 2013 job fair, attended by 80 employers and providers of counselling services and training courses, or the Svet práce job fair held in September 2013 and attended by 52 employers and other partners, can be</p>

					presented as further examples of partnership. In 2013 and 2014 the labour offices and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family have been in partnership with 105 educational institutions. The partnership with schools focused on vocational guidance provided to 21,670 pupils of primary schools and 35,036 students of secondary schools in 2013.
8.2. Self-employment, entrepreneurship and business creation: the existence of a strategic policy framework for inclusive start-up.	Yes	<p>A strategic policy framework for inclusive start-up support is in place with the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures have been put in place with the objective of reducing the time and cost involved in setting up a business, taking account of the targets of the SBA; 	Yes	<p><i>Act No 547/2011 Coll.</i></p> <p>http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2011-547</p> <p>Time for incorporating a company in the business register is shortened from 5 to 2 working days. In effect since 1 January 2014. The measure for reducing the cost of setting up a company was fulfilled through the processing and publication of standardised forms for small and medium-sized enterprises, if the company is established by a sole partner or shareholder. The necessity to address legal professionals in the set-up issues and all changes in a company was thus reduced.</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures have been put in place with the objective of reducing the time needed to get licenses and permits to take up and perform the specific activity of an enterprise, taking account of the targets of the SBA; 	Yes	<p><i>Act No 392/2011 Coll. on the marketing of defence industry products</i></p> <p>http://www.nrsr.sk/web/Default.aspx?sid=zakony/zakon&ZakZborID=13&CisObdobia=5&CPT=456</p> <p>The Act reduced the time for the issuance of sole trade license from 5 to 3 days, and extended the functionality of the Single Points of Contact (SPC). SPC allow those interested in setting up a business to perform all acts necessary for the issuance of a trade licence, or to perform acts related to setting up a company, in one place.</p> <p>Electronic functionality of the SPCs has been fully operational since 1 January 2012, i.e., it is possible to register a trade licence electronically, which also applies to the processing of changes and the filing of requests for registration in the business</p>	

				<p>register, including the payment of court and administrative fees.</p> <p><i>Slovak Government Resolution No 153/2013 on the report on business environment in the SR with proposals for improvement.</i></p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Uznesenie-13242?prefixFile=u</p> <p>The tasks for streamlining the use of SPC services and for extending their functionality have been approved.</p>	
		- actions linking suitable business development services and financial services (access to capital), including reaching out to disadvantaged groups, areas, or both, where needed.	Yes	<p>The “<i>Information System of the Single Points of Contact</i>” is in place and operated by the district (trade licence) offices. As of 1 January 2012, citizens can communicate electronically, from any place, for the purposes of trade licence registration and requests for registration in the business register, including the payment of administrative and court fees (State Treasury Information System).</p>	The information system is linked with the financial administration, health insurance companies, business register and the authorising bodies for the purposes of filing applications for business licenses.
<p>8.3. – Labour market institutions are modernised and strengthened in the light of the Employment Guidelines;</p> <p>Reforms of labour market institutions will be preceded by a clear strategic policy framework and ex ante assessment including with regard to the gender dimension.</p>		<p>Actions to reform employment services, aiming at providing them with the capacity to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personalised services and active and preventive labour market measures at an early stage, which are open to all jobseekers while focusing on people at highest risk of social exclusion, including people from marginalised communities; 			<p><i>Act No 96/2013 Coll.</i></p> <p>http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96</p> <p><i>Report on the current situation in the labour market in the SR and the measures for its improvement.</i></p> <p>http://www.nrsr.sk/web/Dynamic/Download.aspx?DocID=382240</p> <p>Some of the criteria are fulfilled by amendment to the Employment Services Act, which clearly established the roles for the entire system of institutions and instruments of support and assistance to labour market participants which are accessible to all jobseekers.</p> <p>As a follow-up to the amendment to the Employment Services Act, the reform of employment services strengthens the active and preventive measures, which is intrinsically linked to the need to strengthen the capacity of public employment services. Specifically, the need to</p>

	Partially		No		strengthen personnel capacities of the Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family by 500 employees, i.e., by 10 employees per office on average, and especially for the direct contact with clients, jobseekers and employers. The measures for the reform of employment services are set up and primarily focusing on strengthening the capacity of targeted personalised services. From the outside, this entails targeted provision of allowances under active labour market measures, the strengthening of professional counselling activities in particular by providing an overview of individual clients' competences and the use of other innovative methods, individualised assessment of entitlements to non-mandatory instruments under active labour market measures while adhering to the region-based principle, through the Committees for Employment Issues which will be composed of the representatives of social partners. Another aspect of the configured employment services reform includes the strengthening of cooperation with non-public providers of employment services and all partners in the labour market, in particular by interlinking information systems to avoid any duplicity in the funding of the individual instruments and clients. The employment services set up in this manner are included in the Report on the current situation in the labour market in the SR and the measures for its improvement. When finding jobs for their clients, the labour offices may use job agents, i.e., employees of labour offices or persons that may be selected by labour offices in accordance with the Public Procurement Act.
		- Comprehensive and transparent information on new job vacancies and employment opportunities taking into account the changing needs of the labour market.	Yes	<p><i>Act No 96/2013 Coll.</i> http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96</p> <p><i>Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family</i> http://www.upsvar.sk/volne-pracovne-miesta.html?page_id=12925</p> <p><i>EURES</i> www.eures.sk</p>	<p>Transparent and systematic information concerning new job vacancies is provided by the labour offices within their scope of powers in line with the Employment Services Act.</p> <p>In 2013, there were 68,107 job vacancies reported to labour offices and 5,676 job vacancies were available on average.</p> <p>The modernization of Employment Services continues to rely on the provision of information concerning on job vacancies via EURES.</p>
		- Reform of employment services will include the creation of formal or informal cooperation networks		<i>Act No 96/2013 Coll. on employment services</i>	The amendment to Act No 96/2013 Coll. significantly regulates and clarifies the formal cooperation of relevant stakeholders in active labour market policy. This includes

		with relevant stakeholders.	Yes	http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96	the establishment of the new competency of the Committees for Employment Issues composed of all relevant labour market representatives. Non-public temporary employment agencies are also involved in cooperation (1,048 entities), in particular as regards placement of disadvantaged jobseekers onto the labour market; these agencies regularly provide the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family with reports on their activities. Cooperation is also taking place with other employment intermediaries (1,355 entities) and agencies of supported employment (58 entities). In 2013, labour offices organised in partnership with employers as many as 957 selection procedures where 47,975 jobs were offered to jobseekers. Within informal partnership with employers, three job fairs were organised in cooperation with 35 employers. In April 2013, in partnership with employers, educational institutions, providers of counselling services and training courses, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders, the Job Expo fair has been organised as every year; it was attended by 133 employers offering a total of 16,340 job vacancies, 19 expert partners and 27,850 clients. The Profesia Days 2013 job fair, attended by 80 employers and providers of counselling services and training courses, or the Svet práce job fair held in September 2013 and attended by 52 employers and other partners, can be presented as further examples of partnership. In 2013 and 2014 the labour offices and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family have been in partnership with 105 educational institutions. The partnership with schools focused on vocational guidance provided to 21,670 pupils of primary schools and 35,036 students of secondary schools in 2013.
8.4. Active and healthy ageing: Active ageing policies are designed in the light of the Employment Guidelines.		Relevant stakeholders are involved in the design and follow-up of active ageing policies with a view to retaining elderly workers on the labour market and promoting their employment.	Yes	http://30.cvmpsvr.sk/index.php/dokumenty	The implementation of all activities of the project entitled "Strategy of active ageing" has been finalised, the outcomes of activities are published on the website of the MLSAF Centre of Education. In line with the Employment Services Act, citizens aged 50 years and more are considered to be disadvantaged job seekers. Therefore, a special approach is applied towards these citizens in the provision of active labour market measures. Reform change is expected take place through the implementation of the amendment to the Employment Services Act, mainly due to the fact that the new wording of allowance for the support of disadvantaged job seeker's employment seeks to unify and clarify the existing active labour market measures in support of job creation and job retention for disadvantaged job seekers. Reform change is also expected as a result of
		A Member State has measures in place to promote active ageing.			

	Yes		Yes		<p>introducing an allowance for the support of local and regional employment development, which is provided only for the employment of selected groups that are among the most vulnerable on the labour market, i.e. the long-term unemployed, jobseekers 50+ and low-skilled job seekers or jobseekers with no education. With regard to the support of programmes conducive to the creation of jobs and improvement of access to employment for disadvantaged job seekers in the labour market, the MLSAF in cooperation with the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family elaborated the proposals for national projects in line with §54 of Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services and on amendments to certain acts, as amended.</p> <p>The relevant outcomes from the Strategy of Active Ageing and from the Action Plan for the Strategy of Active Ageing have been incorporated in the National Programme of Active Ageing for 2014 - 2020.</p> <p>The SR will prepare and implement the measures aimed at increasing the participation of elderly workers in the labour market in accordance with the Council Recommendation on Slovakia's 2013 national reform programme and delivering a Council opinion on Slovakia's stability programme for 2012 – 2016.</p>
8.5. Adaptation of workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs to change: The existence of policies aimed at favouring anticipation and good management of change and restructuring.	No	<p>Instruments are in place to support social partners and public authorities to develop and monitor proactive approaches towards change and restructuring which include measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to promote anticipation of change; - to promote the preparation and management of the restructuring process. 	No		<p>Some measures stipulated in the Common commitment for employment are being fulfilled.</p> <p>The need of "Forecasts of labour market development in the SR" is being addressed at the present time at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR in cooperation with Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family SR, in the interest to know the changing needs of the labour market. For this purpose, project intention is prepared and project activities are identified. It is expected that the "Forecasts of labour market development in the SR" would allow to ensure continuous and systematic provision of information about employers' requirements for the figures and structures of qualified employees, throughout developing, verification and improvement of methods and results in prognoses in the field of skills offer, broken down by regions of the SR. Forecasts of labour market development in the SR make it possible to anticipate the numbers of employees required in individual professions. The forecasts will build on the already existing and regular future analyses of employment and unemployment. It is intended to create a comprehensive retrospective analysis of trends in quality and quantity of</p>

					human resources in the SR and structural changes of jobs (labour demand) in economic sectors and regions of the SR.
<p>8.6. The existence of a strategic policy framework for promoting youth employment including through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.</p> <p>This ex ante conditionality applies only for implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A strategic policy framework for promoting youth employment is in place that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is based on evidence that measures the results for young people not in employment, education or training and that represents a base to develop targeted policies and monitor developments; 	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Act No 96/2013 Coll. http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2013-96</p> <p>National Reform Programme 2013 http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=22344</p>	<p>In accordance with §8(1)(a) of Act No 96/2013 Coll., the citizen below 26 years of age is considered as disadvantaged job seeker, who has completed the systematic preparation to employment in a full-time study, at an appropriate level of education, not later than two years of completion and has not had the regular paid job before the date of registration as jobseeker. According to §43(5) of Act No 96/2013 Coll. effective from 1 May 2013, the Labour Office may develop, in cooperation with such job seeker, an Individual Action Plan (IAP) to support his/her job opportunities. IAP has been developed, evaluated and updated by special advisor in cooperation with disadvantaged job seeker. After the development and mutual agreement of IAP, this is binding on both the disadvantaged job seeker and the labour office. In accordance with the NRP 2013, the MLSAF SR prepared, in cooperation with the MESRS SR, a draft National Plan for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in the SR. The national plan comprises measures facilitating the implementation of the Youth Guarantee system at national level, as well as the relevant tasks of public authorities and other organisations. On 3 July 2013, 30 September 2013 and 28 November 2013, three interdepartmental meetings on the preparation of the Youth Guarantee were held at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. These meetings gradually revolved around questions about the schedule of the Youth Guarantee preparation, participating subjects, discussion about actual actions that are taken thematically to Youth Guarantee, the time period for which Youth Guarantee should be prepared and the specificities of financing and, in particular, the proposals of new structural/systemic measures aimed at ensuring, through their implementation in the future, a real and permanent change with respect to the integration of young people in the labour market. Youth Guarantee is already prepared for the involvement of supportive measures to improve</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifies the relevant public authority in charge of managing youth employment measures and coordinating partnerships across all levels and sectors; 	<p>Yes</p>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - involves stakeholders that are relevant for addressing youth unemployment; 	<p>Yes</p>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allows early intervention and activation; 	<p>Yes</p>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comprises supportive measures for access to employment, enhancing skills, labour mobility and sustainable integration of young people not in employment, education or training into the labour market. 	<p>Yes</p>		

					<p>access to employment, labour mobility and sustainable integration of young people into the labour market, in particular NEET. The implementation of the Youth Guarantee in the SR was discussed by the Solidarity and Development Council of the SR at its session on 29 January 2014; the Council adopted a Joint Declaration in support of its implementation in the SR. The National Plan was prepared as part of the Information on the preparation and adoption of the Youth Guarantee in the SR, which the Government of the SR discussed and took into consideration at its session on 5 February 2014. The implementation of the Youth Guarantee in line with the conclusions from the bilateral meeting between the EC and the MLSAF SR held on 14 February 2014 was approved by Government Resolution No 195 of 23 April 2014 concerning the NRP SR 2014. In April 2014, the guarantee was sent to the EC and in May 2014 to the EC's official address for the guarantee ('EMPL-Youth-Guarantee@ec.europa.eu').</p>
<p>9.1. The existence and the implementation of a national strategic policy framework for poverty reduction aiming at the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market in the light of the Employment guidelines.</p>	<p>Partially</p>	<p>A national strategic policy framework for poverty reduction, aiming at active inclusion, is in place that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides a sufficient evidence base to develop policies for poverty reduction and monitor developments; 	<p>No</p>		<p>The national project "National framework strategy for social inclusion and fight against poverty" was signed on 8 October 2013, with the following activities carried out in April 2014.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -extending the project until 31 June 2014 again in connection with the follow-up to external activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of indicators designed for the development of policies aimed at reducing poverty and social exclusion and monitoring the trends in this area + Empirical research of social climate and incorporating/reflecting its results in the text of the Strategy -expert consultations, fine-tuning of tasks in relation to the above external activities -consulting the text of the Strategy with the Family and Social Policy Section as part of preliminary "peer review" procedure in order to draw up the comprehensive and consistent final wording of the Strategy -informing the Commission representatives in person about the progress made in the preparation of the Strategy at an expert meeting "<i>Informal Dialogue on OP Human Resources 2014 - 2020</i>" on 28 March 2014 in Bratislava. -creating a text of the final version of the Strategy containing synergies -final peer editing of the complete text of the Strategy <p>The analytical part of the National framework strategy for social inclusion and fight against poverty, developed under the national project, will be based on outcomes from EU</p>

					SILC data, statistical surveys and other administrative and ad hoc sources.
		- contains measures supporting the achievement of the national poverty and social exclusion target (as defined in the National Reform Programme), which includes the promotion of sustainable and quality employment opportunities for people at the highest risk of social exclusion, including people from marginalised communities;	No	http://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/rodina-socialna-pomoc/socialne-sluzby/ http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/ezaradenyMaterialDetail?idMaterial=23195	The National Framework Strategy is in line with, and also based on, the National Reform Programme and other strategic documents, such as the de-institutionalisation strategy, etc. The potential of the social economy and the intermediate labour market in terms of social inclusion (baselines, sources of social economy and the current key development areas, an analysis of four main WISE models in the European area, financing, prerequisites for establishment, development of initiatives, assumptions and limits of social economy in the SR) will constitute a part of the Strategy and its annexes in terms of content and substance.
		- involves relevant stakeholders in combating poverty;	Yes	http://www.sspr.gov.sk/IVPR/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=259&Itemid=49&lang=sk	By the Government Decision No 305/2002 of 27 June 2012 concerning the document entitled "The method for application of ex ante conditionalities in the preparation of an implementing mechanism for EU cohesion policy beyond 2013 in the SR", an interdepartmental working group was set up at the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR, the members of which comprise relevant stakeholders in the fight against poverty in Slovakia (such as governmental and non-governmental institutions) involved in the preparation and commenting on the National framework strategy for social inclusion and fight against poverty. Through the National project, the National Framework Strategy is also discussed and consulted with the relevant stakeholders within an expert workshop and a national conference.
		- depending on the identified needs, includes measures for the shift from institutional to community based care.	Yes	http://www.employment.gov.sk/files/legislativa/dokumenty-zoznamy-pod/strategia-deinstitucionalizacie-systemu-socialnych-sluzieb-nahradnej-starostlivosti-1.pdf http://www.upsvar.sk/buxus/docs//SSVaR/OVOZ/Koncepcia.pdf	The National Framework Strategy will also be based on the already implemented "Strategy of de-institutionalization of social services and foster care system in the SR", as well as the "National action plan for a shift from institutional to community based care in the system of social services for 2012 - 2015" and the "Concept for ensuring the application of court decisions in children's homes for the years 2012–2015 with an outlook until 2020 - the Foster Care Transformation and De-institutionalisation Plan". Based on the de-institutionalisation strategy in the prepared National

					<p>Framework Strategy, the following indicators concerning a shift from institutional to community-based care will be proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the percentage share of beneficiaries of social services (children with disability, people with disability, citizens in social distress, pensioners) to whom social services are provided within the community and in their homes. - Increase the percentage share of social services provided by means of outpatient and outreach forms at community level. - Increase the share of children's homes established as a children's home to children's homes established as a children's centre. The capacity of a supported substitute care facility can be up to 10 persons per one housing unit, with a maximum of one housing unit within a single facility (family house, flat). - Reduce the number of cases/clients per employee of the department for social and legal protection of children and social guardianship
		<p>Upon request and where justified, relevant stakeholders will be provided with support for submitting project applications and for implementing and managing the selected projects.</p>	<p>No</p>		<p>At present, several possibilities for support and provision of information to relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries exist. As regards the submission of projects, this involves, in particular, information seminars on calls for proposals and FAQs, where the MA and IBMA provide answers to all stakeholders. In the implementation phase, beneficiaries are supported by MA or IB project managers. Additional possibilities for support are being sought for the future.</p>

9.2. A national Roma inclusion strategic policy framework is in place	Partially	<p>A national Roma inclusion strategic policy framework is in place that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sets achievable national goals for Roma integration to bridge the gap with the general population. These targets should address the four EU Roma integration goals relating to access to education, employment, healthcare and housing; 	Yes	<p><i>Strategy of the SR for the Integration of Roma until 2020 (the "Strategy")</i>. http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=20646</p> <p><i>The Strategy and the Revised National Action Plan of the Decade of Roma inclusion 2005 - 2015 are published at</i> http://www.minv.sk/?romske-komunity-uvod</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifies where relevant those disadvantaged micro-regions or segregated neighbourhoods, where communities are most deprived, using already available socio-economic and territorial indicators (i.e. very low educational level, long-term unemployment, etc); 	Yes	<p>The <i>Atlas of Roma Communities</i> was created in 2004 in order to obtain available information on the living conditions of people living in Roma communities. Taking into account the growing requirement to monitor and evaluate public policies targeted on this group of population, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in cooperation with the Institute of Romani Studies at the University of Prešov, the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma communities and the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia (ZMOS) have developed, in 2013, a new edition of the <i>Atlas of Roma communities 2013</i>. http://www.minv.sk/?atlas_2013</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - includes strong monitoring methods to evaluate the impact of Roma integration actions and a review mechanism for the adaptation of the strategy; 		<p>The draft of the standard form for the monitoring and evaluation report was created by internal capacities of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma communities, which was consulted with the representatives of the non-governmental organizations and the</p>	

			<p style="text-align: center;">No</p> <p>UNDP who have the expertise in analytical activities, monitoring and evaluations. The outcome comprised the defined scheme of monitoring, divided into three basic lines, e.g.: a) Technical and administrative , b) Qualitative, c) External monitoring lines - publication of the results of a tendering procedure for the external evaluation and monitoring of the Strategy. http://www.minv.sk/?zoznam-schvalenych-ziadosti-o-dotaciu-na-zaklade-na-zaklade-vyzvy-c-i-usvrk-2013</p> <p>The system for the monitoring of the Strategy also includes annual conferences organised by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma communities every year in order to monitor progress in the implementation of measures financed from the EU funds.</p> <p>http://www.minv.sk/?aktualne_info</p> <p>In the <i>Strategy</i>, specific measurable indicators have been defined in each priority area so as to objectively reflect the objectives pursued and, at the same time, the monitoring and evaluation procedures were defined in chapter F.2 on page 65, "Monitoring and evaluation indicators and procedures". http://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/romovia/dokumenty/StrategiaSR_integraciaRomov.pdf</p> <p>The draft PA 4 "Integration of marginalized Roma communities" under the OP HR reads as follows: Comprehensive collection of data on MRC during the 2014-2020 programming period through large-scale quantitative research (such as the Atlas, sample surveys in marginalised Roma households, etc.) as well as qualitative surveys and pilot research projects will be ensured by means of the seven-year national project. The project plan will also include data analysis and evaluation which will make it possible to evaluate the effectiveness of individual</p>	
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				policy instruments and their impact on MRC.	
		- is designed, implemented and monitored in close cooperation and continuous dialogue with Roma civil society, regional and local authorities.	No		<p>The Strategy was conceived on a participatory, multi-sectoral level. The creation process was conducted in the form of consultations with representatives of the relevant ministries, state administration, local governments, Roma and non-Roma NGOs, academic authorities at regional and national level. Responsibility and the implementation of activities within individual areas are described in more detail in the Revised National Action Plan of the Decade of Roma inclusion 2005 – 2015 and in the implementation framework that defines the role and status of other key partners i.e., local governments and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Strategy.</p> <p>http://www.minv.sk/?programove_obdobie_2014-2020</p> <p>Chapter E.1. 3 “Non-governmental organisations” on p. 53 of the Strategy describes the involvement of Roma NGOs in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the Strategy. The framework for building partnerships and networks of NGOs is defined in the following areas: http://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/romovia/dokumenty/StrategiaSR_integraciaRomov.pdf, pg. 67 contains</p> <p>The list of representatives of state administration, local governments and NGOs invited for consultations in the preparation of the Strategy;</p> <p>The website http://www.minv.sk/?podporne_platformy contains the support platforms of the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma communities and includes organisations involved in working groups for the preparation of programming documents, implementation and monitoring of the EU funds for Roma inclusion.</p> <p>In cooperation with the ministries, the OGP SR RC prepared the first monitoring report of the Strategy for 2012 and 2013: https://lt.justice.gov.sk/Document/DocumentDetails.aspx?InstEID=-1&matEID=7002&docEID=351001&docFormEID=-1&docTypeEID=1&langEID=1</p> <p>In order to ensure an independent opinion on the fulfilment of the Strategy and the forms of its monitoring, the OGP SR RC provided financial support through a subsidy scheme to NGOs – the Slovak Governance Institute (SGI) and the Wide Open School Foundation (Škola dokorán) for</p>

					<p>the implementation of external evaluation and monitoring of the Strategy http://www.minv.sk/?oznam-schvalenych-ziadosti-o-dotaciu-na-zaklade-na-zaklade-vzvyv-c-i-usvrk-2013</p> <p>External monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy is also carried out by a national coalition of non-governmental organisations coordinated by the Roma Institute. http://www.romainstitute.sk/index.php?ID=255. The organisations are members of the OGP SR RC's working groups for the 2014 - 2020 programming period.</p>
		<p>Upon request and where justified, relevant stakeholders will be provided with support for submitting project applications and for implementing and managing the selected projects.</p>	<p>No</p>		<p>In the context of the organizational structure, the OGP SR RC has set up administrative capacities which include regional offices and are linked to the 2007 – 2013 programming period. http://www.minv.sk/?kontakty_rk</p> <p>The OGP SR RC prepared a document entitled “Proposal for the stabilisation of administrative capacities of the Unit for the coordination of horizontal priority Marginalised Roma Communities at the Office of Government Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities in 2014 and 2015” which refers to the need to ensure adequate administrative capacity for the preparation of the new programming period 2014 – 2020. https://lt.justice.gov.sk/Material/MaterialHome.aspx?instEID=-1&matEID=6983&langEID=1</p> <p>The proposal to reinforce administrative capacities of the OGP SR RC for the 2014-2020 programming period is also discussed in the “Ad hoc HP MRC Evaluation in 2011” and the “Strategic External HP MRC Evaluation as at 31 December 2011” http://www.minv.sk/?hodnotenie_MRK</p> <p>Conclusions of the working group “Strengthening cooperation and administrative capacity in the 2014 - 2020 programming period” at the High Level Event held on 22 – 23 June 2013 are published at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/roma2013/agenda_en.cfm</p> <p>The results of the working group session on ex ante conditionalities concerning “Qualitative setup of support for stakeholders” are published at: http://www.minv.sk/?podporne_platformy</p> <p>The objective of the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma communities is to continue to build on the experience from the 2007 – 2013 programming period in providing</p>

					<p>assistance and to strengthen it for the benefit of stakeholders. The activities proposed by the OP HR include assistance programme for municipalities with the presence of MRC aimed at increasing SF absorption and the support for building the capacities of non-governmental organisations through global grants. The draft Operational Programme is published at:</p> <p>https://it.justice.gov.sk/Document/DocumentDetails.aspx?instEID=-1&matEID=7183&docEID=359733&docFormEID=-1&docTypeEID=1&langEID=1</p>
<p>9.3. Health: The existence of a national or regional strategic policy framework for health within the limits of Article 168 TFEU ensuring economic sustainability.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>A national or regional strategic policy framework for health is in place that contains:</p>	<p>No</p>	<p><i>Strategic Framework for health for the years 2013 – 2030.</i></p> <p>http://www.health.gov.sk/?strategia-v-zdravotnictve</p>	<p>The document was approved by the Slovak Government on 18 December 2013 and submitted to the EC for assessment on 20 December 2013. It identifies key healthcare areas which will represent the priorities of the Slovak healthcare system until 2030.</p>
		<p>- coordinated measures to improve access to health services;</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The document contains a separate chapter identifying the basic priorities and actions of the SR reflecting the need to improve access to health services and stimulate efficiency in the Slovak health sector.</p> <p>The key priority areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support of integrated out-patient healthcare • innovative modernization of inpatient health care • improvement of public health interventions 	
		<p>- measures to stimulate efficiency in the health sector, through deployment of service delivery models and infrastructure;</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Measures (sub-strategies/tools of change) to improve access to high quality health services include, in particular: integration of outpatient healthcare (with emphasis on primary healthcare), e-Health, resident programs, creation and innovation of clinical and prevention guidelines, program for support of health status of MRC (health mediators' program), programs in the field of non-medical prevention.</p> <p>Measures to stimulate efficiency in health sector through deployment of service delivery models and infrastructure include, in particular: new infrastructure of integrated healthcare centres, new</p>	

				<p>infrastructure of hospitals, DRG, e-Health, control mechanisms in management of university and faculty hospitals.</p> <p>Key indicators and target values have been identified for the individual priority areas of health care; the SR should achieve these indicators and targets through the implementation of specifically addressed strategies/tools of change by 2030.</p> <p>Moreover in each strategy/tool of change, contribution to the improvement of accessibility, quality and efficiency of healthcare was identified.</p>	
		- a monitoring and control system.	No	<p>The mechanism of the monitoring and review system for the fulfilment of the individual strategies is described in a separate chapter of the document. The monitoring and review system will be implemented at two levels:</p> <p>1st level – the MH SR, by means of a detailed “Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/ tools of change” - the fulfilment will be subsequently verified within agreed deadlines.</p> <p>2nd level - the MH SR will set up a monitoring board composed of representatives of relevant partners. The board will periodically monitor the progress of the Strategic framework, propose amendments, if any, and will supervise the implementation of sub-strategies/tools of change.</p> <p>The MH SR in cooperation with partners will be preparing annual reports on progress achieved at the strategic framework level in particular by updating the achieved values of indicators and by providing information on the status of the implementation of strategies/tools of change.</p>	
		A Member State or region has adopted a framework outlining available budgetary resources on an indicative basis and a cost-		The possible sources of funding for fulfilling the set objectives (state budget, public health insurance, PPP, Community Health Programme and Structural Funds) are	

		effective concentration of resources on prioritised needs for health care.	No	described in a separate chapter of the document. The description of the sources of funding will also include indicative allocations of funds and identification of measures (sub-strategies/tools of change) to be financed from such sources. Every sub-strategy/tool of change will include a detailed budget.	
10.1. Early school leaving: The existence of a strategic policy framework to reduce early school leaving (ESL) within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.	Partially	A system for collecting and analysing data and information on ESL at relevant levels is in place that:	No	Sectoral Information System will establish a monitoring system that will make it possible to perform analyses and target the support measures at reducing early school leaving at national, regional and local level. The Sectoral Information System should be fully operational in the fourth quarter of 2014.	
		- provides a sufficient evidence- base to develop targeted policies and monitors developments.	No		
		A strategic policy framework on ESL is in place that:	Yes	Revised National Action Plan of the Decade of Roma inclusion 2005 - 2015 http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=19992	
		- is based on evidence;	Yes		
		- covers relevant educational sectors including early childhood development, targets in particular vulnerable groups that are most at risk of ESL including people from marginalised communities, and addresses prevention, intervention and compensation measures;	Yes		

		- involves all policy sectors and stakeholders that are relevant to addressing ESL.	Yes	vzdelavani-a-priprave/ National Project "Inclusive Pre-school Education Model" of the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre http://www.npmrk2.sk/ (National project website)	
10.2. Higher education: the existence of a national or regional strategic policy framework for increasing tertiary education attainment, quality and efficiency within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.	Partially	A national or regional strategic policy framework for tertiary education is in place with the following elements: - where necessary, measures to increase participation and attainment that: - increase higher education participation among low income groups and other under-represented groups with special regard to disadvantaged people, including people from marginalised communities;	No		The MESRS SR is preparing a national strategic policy framework for university education for the years 2014 - 2020 to address, inter alia, the issue of access to university education, e.g., for students with specific needs (physical disability in particular).
		- reduce drop-out rates/ improve completion rates;	Yes	<i>Amendment to Act No 455/2012 Coll. on Tertiary Schools</i> http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/vyhľadavanie?filter_sent=1&filter_predpis_aspi_id=455%2F2012&q=	
		- encourage innovative content and programme design;	No		<i>The MESRS SR is preparing a national strategic policy framework for university education for the years 2014 - 2020</i> The Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information is implementing the national project: " <i>Universities as drivers of knowledge-based society development</i> ". The aim of the national project is to adapt higher education to the needs of the knowledge-based society through the development of innovative forms of education, the development of active cooperation between universities and the private sector in the development of new training courses and programs, the rationalization and improvement in the quality of existing training courses and programmes at universities and the learning process and increasing the

					involvement of universities in international cooperation.
		- measures to increase employability and entrepreneurship that:	Yes	Amendment to Act No 455/2012 Coll. on Tertiary Schools http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/vyhľadavanie?filter_sent=1&filter_predpis_aspi_id=455%2F2012&q=	
		- encourage the development of "transversal skills", including entrepreneurship in relevant higher education programmes;	Yes		
		- reduce gender differences in terms of academic and vocational choices.	Yes		
10.3. Lifelong learning (LL): The existence of a national and/or regional strategic policy framework for lifelong learning within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.	Partially	A national or regional strategic policy framework for lifelong learning is in place that contains measures:	Yes	<i>Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance Strategy</i> , http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=6639	Lifelong learning of health workers (further education of health workers) is governed and regulated by Act No. 578/2004 Coll. on healthcare providers, health workers and professional organisations in the health sector, and on amendments to certain acts, as amended. In terms of further education of health workers, the ex-ante conditionality criteria have been fulfilled.
		- to support the developing and linking services for LL, including their implementation and skills upgrading (i.e. validation, guidance, education and training) and providing for the involvement of, and partnership with relevant stakeholders,	Yes	<i>Lifelong Learning Strategy 2011 and Action Plan for the fulfilment of Lifelong learning Strategy 2011</i> http://www.minedu.sk/9772-sk/dokumenty-a-predpisy/	
		- for the provision of skills development for various target groups where these are identified as priorities in national or regional strategic policy frameworks (for example young people in vocational training, adults, parents returning to the labour market, low skilled and older workers, migrants and other disadvantaged groups, in particular people with disabilities);	No		Act on the recognition of results of non-formal education and informal learning is planned to be adopted (it should be submitted to the National Council of the SR in the second half of 2015). According to this Act, the graduates from the school education system, as well as non-formal education system should get the same position in the labour market.
		- to widen access to LL including through efforts to effectively			From 2013 to 2015, two key national projects are implemented with a focus on the development of adult

		implement transparency tools (for example the European Qualifications Framework, National Qualifications Framework, European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training, European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training);	No		education in Slovakia: - Creating the <i>National Qualifications System</i> (the project should contribute to increasing the adult participation in further education through the development of further education and counselling for adults); - <i>Further education and counselling for adults as a tool for better employability in the labour market</i> (the aim of the project is to create and develop an effective system of lifelong education and counselling aimed at developing the key competencies, skills upgrading and improving the qualification in accordance with current and prospective needs of the knowledge-based society available throughout life for all citizens of the SR).
		- to improve the labour market relevance of education and training and to adapt it to the needs of identified target groups (for example young people in vocational training, adults, parents returning to the labour market, low-skilled and older workers, migrants and other disadvantaged groups, in particular people with disabilities).	Yes	<i>Lifelong Learning Strategy 2011</i> <i>Action Plan for the implementation of Lifelong Learning Strategy 2011</i> http://www.minedu.sk/9772-sk/dokumenty-a-predpisy/	
10.4. The existence of a national or regional strategic policy framework for increasing the quality and efficiency of VET systems within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.	Partially	A national or regional strategic policy framework is in place for increasing the quality and efficiency of VET systems within the limits of Article 165 TFEU which includes measures for the following: - to improve the labour market relevance of VET systems in close cooperation with relevant stakeholders including through mechanisms for skills anticipation, adaptation of curricula and the strengthening of work-based learning provision in its different forms;	Yes	<i>Act No 184/2009 Coll. on vocational education and training and on amendments to certain acts</i> http://www.minedu.sk/zakon-o-odbornom-vzdelavani-a-priprave/ <i>Government Council for Vocational Education and Training</i> http://www.radavladyo vp.sk/	<i>Act No 184/2009 Coll. on vocational education and training</i> addresses the status and roles of the entities of quadripartite cooperation in the field of vocational education and training, which are state administration, local government, employers and employees. It also creates the conditions for motivating the employers to promote vocational education. The aim of the Act is to create effective tools for adapting VET to the changing demands of the labour market, to raise the interest of primary school pupils to study at secondary vocational schools, to promote study in the fields of education which are required by employers and to establish a mechanism to reduce the number of graduates of study programmes in which employers are not interested. Government Council for Vocational Education and Training, regional and sectoral councils for vocational education and training - are designed to allow every employer to participate directly or by its comments in innovating the existing curriculum and training, in the implementation of

					<p>vocational education and training and in quality assessment connected with the completion of studies.</p>
		<p>- to increase the quality and attractiveness of VET including through establishing a national approach for quality assurance for VET (for example in line with the, European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training) and implementing the transparency and recognition tools, for example European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training. (ECVET).</p>	<p>No</p>		<p>The attractiveness and quality of VET will be increased through the adoption of the new Act on vocational education and training that will introduce the elements of dual education system (expected to enter into force on 1 September 2015).</p> <p>Between 2013 and 2015, three key national projects are being implemented with a focus on increasing, inter alia, the attractiveness of VET in the SR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of the National Qualifications System (with the aim to create, inter alia, 1,000 partial and full qualifications in the form of establishing qualification standards based on learning outcomes and evaluation standards), - Support for occupational orientation of primary school pupils towards vocational education and training through the development of polytechnic education with a focus on developing occupational skills, as well as working with talented individuals (one of the objectives is to provide equipment for science labs in primary schools, development of continuing education programmes for pedagogues teaching natural science subjects), - Development of secondary vocational education (the objectives include, for instance, an analysis of how the graduates' skills match the labour market supply, an audit of secondary vocational schools, analytical-methodological activities in relation to the trends in the unemployment of graduates from secondary vocational schools and the impact on vocational education and training). <p>Actions to be undertaken through the implementation of</p>

					<p>the above national projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the identification of learning outcomes and their description in line with the qualification standards of partial and full qualifications in accordance with the Recommendation of the European Council and the Parliament on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. - the creation of mechanisms for the recognition of qualifications not attained through formal education (non-formal and informal learning) – creating legislative and institutional environment and a system for evaluation quality assurance, validation and recognition of all types of qualifications in connection with the creation of the National Qualifications System and the linkage with the European Qualifications Framework - involvement of social partners and stakeholders in the processes aimed at creating evaluation standards, recognition and award of qualifications through: active participation in all of the three processes referred to above; monitoring the needs of the labour market when identifying the occupational standards and their incorporation in the qualification standards within the implementation of national projects, as well as through participation in the referencing process - the creation of mechanisms and methodologies for identifying the employability of graduates
11. The existence of a strategic policy framework for reinforcing the Member States' administrative efficiency including public administration reform	Partially	<p>A strategic policy framework for reinforcing a Member State's public authorities' administrative efficiency and their skills with the following elements are in place and in the process of being implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an analysis and strategic planning of legal, organisational and/or procedural reform actions; 	No		<p>http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Uznesenie-13500?prefixFile=u</p> <p>Established in accordance with Government Resolution No 388 of 10 July 2013, the Steering Committee for the Coordination of Public Administration Reform is the coordinating authority for the public administration reform at national level. The Steering Committee represents the mechanism for coordination and dialogue between relevant bodies in charge of the preparation and implementation of reform actions. The members of the Steering Committee represent the individual government bodies and agendas responsible for the fulfilment of the public administration reform in their own segments. Analyses of legal, organisational and/or procedural reform actions have been prepared on the basis of key needs and goals in the individual public administration segments. The analyses were based on examining the existing regulatory</p>

					<p>framework, the organisational structure and/or procedural rules with a view to reinforcing the effectiveness of the public administration in Slovakia.</p> <p>Strategic Framework “Basic assumptions for the public administration reform in the SR” http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23148 Submitted to the Steering Committee and taken into consideration by the Government of the SR on 18 December 2013. This strategic document reflects the Slovak Government's commitment to implementing a comprehensive horizontal reform of the public administration across all segments of public administration with clearly defined priorities and will serve as the basis for a further development of reform concepts in individual segments of public administration in the same manner as strategies of the OP Effective Public Administration.</p> <p>The ESO Programme (Effective (Efektívna), reliable (Spofahlivá) and open (Otvorená) public administration) http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=20957 http://www.zbierka.sk/sk/predpisy/zakon-345-2012-z-z-p-34903.html?aspi_hash=MzQ1LzlwMTIiWj56Lg Adopted on 24 April 2012. Stage I of the ESO reform has been completed and involved the cancellation of regional specialised local public administration offices and the integration of regional educational authorities, regional construction authorities and territorial military authorities into district authorities in the regions. This directly contributes to the simplification of the structure and improvement of the transparency and effectiveness of public administration.</p> <p>Stage II of the ESO reform was fulfilled through the adoption of Act No 180/2013 on the organisation of the local state administration and on amendments to certain acts and facilitated the establishment of 72 district authorities as integrated local authorities of public administration.</p> <p>MI SR is involved in a joint project with the OECD “Improving quality of public administration – strategic evaluation of the main aspects of public administration reform”. The project outcomes will contribute to shaping the national strategy for the public administration reform and the Steering Committee for the Coordination of the Public Administration Reform. In December 2013, OECD prepared another strategic document entitled “Strategic</p>
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					<p>Framework for the Public Administration Reform in the SR".</p> <p>Strategic Plan to Fight Corruption in the SR http://bit.ly/1gOTdD6 The document was approved by Government Resolution No 517 of 10 August 2011. In order to monitor, coordinate and perform interim controls and evaluations of the fulfilment of tasks under the Strategic Plan to Fight Corruption, the Minister of the Interior issued instruction No 115/2011 to establish an inter-ministerial expert working group for anti-corruption, with the Minister of the Interior being the chairman and the Head of the Government Office of the SR being the vice-chairman of the group. The Report on the fulfilment of tasks under the Strategic Plan to Fight Corruption was discussed by the Government of the SR on 2 April 2014.</p> <p>Concept of a reform of tax and duties administration, with the aim of unifying collection of taxes, duties and insurance contributions http://bit.ly/HW5MhO</p> <p>Concept of a reform of the tax, levy and insurance contribution systems http://bit.ly/1asJEF2 http://bit.ly/1aWmOU4</p> <p>Stage 1 of the UNITAS project of electronic communication of the financial administration with relevant entities (deployment of a portal for one-way communication) pursuant to Act No 563/2009 Coll. on tax administration (the Tax Code) and on amendments to certain acts, as amended, was implemented as at 1 January 2014. The processing load of the Financial Administration portal is regularly monitored and measures have been adopted to ensure trouble-free submission of documents during the "tax peak" in March 2014.</p> <p>Based on the approved Concept to Combat VAT Fraud and the Action Plan for Combating Tax Fraud for 2012-2016, tax payers are required, based on an amendment to Act No. 222/2004 Col. on value-added tax effective from 1 January 2014, to submit VAT control statement containing information on the supply of goods and services within the country to the tax administrator by electronic means. The control statements are submitted through the Financial Administration portal. The information system for the processing of VAT control statements was launched on 1 February 2014.</p>
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				<p>Approved bilateral and multilateral agreements for promoting neighbourly relations between public administration bodies as part of cross-border cooperation with respect to the provision of mutual assistance in the event of crisis situations. In order to fulfil this criterion, an action plan has been prepared.</p> <p>http://www.minv.sk/?multilateralne-zmluvy</p>
		- the development of quality management systems;	<p>No</p> <p>http://bit.ly/1eeXCPG</p>	<p>“Basic assumptions for the public administration reform in the SR” include a commitment to implement quality management systems (QMS) in public administration. The National Quality Programme of the SR for 2013 – 2016 was approved by the Slovak Government in October 2013 and one of the nine priority sectors is oriented at strengthening the quality of public administration through the implementation of QMS in public administration – for instance, CAF.</p> <p>In order to fulfil this criterion, an action plan has been prepared.</p>
		- integrated actions for simplification and rationalisation of administrative procedures;	<p>Yes</p> <p>http://bit.ly/1cmrSF4</p> <p>http://bit.ly/1ie8Sel</p> <p>http://bit.ly/1hJAHp</p> <p>http://bit.ly/1cY2iEI</p>	<p>Uniform methodology for the assessment of selected impacts aimed at measuring and reducing the administrative burden faced by entrepreneurs and for the assessment of legislative proposals has been updated.</p> <p>Establishment of analytical Centre for Better Regulation which will be responsible for the systemic evaluation of the impacts of regulation on the business sector – Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). At the same time, this will strengthen the analytical capacities and facilitate the simplification and rationalisation of administrative procedures. The assessment of legislation and its impact on small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) will be performed by means of SME test.</p> <p>The creation of a database of legislation and the ensuing information obligations which represent an administrative burden for businesses.</p> <p>The Report on Business Environment in the SR was approved by Government Resolution No 153 of 3 April 2013 and introduces measures aimed at improving the business environment, including measures to reduce the administrative burden. The measures are evaluated on an annual basis.</p> <p>Government Resolution No 153 of 3 April 2013 specifies</p>

				<p>http://bit.ly/1gFghuT</p> <p>http://bit.ly/IX6RW5</p>	<p>measures aimed at improving the business environment, including measures to reduce the administrative burden.</p> <p>A web portal has been launched in cooperation with the National Union of Employers, allowing entrepreneurs to pinpoint and warn about administrative complexity and duplicity resulting from legislation.</p> <p>In 2013, the Council of the Public Procurement Office was established to strengthen independence in decision-making and submission of appeals.</p> <p>The MI SR was the body responsible for the amendment to Act No 25/2006 Coll. on public procurement and on amendments to certain acts as amended and on amendments to Act No 455/1991 Coll. on trade licensing (the Trade Licensing Act) as amended– effective as of 1 July 2013. The capacity and budget of the Public Procurement Office were reinforced in order to be able to create new mechanisms, training, and capacity-building in the area of public procurement. Therefore, the Public Procurement Office is the body responsible for this area. The MI SR is prepared to cooperate with the Public Procurement Office in developing policies in this area.</p> <p>MI SR is currently setting up client centres. These projects were have been implemented at the district offices in Nitra, Galanta, Stropkov, Svidník, Stará Ľubovňa, Snina, Topoľčany and Senec. Additional client centres are planned for 2014.</p> <p>The Concept of Developing Financial Administration 2014 – 2020 was approved at the meeting of the Financial Administration management on 12 November 2013. The aim is to implement changes in the system of managing and organising the financial administration by implementing the related projects.</p> <p>Action Plan for Combating Tax Fraud.</p> <p>The MF SR is implementing a project of electronic communication of the financial administration with relevant entities in line with Act No 563/2009 Coll. on tax administration (the Tax Code) and on amendments to certain acts as amended. Stage 1 of the project implementing electronic communication of the financial administration with relevant entities pursuant to Act No. 563/2009 Coll. on tax administration (the Tax Code) and on amendments to certain acts as amended, was implemented as at 1 January 2014 (deployment of a portal for one-way communication). The processing load of the Financial</p>
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		- the development and implementation of human resources strategies and policies covering the main gaps identified in this field;	No	<p>The MI SR is implementing a National Project of Building Capacities and Improving Effectiveness of the Public Administration in the SR. The project is implemented in cooperation with the OECD, and addresses problematic and ineffective operation of certain areas of public administration.</p> <p>As of 1 November 2013, the Government Office of the SR is the lead authority for civil service employment relations and legal relations as regards work in the public interest. In 2013, the MLSAF SR carried out a survey of problems in the application of the Act on Civil Service in order to collect documentation for an amendment to the act which would remove application problems in practice. In cooperation with the MLSAF SR and the MI SR, the GO SR organised a questionnaire-based survey on a selected group of 46,815 civil servants, the main purpose of which was to identify systemic and process errors in the management of human resources in order to be able to prepare the civil service reform in line with the rules for the development of a stable, professional and politically neutral public administration.</p> <p>In order to prepare a new draft act on civil service the GO SR set up working groups comprising experts on civil services dealing with the preparation of the new act. Each of the groups is responsible for a particular area, i.e.: (1) commencement, change and termination of civil service employment; (2) disciplinary proceedings and the rights and obligations of civil servants; (3) performance-based assessment and remuneration; (4) selection procedures – recruitment of civil servants and (5) training. At the same time, the GO SR established the Steering Committee for Civil Service Reform which coordinates the activities of</p>

				<p>individual working groups and provides guidance. At present, the Steering Committee and the working groups are intensively working on the preparation of the draft Civil Service Act.</p> <p>In order to fulfil this criterion, an action plan has been prepared.</p>
		- the development of skills at all levels of the professional hierarchy within public authorities;	No	<p>http://bit.ly/1765cHb</p> <p>Act No 568/2009 Coll. on lifelong learning and on amendments to certain acts as amended by Act No. 315/2012 Coll. The Act on Lifelong Learning governs: a) long learning in which further education follows up on the level of education attained in school education; b) accreditation of education programs of further education; c) rules and procedures of verifying and recognising results of the further education focused on obtaining partial or full qualification; d) the National Qualifications System; e) the information system of further education; f) the system of monitoring and forecasting further education needs; g) the control of compliance with accreditation conditions.</p> <p>In order to fulfil this criterion, an action plan has been prepared.</p>
		- the development of procedures and tools for monitoring and evaluation.	No	<p>Audit of local governments – Audit of the transferred performance of public administration and original competencies, and the provision of their financing at the level of regional and local governments is in process. In line with the Government Resolution, a uniform audit methodology was developed. The ministries and other central bodies of the public administration carried out an audit of the local government, and an audit report was submitted by the MI SR and MF SR. The MI SR together with the MF SR prepared a summary audit report as a basis for the preparation of modernisation of the local governments in the SR. Summary audit for public administration competences was discussed by the Government of the SR on 14 May 2014 and approved by Government Resolution No 226.</p> <p>The manual entitled “How to Measure Progress – a proposal of result indicators for ministries” suggests three levels of indicators for evaluating the results achieved by various public policies. As soon as certain indicators are completed, the Steering Committee for the coordination of public administration reform will assess the alternatives of using the manual as a systemic instrument for evaluating the operations of the state and public administration. The system of indicators will be further supplemented with the</p>

					<p>result, output and input indicators at the level of ministries will serve as an indicative tool for public policy makers.</p> <p>In order to fulfil this criterion, an action plan has been prepared.</p>
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General ex ante conditionalities

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
<p>1. Anti-discrimination</p> <p>The existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union anti-discrimination law and policy in the field of the ESI Funds.</p>	No	<p>Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the involvement of bodies responsible for the promotion of equal treatment of all persons throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including the provision of advice on equality in ESI fund-related activities.</p>	No	<p><i>Act No 575/2001 Coll. on the organisation of government activities and the organisation of central government as amended</i></p> <p>http://www.epi.sk/Main/Default.aspx?Template=~%2FMain%2FTArticles.ascx&LngID=0&zzsrInkid=4654186&phContent=~%2FZzSR%2FShowRule.ascx&RuleId=14927&pa=13597</p> <p><i>Anti-discrimination Act (Act No 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas and protection against discrimination and on amendment of certain laws as amended)</i></p> <p>http://www.gender.gov.sk/?page_id=72</p>	<p>In compliance with Act No 575/2001 Coll. on the organisation of government activities and the organisation of central government as amended, the responsibility for coordination of the national policy on equal opportunities lies with the MLSAF SR. Therefore, under the PA SR for the years 2014 - 2020, the MLSAF SR should also be responsible for coordination of the horizontal principle anti-discrimination. The Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities (DGEEO) is the executive body for the implementation of programmes, while the provision of advice is the responsibility of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (SNCHR). In compliance with Act No 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas and protection against discrimination and on amendment of certain laws as amended (Anti-discrimination Act), this function is performed by the SNCHR. The centre's role is to operate comprehensively in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The activities of the SNCHR focus on the following areas: monitoring and evaluation of the observance of human rights and compliance with the principle of equal treatment pursuant to the Anti-Discrimination Act, research and surveys to provide information on human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of the child, provision of legal assistance to victims of discrimination and intolerance. Measures are currently being drafted to make the centre more effective.</p> <p>The existence of a plan to consult with and involve bodies in charge of anti-discrimination and specific steps taken to facilitate active involvement of the national equality body.</p> <p>The civil society will be represented by partners engaged in the areas of gender equality, anti-discrimination and persons with disabilities through their representative organisations, such as the National Council of Persons with Disabilities in Slovakia, civic associations Myslím-centrum kultúry</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
		Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of Union anti-discrimination law and policy.	No		<p>Nepočujúcich, o. z. [I Think - a Culture Centre for the Deaf], Otvorme dvere, otvorme srdcia [Let's Open our Doors, Open our Hearts], Život s autizmom-LTK [Life with Autism - LTK], the Organisation of Muscular Dystrophy Patients in Slovakia, Slovak Red Cross, the Association to Help People with Mental Disabilities in Slovakia.</p> <p>A list and directory of further cooperating non-governmental organisations in Slovakia dedicated to women's rights and gender equality is available on the department's website at: http://www.gender.gov.sk/?page_id=347</p>
<p>2. Gender</p> <p>The existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union gender equality law and policy in the field of the ESI Funds.</p>	No	<p>Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the involvement of bodies responsible for gender equality throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including the provision of advice on gender equality in ESI Fund-related activities.</p>	No	<p>A list and directory of cooperating non-governmental organisations in Slovakia dedicated to women's rights and gender equality http://www.gender.gov.sk/?page_id=347</p>	<p>In compliance with Act No 575/2001 on the organisation of government activities and the organisation of central government as amended, the responsibility for coordination of the national policy on gender equality lies with the MLSAF SR. Therefore, under the draft PA SR, the MLSAF SR, which formulates and implements national policy on gender equality and equal opportunities and coordinates the national system for gender equality and equal opportunities, should also be responsible for coordination of the horizontal principle gender quality; its activities in this area build on international documents binding on Slovakia and involve cooperation with the Gender Equality Committee of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality</p> <p>The civil society will be represented by partners engaged in the areas of gender equality, anti-discrimination and persons with disabilities through their representative organisations, such as the National Council of Persons with Disabilities in Slovakia, civic associations Myslím-centrum kultúry Nepočujúcich, o. z. [I Think - a Culture Centre for the Deaf], Otvorme dvere, otvorme srdcia [Let's Open our Doors, Open our Hearts], Život s autizmom-LTK [Life with Autism - LTK], the Organisation of Muscular Dystrophy Patients in Slovakia, Slovak Red Cross, the Association to Help People with Mental Disabilities in Slovakia</p> <p>The Gender Equality Committee is a permanent expert body</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
		Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of Union gender equality law and policy as well as on gender mainstreaming.	No	National Gender Equality Strategy for 2009 - 2013 http://www.gender.gov.sk/?page_id=294	of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the "Council") on issues related to gender equality and for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, other international treaties imposing an obligation to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sex and gender and EU legislation in this area. The Committee acts as a consultative body on matters of gender equality in compliance with the Slovak Constitution and comprises representatives of the government, professional institutions and the third sector. The National Gender Equality Strategy for 2009 - 2013 is available on the website of the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities. The new National Gender Equality Strategy for 2014 - 2020 is being drafted on the basis of an evaluation of the existing National Gender Equality Strategy for 2009 - 2013. The new strategy will become relevant in October 2014.
3. Disability The existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) in the field of the ESI Funds in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC.	No	Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the consultation and involvement of bodies in charge of protection of rights of persons with disabilities or representative organisations of persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes.	No	National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for 2014 - 2020. http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=23180	The National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for 2014 - 2020 (Government Resolution No 25/2014 of 15 January 2014) is focused on achieving progress in the protection and exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities recognised by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as the "Convention"). The National Programme serves as a means for Slovakia to implement the Convention, including the institutional framework for the process of implementing and monitoring it. The document's target group are persons with disabilities who participated in the drafting of the document through their representative organisations as stipulated under Article 4(3) of the Convention. The basic objective of the National Programme is to ensure, by means of the defined tasks and measures that progress is made in the protection and exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities recognised by the Convention. Government Resolution No 25/2014 is binding on all

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
					<p>government departments and will also be binding in respect of the new OPs. This document will subsequently be incorporated into the forthcoming OPs and its objectives regarding assistance to persons with disabilities will be applied in the OPs in the form of activities, indicators and method of evaluation. This document is Slovakia's binding and operational instrument for the implementation of the Convention.</p> <p>At present, work is in progress on an amendment to the Construction Act and its implementing decrees, which will lay down the conditions related to accessibility. This act will also redefine compliance with the relevant act and its implementing decrees and the related sanctions. It has been under the process of review and incorporation of comments since summer 2013.</p>
		<p>Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of applicable Union and national disability law and policy, including accessibility and the practical application of the UNCRPD as reflected in Union and national legislation, as appropriate.</p>	<p>No</p>		
		<p>Arrangements to ensure monitoring of the implementation of Article 9 of the UNCRPD in relation to the ESI Funds throughout the preparation and the implementation of the programmes.</p>	<p>No</p>		<p>The implementation of Art. 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is ensured through the <i>National Programme</i>, which dedicates a special chapter to the subject of accessibility and the measures related to it. Measures relating to this article focus above all on making buildings and transportation barrier-free and the accessibility of goods, services and information.</p> <p>The process of monitoring the fulfilment of horizontal principles will be monitored at the project level by means of monitoring reports that will include a separate document containing information about horizontal principles (i.e. description of the activities carried out, their outcomes and assessment of how they contributed to the achievement of the set objectives of horizontal principles), as well as on-site inspections of the implementation of projects and, subsequently, evaluation of their contribution to the objectives of horizontal principles. This separate document containing information on the application of the horizontal</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
					principles will form a basis for the process of assessment of the contribution of the ESI Funds to the objectives identified in the national strategic document. A review of the level of achievement of the objectives set down in the national strategy document, including proposals for corrective measures and recommendations for achieving them, will be submitted annually to the Government. The control mechanism will be ensured by the lead authority for the horizontal principles in cooperation with MAs.
<p>4. Public procurement</p> <p>The existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union public procurement law in the field of the ESI Funds.</p>	No	Arrangements for the effective application of Union public procurement rules through appropriate mechanisms.	No	<p>Act No 25/2006 Coll. on public procurement and on amendments to certain laws, as amended</p> <p>http://www.uvo.gov.sk/legislativa/-/document_library_display/74gW/view/706651?_110_INSTANCE_74gW_redirect=htp%3A%2F%2Fwww.uvo.gov.sk%2Flegislativa%3Fp_id%3D110_INSTANCE_74gW%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p_p_col_count%3D1</p> <p>Act No 95/2013 Coll. (amendment to Act No 25/2006 Coll.)</p> <p>http://www.upsvar.sk/buxus/docs//urady/VK/vo/13-z095.pdf</p>	<p>In the area of legislation, all applicable EU directives on public procurement (PP) have been transposed into the currently valid and applicable Act No 25/2006 Coll. on public procurement and on amendments to certain acts as amended (hereinafter as the "Public Procurement Act". The new public procurement act, which will transpose newly adopted EU directives into the Slovak legal system, will be adopted within a deadline specified under a new directive.</p> <p>Based on the 2013 amendment to the PP Act, several procedures and arrangements have been or will be designed to strengthen the competitive principle and transparency of PP processes; some of the arrangements adopted and applicable concepts introduced by the latest amendments to the act are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the introduction of the central register of references of individual tenderers that are used for demonstrating technical and professional competence of tenderers and candidates. The measure should ensure transparent demonstration of the conditions for participation as regards technical and professional competence of tenderers. <p>On <u>1 March 2014</u>, the PPO established the Register of References and published the model reference in accordance with the Public Procurement Act. The register of references constitutes the PPO's information system for keeping the records of references by contracting authorities/entities concerning the supply of goods, performance of construction works or the provision of services by suppliers that were successful in the public procurement procedure.</p> <p>The register of references is published on the Office's website http://www.uvo.gov.sk/zoznam-podnikatelov/-/RegisterPodnikatelov/sreferenciami</p> <p>The model reference is an electronic form available in the data collection information system.</p> <p>The primary objective of the measure is to keep records</p>

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					<p>concerning the supply of goods, provision of services and construction works by means of an electronic document published in the central register. The secondary objective is to keep track of information contained in the references in order to prohibit from participation in public procurement those tenderers, candidates or suppliers with respect to which :</p> <p>a) a score of 20 or less has been obtained in at least three consecutive references.</p> <p>b) the contract, concession contract or framework agreement has been terminated by the contracting authority/entity due to a material breach of obligations on their part.</p> <p><i>Arrangement adopted.</i></p> <p>- restrictions on the conclusion of amendments increasing contract value The Public Procurement Act prohibits the conclusion of an amendment to the contract awarded through public procurement, where the content of such amendments would a) change the initial subject-matter of contract in a substantial manner, b) amend, in a substantial manner, the conditions which, in the initial contract award procedure, would allow participation of other candidates or tenderers or would allow accepting other than the initially accepted tender, or c) change the price for the performance of the contract or a part thereof or would change the economic balance of the contract to the benefit of the successful tenderer.</p> <p>The PPO Council makes the decision on the proposal to determine whether the circumstances have changed to an extent that justifies the conclusion of an amendment to the contract awarded as a result of public procurement.</p> <p>The arrangement is aimed at preventing a purposeful, non-transparent increase in contract prices following the contract award. <i>Arrangement adopted</i> – introduced by the amendment to the Public Procurement Act effective from 1 July 2013.</p> <p>- the possibility to cancel PP if only 2 tenders or less have been received. Pursuant to the Public Procurement Act, the contracting authority and the contracting entity may also cancel the applied contract award procedure if two or less tenders have been received. Where only one tender has been received and the contracting authority or contracting entity does not cancel the contract award procedure, it shall publish through its website profile the reasons for its decision not to cancel the applied procedure.</p> <p>The arrangement is intended to increase and encourage</p>

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					<p>competition and satisfy the “value for money” principle in public procurement. <i>Arrangement adopted</i> – introduced by the amendment to the Public Procurement Act effective from 1 July 2013.</p> <p>- the obligation of the contracting authority to disclose the relevant information and public procurement documentation in its website profile.</p> <p>Electronic repository is an information system of the Office where the contracting authority/contracting entity is required to create its profile and use it for publishing the documents and information under the Public Procurement Act, structured by the individual public procurement procedures. The profiles created by contracting authorities/contracting entities and the documents published in such profiles are available under the “Vestník/Journal and Zoznamy/Lists” tab on the Office's website. http://www.uvo.gov.sk/profilyvoo</p> <p>The purpose of the arrangement is to increase transparency and awareness of the parties to the public procurement process and the public. In the profiles, the contracting authority publishes the documents and information concerning the public procurement procedure (e.g. notices used in public procurement, tender documents, information concerning the opening of tenders, information on the evaluation of tenders, grounds for not cancelling the applied contract award procedure) as well as documents on compliance with the terms and conditions of awarded contracts (contracts, concession contracts, framework agreements, acceptance and delivery documents, information on amounts actually paid). <i>Arrangement adopted</i> and introduced, the electronic repository for the profiles of the contracting authority/contracting entity has been set up as of 27 February 2014.</p> <p>- establishment of the PPO Council to deal with appeals from tenderers against decisions on objections issued by the PPO</p> <p>The Public Procurement Act authorises the PPO Council to a) decide on appeals against Office's decisions on objections, b) decide on proposals to determine whether circumstances have changed to an extent that justifies the conclusion of an amendment to the contract awarded as a result of public procurement, c) create references upon proposal by suppliers in cases where the contracting authority or contracting entity fails to create such reference within the time limit prescribed by law, d) make decisions within the process of reviewing decisions on objections outside appeal proceedings, e) decide</p>

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					<p>on prosecutor's protest in cases where the decision is made by a head of the central government body under a separate regulation.</p> <p>The arrangement seeks to introduce second-instance decision-making in terms of supervision (objections). The decisions made by the PPO Council are subsequently subject to review by the court, i.e., tenderers are not denied their rights in the public procurement process; quite the opposite, this arrangement actually reinforces their rights. The arrangement also prevents a non-transparent increase in contract prices following the award of the contract by means of amendments. <i>The arrangement has been adopted and implemented by an amendment to the Public Procurement Act effective from 1 July 2013</i></p> <p>- introduction of the possibility of ex-ante control of dossiers prior to publication by the contracting authority Pursuant to the Public Procurement Act, the contracting authority may request the Office to perform ex ante control prior to the publication or commencement of public procurement procedure in the case of above-limit contract financed, even partly, from the EU funds.</p> <p>The arrangement is intended to remove the deficiencies of public procurement procedure prior to its publication and announcement. The arrangement reinforces the prevention against discriminatory/unlawful tendering conditions in public procurement which can be removed already before the publication of public procurement procedure. The objective is to reduce and eliminate deficiencies in the initial stages of the public procurement procedure prior to its announcement. <i>Arrangement adopted</i> and introduced by an amendment to the Public Procurement Act effective from 18 February 2013.</p> <p>- introduction of a register of persons prohibited from participation in public procurement. The arrangement seeks to improve the competitive environment by excluding those entities which use unfair competition practices or do not perform their contractual obligations in a due manner. It has a preventive and repressive impact on entities breaching the principles of fair competition.</p> <p>The register is published on the Office's website: http://www.uvo.gov.sk/zoznam-podnikatelov/-/RegisterPodnikatelov/sozakazom</p> <p>The register of prohibited persons constitutes an information</p>

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					<p>system of the Office which contains information on business entities prohibited from participation in public procurement. It informs the parties to the public procurement proceedings as well as the general public about entities which have been conclusively prohibited from participating in public procurement pursuant to §149(3) of the Public Procurement Act. <i>Arrangement adopted</i> – introduced as of 14 February 2014.</p> <p>- electronic public procurement - End-to-end e-procurement as a means for modernisation of public administration is among the priorities of the SR. In accordance with Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU, the following will have to be adopted and ensured: a) direct and unrestricted access to procurement documents by electronic means; b) submission of tenders by electronic means; c) strengthening the role of e-Certis; d) electronic form (PAS) for tenderers and candidates to provide a proof of compliance with selection criteria; e) electronic catalogues as a form of electronic tender; f) dynamic purchasing system recast and refined into an electronic system.</p> <p>A central purchasing body is required to implement an end-to-end e-procurement system within 36 months of entry into force of said directives, that is, by 18 April 2017. Other bodies are required to implement an end-to-end e-procurement system within 54 months of entry into force of said directives. The PPO currently operates an electronic public procurement system called EVO. The system will be upgraded to meet the new requirements set out in EU directives in order to simplify electronic public procurement procedures and increase their effectiveness.</p> <p>Slovak authorities will prepare a national strategy for the timely and efficient transition to end-to-end e-procurement, as called for in section 5.3 of the Commission Communication “End-to-end e-procurement to modernise public administration” (COM(2013)453 final). The strategy will set out the specific objectives to be achieved, the process to be followed, the milestones, and any necessary indicators. Adequate assistance from the SF will be made for the implementation of this strategy, in particular for the development or improvement of end-to-end e-procurement infrastructure, the strengthening of administrative capacity, training, and awareness-raising. The strategy will ensure that</p>

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					<p>the most efficient and cost-effective approach to the implementation of mandatory e-procurement in Slovakia is undertaken, and that duplication at national/regional level is avoided, as it may result in interoperability problems. The overall objective should be an improved, simpler, and more efficient public procurement system. <i>Arrangement to be taken</i></p> <p>1.2 The general measures to address deficiencies identified during controls will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased support from the PPO for organisations conducting public procurement control by means of a cooperation agreement Under the cooperation agreement, the MAs will be entitled to ask the PPO to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide an ex-ante evaluation of documentation for planned public procurement; b) provide personal consultations on a partial issue in public procurement; c) prepare an opinion on the compliance of partial issues in public procurement with the Act on Public Procurement prior to the signing of a contract; d) perform a public procurement control; e) to cooperate in assessing Commission audit findings concerning public procurement. <p><i>Arrangement to be taken.</i></p> <p>- Introduction of a risk analysis in the conduct of PP control by the MA, which identifies contract risks in terms of the necessary cooperation with the PPO (risk-carrying contracts will be subject to mandatory control by the PPO), namely by performing control in a manner set out under the Act on Public Procurement, while targeting PPO's expert support in risk-carrying public procurements will ensure an increased supervision of contracts with the potentially highest error rate. At the same time, it will eliminate a disproportionate workload of the PPO with respect to requests for control of public procurements that do not represent an increased risk in terms of their complexity or error rate and will help avoid disproportionate prolongation of controls (risky contracts will be subject to mandatory control by the PPO). The analysis itself will include a set of data to be assessed (e.g. estimated contract value, procurement procedure, existence of review procedures, scope of participation criteria, etc.); each data item will have a certain value representing the level of risk</p>

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					<p>(e.g. an open procedure will be given a zero risk value, while a negotiated procedure will have a 15-point risk value). A summary value of all these partial items will represent a total risk value of a contract; based on this total value compared against an evaluation key, an MA will be entitled, not entitled or required to request the PPO to perform control over the public procurement in question. <i>Arrangement to be taken</i></p> <p>- Preparation of model documents used in the public procurement process (e.g. tender documents, drafts of notifications used in PP processes) and their publication and making available to the beneficiaries. The arrangement is intended to reduce error rates in public procurement by contracting authorities or contracting entities and to enhance their transparency. As a follow-up to a new Act on Public Procurement to be adopted, model tender documents and notices to be used in public procurement will be prepared. <i>Arrangement to be taken.</i></p> <p>- At the level of the management system, checklists for MA control will be prepared, taking into consideration specific aspects of different types of public procurement procedures (open procedures, restricted procedure, negotiated procedure, etc.) and most frequent errors in PP processes identified in the previous period of 2007 - 2013. <i>Arrangement to be taken</i></p> <p>- Preparation of uniform rules and requirements for PP and requirements for PP documentation. With respect to the application of the Act on Public Procurement, the PPO will provide for a transparent, consistent and foreseeable procurement framework through uniform methodological interpretations and uniform decision-making within control and review procedures. Under binding procedures defined in methodology and managing documents at the level of management system, to be followed by the MAs in the performance of controls as well as by beneficiaries in conducting public procurement and subsequent submission of documentation, procedures and preparation of uniform rules will be aligned (e.g., uniform control outputs, uniform requirements for beneficiaries concerning the scope of required documentation, uniform requirements on the level of publication of contract with a</p>

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					<p>very low value, etc.). <i>Arrangement to be taken.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of price maps, benchmarks and limits to assess cost-effectiveness. At the level of the management system, an obligation will be introduced for MAs to consider a maximum amount of a non-repayable contribution sought, taking into account the system of price maps, benchmarks and limits for the most frequent and/or most relevant types of expenditure. The control of public procurement and/or of its outcome will subsequently verify whether these limits were observed. At the same time, a methodology procedure will be defined to set up these indicators in order to ensure they are set in a uniform and transparent manner. Arrangement to be taken. - Introduction of compulsory ex ante control of documentation by the MAs (review of drafts of tender documents and tender notices prior to publication) and control of public procurement prior to the signing of a contract with a successful tenderer. This type of control is designed to prevent and eliminate errors and deficiencies in draft documents for public procurement, thus reducing a risk of violation of the Act on Public Procurement. Arrangement to be taken - Application of the principles of “green” and social public procurement or other aspects of PP (such as support for innovation, support for SMEs, etc.) by means of legislative instruments established through the EU and Slovak legislation as part of suitable types of support. Through its provisions, the Public Procurement Act supports environmental and social aspects. The Act on Public Procurement allows to determine special conditions for the performance of contracts in particular as regards social and environmental aspects and, in relation to the procurement of motor vehicles, it allows to specify a requirement to take into account energy-related and environmental impacts of their operation during their lifespan; among the criteria for the economically most advantageous tender, it is also possible to determine the environmental aspects of the subject-matter of the contract. The legislation makes it possible to restrict the award of contracts to sheltered workshops and sheltered employment. Arrangement adopted – governed by the Public Procurement Act in the long term.

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					<p>- Introduction of cooperation with the Antimonopoly Office (AMO) (enhancing competition protection by introducing cooperation of this entity with MA under the cooperation agreement). If risk factors, "red flags", are identified, the MAs will be required to ask the AMO for cooperation in the form of consultations, requests for opinion or submission of a complaint. Another area of cooperation covers the preparation of a general methodology for the PP control system and training activities for employees performing controls. The Anti-monopoly Office is responsible for competition protection in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty. <i>Arrangement to be taken.</i></p> <p>Arrangements to address the main types of specific deficiencies identified by the EC are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amendments to contracts: the amendment to the PP Act prohibited the conclusion of amendments to contracts if these change substantially the subject-matter of the contract or the terms of the original tender, or which increase the contract value. Arrangement adopted. - Conflicts of interests: this issue will be addressed at the legislative and systemic levels. At the legislative level, Slovakia will fully transpose the provisions on the conflict of interests based on the new EU public procurement directive. At the level of the PP management and control system, procedures for administrative control by the MA will be defined to identify conflicts of interest and further assess and address them. Arrangement to be taken. - Insufficient competition – only one tender submitted: The deficiency was addressed at the legislative and system level. At the legislative level, an amendment to the Act on Public Procurement enabled the contracting authority to cancel the award procedure in cases where only one or two tenders have been received. At the systemic level, this issue was addressed by modifying the management system, where the MA is required to request that the PPO oversee the whole PP process if it identifies PP in which only one tender has been received. At the same time, competition protection will be strengthened through cooperation of controlling bodies with the Antimonopoly Office.

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting the deadline for requesting tender documents: The electronic forms – notices of the publication of public procurement procedure – have been modified so that the deadline for requesting the tender documents is consistent with the deadline for the submission of tenders. The above arrangement fully removed the possibility to shorten the deadline for requesting tender documents. An amendment to the Act on Public Procurement introduced an obligation to publish tender documents in the contracting authority's profile. At the same time, all beneficiaries have been instructed by the MA not to restrict candidates' access to tender documents by setting deadlines for requesting tender documents. Arrangement adopted. - Discriminatory tendering conditions: Elimination and/or identification of discriminatory tendering conditions are covered by several of the aforementioned arrangements, such as cooperation with the PPO, ex-ante evaluation of tender notices and tender documents prior to publication, as well as arrangements referred to in the part concerning training of employees and use of technical assistance to introduce and apply EU public procurement rules (e.g. employee training, beneficiary training, publication and information about identified deficiencies). <i>Arrangement to be taken</i>
		Arrangements which ensure transparent contract award procedures.	No		The area of contract awarding not subject to the relevant EU directives on PP (below-threshold contracts) is covered by the PP Act itself in Slovak legislation. This provides for the obligation to proceed according to this Act in the procurement of works, goods and services for contracting authorities, contracting entities as well as individuals who are beneficiaries of grants. The procedures for these contracts are based on the basic principles of public procurement referred to in the relevant EU directives, thus ensuring transparent public procurement procedures even for contracts not falling under EU directives on public procurement. The public procurement procedures for this type of contracts will be covered by the same measures as specified, under criterion 1. <i>Arrangement adopted partially</i>
		Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds.	No		Providing training by the CCA relating to procedures of administrative control of public procurement in the context of the management system, presentation of the most common deficiencies identified in public procurement controls. The CCA already provides training for MA/IBMA relating to procedures of administrative control of public

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				<p>In accordance with Government Resolution No 21/2013, the Public Procurement Office prepares in cooperation with each managing authority a report on the results of public procurement controls and audits on a semi-annual basis which is published at:</p> <p>http://www.rokovania.sk/Rokovanie.aspx/BodRokovaniaDetail?idMaterial=21941</p> <p>(e.g. http://www.opzp.sk/dokumenty/projekto-ve-dokumenty/rozhodnutia-uvo-sr-v-procesoch-vo-v-ramci-projektov-op-zp-v-programovom-obdobi-2007-2013/) or (http://www.ropka.sk/sk/verejne-obstaravania/)</p> <p>http://www.uvo.gov.sk/za-obdobie-od-1.1.2013-do-30.6.2013</p>	<p>procurement in the context of the management system, presentation of the most common deficiencies identified in public procurement controls, and interpretation of CCA methodology concerning public procurement. 179 employees received this training in 2013. In 2014, the CCA also plans to organise and provide training focused on these issues. <i>Arrangement adopted</i></p> <p>Introduction of a uniform employee training system under the ESI Funds control and management system. The MA will be required to provide regular training and seminars for all staff involved in the implementation of the funds, while making participation in this training compulsory for this staff. The training system will be set up with the focus on ensuring targeted training for a particular group of employees (e.g. PP controllers). Said training will involve seminars provided the CCA, PPO, as well as those organised by the Antimonopoly Office on competition protection. <i>Arrangement to be taken.</i></p> <p>These forms of dissemination of information about deficiencies identified by PP controls will also be used in the 2014 - 2020 programming period, with an emphasis put on their enhanced information value.</p> <p>A proposal has also been made to establish a Coordinating Committee for Cooperation In Public Procurement. This committee of experts, primarily from the CCA, PPO, CA, AA, MAs, will ensure a joint approach to the application of public procurement rules (cooperating in issuing methodology interpretations, instructions and guidelines adjusted to the needs of EU funds implementation). A clear advantage of constituting this body will be the instant identification of any serious misconduct (system-level irregularities) in MA/IBMA procedures in PP control and effective opportunities to take appropriate corrective measures to eliminate them. A uniform approach followed by all bodies and formulation of a joint statement will indirectly increase pressure for timely identification of errors in public procurement by bodies performing public procurement (this joint approach will ensure a faster and more effective response to identified errors). <i>Arrangement to be taken</i></p>
		Arrangements to ensure administrative capacity for		Public Procurement Office	The PPO provides methodical guidance to all parties involved

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					frequent deficiencies identified by PP controls while presenting examples of best practice. Training should primarily be delivered by individual MAs so that its content and focus respond to the specific aspects of a given programme (e.g., customary subject matters of procurement). <i>Arrangement to be taken</i>
<p>5. State aid</p> <p>The existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union State aid rules in the field of the ESI Funds.</p>	<p>Partially</p>	<p>Arrangements for the effective application of Union State aid rules.</p>			<p>The obligation to comply with aid cumulation rules (if aid is granted for the same eligible costs from different public sources or de minimis aid) and compliance with the "Deggendorf" obligation were implemented in all state and de minimis aid schemes in the 2007 – 2013 programming period. Considering that the structure of the schemes remains unchanged, these will also be included in the aid schemes for the 2014 – 2020 programming period. The introduction of measures to ensure compliance with aid cumulation rules and the "Deggendorf" obligation will be overseen by the state aid coordinator by means of commenting on state aid schemes and de minimis aid schemes. The conditions for granting aid under the individual schemes will include the submission of a solemn declaration by the beneficiary relating to aid cumulation in respect of the same eligible expenditures and a solemn declaration that the beneficiary is not subject to recovery orders. The control of aid cumulation, as well as the compliance with the "Deggendorf" obligation will further be reinforced through the establishment of a central IT register for State aid having the scope and structure to be defined by a new GBER, due to come into force on 1 July 2014, and relevant EC guidelines.</p> <p>At its session on 9 April 2014, the Slovak Government approved Resolution No 156 concerning the document "Method for application of ex ante conditionalities in the preparation of an implementing mechanism for EU cohesion policy beyond 2013 in the SR" by which it strengthened the position of the MF SR as state aid coordinator (Task B.5). The relevant ministers (for ministries that act as managing authorities) were tasked to apply, in connection with the use of financial resources from the ESI Funds in the SR for the 2014 – 2020 programming period, the statements and positions of the MF SR as state aid coordinator for the pre application of state aid rules.</p> <p>Changes in aid schemes may be made only in the form of</p>

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	Partially		No		<p>written amendments. The state aid coordinator comments on these amendments to state aid schemes and de minimis aid schemes and verifies that the changes made in the schemes conform to EU state aid rules. The mechanism for consultations between the state aid coordinator and managing authorities is in place. Managing authorities (as well as other aid grantors) may consult the state aid coordinator on aid measures either through working meetings or the relevant written communication.</p> <p>Repayable assistance through financial instruments is provided under state aid schemes or de minimis aid schemes. Such schemes are also commented upon by the state aid coordinator and EU state aid rules must be adhered to at the level of the fund manager, financial intermediaries, co-investors, and final recipients.</p> <p>The mechanism for recovery of unlawful state aid was reformed in the Slovak Republic by Act No 102/2011 Coll. (amendment to Act on State Aid) which entered into force on 1 June 2011. This act laid down that a EC decision on unlawful state aid is a direct enforceable order under which unlawful state aid will be recovered in an enforcement procedure. Based on the EC decision on unlawful state aid and at the initiative of the state aid coordinator, the aid grantor is required to file a petition to execute the order in accordance with the Enforcement Code, within 30 days of receipt of the initiative. EC decisions on unlawful state aid are directly enforceable against the beneficiary on the date of receipt of such a decision by the SR.</p> <p>Measures are also in place to ensure the performance of controls of compliance with the General Block Exemption Regulation and with the approved schemes. State aid grantors can verify the aid eligibility and compatibility conditions (for example, the incentive effect, limitation of aid to maximum aid intensity, the conditions of eligibility of schemes, SME status as beneficiaries) under § 19 of the State Aid Act.</p> <p>Records of de minimis aid are kept by the Ministry of Finance through the information system of the Slovak Aid Monitoring Authority – IS SAMA. Access to the IS SAMA is currently provided only to the state aid coordinator (MF SR) that inputs data on the provision/receipt of de minimis aid on the basis of written notifications from the grantors/beneficiaries of de</p>

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					<p>de minimis aid. IS SAMA in its present form is used to ensure that newly provided aid does not exceed the de minimis aid ceiling. If de minimis aid ceiling is exceeded, the MF SR notifies the grantor to that effect. Upon receipt of updated data from de minimis aid grantor, the data in IS SAMA are adjusted. Once the IS SAMA is completed, a portal design of this information system will be implemented. The website and the possibility to browse data on aid granted will be publicly accessible. When completed, the information system will also contain a state aid register in which summary information about each measure will be entered.</p> <p>A central IT register for State aid will be set up, having the scope and structure to be defined by a new GBER, due to come into force on 1 July 2014, as well as by the relevant EC guidelines.</p>
		<p>Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds.</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>The relevant training courses for staff on the application of EU state aid rules at all relevant levels (i.e. the relevant departments) have either already taken place or have been scheduled.</p> <p>A system of dissemination and exchange of information is in place for all staff applying state aid rules linked to the implementation and control of ESI funds (MAs, intermediate bodies, CAs, AAs and beneficiaries, and in case of financial instruments also the fund of funds, and the bodies implementing the financial instruments (for example: via websites, direct mail, etc.).</p> <p>In February 2013, CCA organized training aimed at the topic „Application of state aid rules in EU funds, system of managing of Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund for programming period 2007 - 2013 and Act No 528/2008 Coll. on Aid and Support provided from EU funds in practice“ for all managing authorities as well as for intermediate bodies under managing authorities. Lectures on state aid rules are organised by the deputy coordinator. On its web site, the coordinator publishes the relevant legislation of the European Union in the field of state aid, reference rates, discount and interest rates for state aid recovery, as well as guidelines of the EC. All documents are publicly accessible to the staff</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
		<p>Arrangements to ensure administrative capacity for implementation and application of Union State aid rules.</p>	No		<p>responsible for the application of state aid rules in the implementation and management of ESI Funds.</p> <p>At present, the MF SR is drafting a training strategy on new State aid rules adopted by the EC in connection with modernisation of State aid system, which will enter into force on 1 July 2014. The strategy will involve training which should be broken down into six separate training blocks:</p> <p>Training Block I (the concept of aid, procedural aspects, block exemptions, de minimis aid, State aid for venture capital, transport and transport infrastructure) – following an agreement with the EC, the training will take place on 27 May 2014, involving the trainers from the EC</p> <p>Training Block II (new GBER, transparency, ex post evaluation of State aid)</p> <p>Training Block III (State aid for environmental protection and energy-related issues, State aid for research, development and innovation)</p> <p>Training Block IV (calculation of the aid element for various forms of aid, services in general economic interest)</p> <p>Training Block V (training for local government representatives)</p> <p>Training Block VI (based on the requirements and current needs of aid grantors)</p> <p>The participation of trainers from the EC at the relevant training courses, including the timetable of training courses, will be discussed at a meeting with DG Competition representatives to be held in Bratislava on 26 May 2014.</p> <p>MAs were requested by state aid coordinator to submit results of analyses of assessment of sufficiency of administrative capacities in the field of state aid to the MF SR by the end of September 2013. The priorities contained in the programs for the 2014 – 2020 programming period served as the basis for the preparation of said analyses. Managing</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
					<p>authorities were familiarised with the structure of the analyses in advance by the MF SR. The analyses were to focus, in particular, on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the current number of employees, i.e., headcount and names of the employees of the Mas currently responsible for the implementation of EU state aid rules (employees that have these tasks also in their job descriptions) including information about their positions, - the potential for increasing the current number of staff, i.e., a proposal relating to the possible increase in the number of staff, - justification of the increase in the number of staff in relation to the effective application of state aid under EU funds. <p>Almost all authorities expressed the need to increase their number of staff by at least one employee. The need for a total of 14 additional employees was identified.</p> <p>By letter of 12 May 2014, the MF SR requested to change the OP Technical Assistance in a way that the funds under this OP could be used, if necessary, to reinforce the administrative capacity of the MF SR as state aid coordinator. The Government Office of the SR as the MA for the OP Technical Assistance accepted the request and state aid will be incorporated in the Operational Programme in the next stage of its preparation (submitted to the Government of the SR for discussion on 14 May 2014).</p> <p>The quantification of the need to reinforce the administrative capacity of the state aid coordinator with respect to the implementation of the ex-ante conditionality "State aid" as well as the establishment of methodological centres required by the EC will be discussed with DG Competition representatives at a meeting to be held in Bratislava on 26 May 2014.</p>
6. Environmental legislation relating to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)		Arrangements for the effective application of Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (EIA) and of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (SEA).		Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment and on amendment of certain laws as amended The act is available at www.jaspi.justice.gov.sk	An infringement procedure was initiated through a letter dated 21.03.2013 on the matter of the transposition deficit in relation to Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (EIA Directive). The letter identifies further legislation directly affected by the

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
<p>The existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union environmental legislation related to EIA and SEA.</p>	<p>Partially</p>		<p>No</p>		<p>need for full and proper transposition of the EIA Directive, including legislation transposition measures for which had not been notified (laws governing the rights and obligations of involved bodies, proposers and the public, laws governing authorisation procedures). A list of laws was provided in a formal communication from the Commission addressed to the MFEA SR.</p> <p>Based on the issues identified, coordination with other authorities is vital with a view to the links between the impact assessment process and the process of project authorisation and public access to justice. These issues are covered by legislation falling under the responsibility of other ministries, in particular the MTCRD SR (the Building Code, Roads Act), the MI SR (Administrative Procedure Code), and the MJ SR (Civil Procedure Code).</p> <p>On 12 July 2013, SR forwarded its final response to the Commission's formal communication in which it undertakes to make all the appropriate legislative changes and provide methodological guidance in order to remove the transposition deficit identified no later than at the time it will be required to transpose the forthcoming amendment to the EIA Directive introducing major changes to the current EIA Directive, i.e. in two and a half years.</p> <p>The formulation of the relevant legislative changes at the ministerial level took place in the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on 5 December 2013, technical consultations on the first draft of the paragraphed wording with representatives of DG Environment, - from 17 January 2014 to 06 February 2014, inter-ministerial review procedure on the draft act amending Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment and on amendment of certain laws, as amended, and amending certain laws <p>Published on the portal of laws: https://lt.justice.gov.sk/Material/MaterialHome.aspx?instEID=-1&matEID=6958&langEID=1</p> <p>Inter-ministerial review procedure was completed on 6 February 2014.</p> <p>On 31 March 2014, the second round of review procedures</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
					<p>concerning the Act on environmental impact assessment. Based on the results of these procedures, alternative versions of the draft Act on Environmental Impact Assessment were prepared and submitted to the Commission for opinion.</p> <p>As regards arrangements concerning the direct application of the EIA Directive, a coordination meeting attended by representatives of the CCA, MEn SR and MTCRD SR was held on 7 May 2014. In formulating the proposal for measures, the experience of the MTCRD SR with respect to re-assessment and re-permitting of projects due to changes in projects based on notice of the change in proposed activity pursuant to Act No 24/2006 Coll. as well as notice on the change in structure pursuant to the Building Act (Act No 50/1976 Coll. as amended) has been taken into account. The draft of the specific measure is specified in the Action Plan and its application must be coordinated by the CCA horizontally, across all relevant OPs.</p>
		<p>Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the EIA and SEA Directives.</p>		<p>The Strategy for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of EIA and SEA Directives, including a proposal for measures to implement the strategy, was approved at the 7th MEn SR Council meeting held on 07 March 2013.</p>	<p>The Strategy is aimed at providing training for staff participating in EIA and SEA processes.</p> <p>Training for staff participating in EIA and SEA processes concerns the staff of the MEn SR, ME SR, MTCRD SR, MARD SR, MH SR, MESRS SR, MI SR, MD SR, and the Nuclear Regulatory Authority, as well as municipalities and the general professional public. The training itself will be provided mostly through lectures, workshops, seminars and conferences. In view of the fact that an infringement procedure has been initiated on the matter of the transposition deficit in relation to Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, the training strategy will need to be updated to reflect the need for methodological guidance in the “transitional” period (before the approval and entry into force of the relevant legislative changes) and the relevant legislative changes.</p> <p>Of the activities scheduled under the Strategy, the activities below have been implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on 24 October 2013, a workshop in collaboration with the MTCRD SR focusing on changes in projects, - regular training for staff of district offices focusing on the performance of state administration in environmental impact

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
			No	http://www.sazp.sk/public/index/go.php?id=81&prm3=686	<p>assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on 29 October 2013, in the Prešov and Košice regions, - on 06 November 2013, in the Banská Bystrica, Žilina and Trenčín regions, - on 13 November 2013, in the Nitra, Trnava and Bratislava regions, - on 03 December 2013, the Final Conference of the e-MAT project “Development of management tools in environmental impact assessment in the border regions between Austria and Slovakia”, - on 10-11 December 2013, training for natural and legal persons in relation to obtaining professional competence in the area of environmental impact assessment, - on 17 December 2013, verification of knowledge of natural and legal persons in order to obtain professional competence in the area of environmental impact assessment. <p>The Environmental Assessment Department already provides methodological guidance for the ongoing assessment processes both at the level of the ministry and at the level of other relevant authorities.</p>
		Arrangements to ensure sufficient administrative capacity.	Yes	Analysis of administrative capacity in the area of environmental impact assessment (implementation of EIA and SEA Directives), including a proposal for measures to ensure that the capacity is sufficient, was approved at the 3rd MEN SR Council meeting held on 24 January 2013.	<p>The conclusions of the Analysis point to the fact that the current level of administrative capacity in environmental impact assessment is sufficient.</p> <p>At present, there is no need to revise the relevant analysis or update it on the basis of comments raised in relation to the proposal of legislative changes in Act No 24/2006 Coll.</p> <p>Under the applicable legislation, as well as under the prepared amendment to Act No 24/2006 Coll., the administrative capacities have been arranged (and no new administrative capacities are necessary). In connection with the amendment to the Act on Environmental Impact Assessment which is pending, the issue of administrative capacities has been addressed under the impact clause which specifies the impacts on the general government budget and constitutes part of the draft act. The need to increase the</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment of ex ante conditionality: Yes/No/Partially	Criteria for fulfilment	Fulfilment of criteria: Yes/No	References	Explanation (where appropriate)
					<p>number of employees in the area of environmental impact assessment has not been identified for the time being, i.e., the existing administrative capacity can be considered sufficient in terms of quantity. In terms of quality, however, it will be necessary to focus on improving the quality of administrative capacities (in particular through training, workshops, etc.); as far as administrative capacities in other areas are concerned, this issue will be addressed by the amendment to the Act on Environmental Impact Assessment (the Building Act, the Nuclear Act and the Mining Act).</p>

2. Rural development

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment Yes/No/Partially	Criterion	Fulfilment of criterion Yes/No	Reference (if fulfilled) <i>For information</i>	Explanation (where needed)
3.1. Risk prevention and risk management: the existence of national or regional risk assessments for disaster management taking into account climate change adaptation.	Sea assessment for EAC 5.1. Risk prevention and risk management: the existence of national or regional risk assessments for disaster management taking into account climate change adaptation.				
4.1 Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC): standards for good agricultural and environmental condition of land referred to in Chapter I of Title VI of Regulation (EU) 1306/2013 are established at national level	Yes	GAEC standards are defined in national law and specified in the programmes.	Yes	The ex-ante conditionality has been fulfilled based on the applicable legislative framework in 2014. In accordance with the applicable legislation, the year 2014 is a transitional year under the CAP reform.	SR will update the relevant provisions by 2015 when the new requirements under the CAP reform are due to enter into force.
4.2 Minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products: minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products referred to in Article 28 of Chapter I of Title III of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 are defined at national level	Yes	Minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products referred to in Article 28 of Chapter I of Title III of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 are specified in the programme.	Yes	<p>Minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products are contained in the criteria for measures and specified in an annex to the programme.</p> <p>Minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products are laid down in national legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fertilisers (use of fertilisers) are governed by § 10 of Act No 136/2000 Coll. on fertilisers 	Ex ante conditionality fulfilled. The national legislation lays down the minimum requirements for fertilisers and plant protection products. The requirements will be specified in the programme.

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment Yes/No/Partially	Criterion	Fulfilment of criterion Yes/No	Reference (if fulfilled) <i>For information</i>	Explanation (where needed)
				- Plant protection is governed by § 8, § 30 and § 32 of Act No 405/2011 Coll. on phyto-sanitary care as amended.	
4.3 Other relevant national standards: relevant mandatory national standards are defined for the purpose of Article 28 of Chapter I of Title III of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013.	Yes	Relevant mandatory national standards are specified in the programme.	Yes	Relevant mandatory national standards defined for the purpose of Article 28 of Chapter I of Title III will be specified in among relevant measures under the programme.	Ex ante conditionality fulfilled. The relevant national regulations will be specified in the programme.
5.1 Energy efficiency: Actions have been carried out to promote cost-effective improvements of energy end use efficiency and cost-effective investment in Energy efficiency when constructing or renovating buildings.	See assessment of EAC 4.1. Actions have been carried out to promote cost-effective improvements of energy end use efficiency and cost-effective investment in energy efficiency when constructing or renovating buildings.				
5.2 Water sector: The existence of a) a water pricing policy which provides adequate incentives for users to use water resources efficiently	No	In sectors supported by the EAFRD, a Member State has ensured a contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs	No	Water Act: § 78a of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters and on amendments to Act of the Slovak National Council No 372/1990 Coll. on minor offences as amended (Water Act) as amended	Relates to ex ante conditionality 6.1 pursuant to Regulation 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The principle for refunding the costs of all water management services is fulfilled, except for the

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment Yes/No/Partially	Criterion	Fulfilment of criterion Yes/No	Reference (if fulfilled) <i>For information</i>	Explanation (where needed)
and b) an adequate contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services at a rate determined in the approved river basin management plan for investment supported by the programmes.		of water services by sector consistent with Article 9 paragraph 1 first indent of the Water Framework Directive having regard, where appropriate, to the social, environmental and economic effects of the recovery as well as the geographic and climatic conditions of the region or regions affected.		<p>http://jaspi.justice.gov.sk</p> <p>Government Resolution No 755/2004 Coll. laying down the amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use, as amended by Government Regulation No 367/2008 Coll. amending Government Regulation No 755/2004 Coll. laying down the amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use</p> <p>http://jaspi.justice.gov.sk</p> <p>Pricing policy for water management sector approved by Government Resolution No 17 of 12 January 2011 https://lt.justice.gov.sk/Attachment/vlastn%C3%BD%20materi%C3%A1l_doc.pdf?instEID=-1&attEID=29620&docEID=144483&matEID=3384&langEID=1&tStamp=20101129113946687</p> <p>Regulatory policy for regulatory period 2012–2016 www.urso.gov.sk/doc/urad/RegulacnaPolitika_2012-2016.pdf</p>	<p>adequate contribution for the service related to the use of water for irrigation which is currently addressed by a draft amendment to the Water Act; subsequently, an amendment to Government Resolution No 755/2004 Coll. laying down the amount of non-regulated payments, amount of fees and details related to charges for the use of waters.</p> <p>The draft amendment to the Water Act must be subject to the whole law-making procedure (must again be discussed by the Government and, afterwards, by parliamentary committees and the National Council of the SR as such).</p> <p>The amendment to the Act on Waters has a positive impact on general protection of waters with a focus on groundwater in protected water management zones and aims to increase the protection of aquatic resources in the territory of the SR while determining the procedures for the use of water due to its strategic importance for the country and the public interest.</p> <p>In the SR, the regulation of prices is the responsibility of the Regulatory Office for Network Industries (RONI).</p> <p>Prices in the water sector are currently regulated in accordance with the applicable legislation (Act No 250/2012 Coll. on regulation in network industries and Decree No 195/2013 Coll.). The prices reflect the eligible costs and reasonable profit, new investments and their utilisation for the production and supply of drinking water by public water supply system and</p>

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment Yes/No/Partially	Criterion	Fulfilment of criterion Yes/No	Reference (if fulfilled) <i>For information</i>	Explanation (where needed)
				<p>Slovak Water Plan, Chapter 7, http://www.vuvh.sk/rsv2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=87&lang=sk</p> <p>Analysis of the progress made in implementing the Programme of measures contained in the Slovak Water Plan, chapter 5 „Pricing policy for water management services“</p> <p>http://www.vuvh.sk/rsv2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=58&lang=sk</p>	<p>disposal and treatment of waste water through the public sewerage system, including social viability as one of the priorities of the regulation itself.</p> <p>One of the objectives of the approved Water Sector Regulatory Policy for 2012 - 2016 is to establish a legislative environment conducive to the application of a two-component price (fixed and variable component) on the basis of a thorough and objective analysis examining the rationale of its application while considering the social-economic impacts which currently represent the focus of RONI's attention.</p> <p>In Slovakia, all eligible costs related to any particular water service (including costs related to the repair, maintenance and replacement of assets) are included in the prices. The cross-subsidies in the prices for water supply and sewerage service through the public water system or, respectively, public sewerage system, have been discontinued in 2007 (i.e. cross-subsidies between potable and waste water, or between households and commercial customers).</p> <p>As regards point and diffuse sources of pollution, the point sources are currently addressed by means of fees for the discharge of purified waste water. The possibilities to cover the costs of diffuse sources of pollution from the agricultural sector are currently being analysed and will be coordinated with the approaches of other Member States.</p>
5.3 Renewable energy: Actions have been carried out to promote the	Sea assessment of EAC 4.3. Actions have been carried out to promote the production and distribution of renewable energy sources.				

Ex ante conditionality	Fulfilment Yes/No/Partially	Criterion	Fulfilment of criterion Yes/No	Reference (if fulfilled) <i>For information</i>	Explanation (where needed)
production and distribution of renewable energy sources.					
6. Next Generation Network (NGN) Infrastructure: The existence of national or regional NGA Plans which take account of regional actions in order to reach the Union high-speed Internet access targets, focusing on areas where the market fails to provide an open infrastructure at an affordable cost and quality in line with the Union competition and state aid rules and to provide accessible services to vulnerable groups.		Sea assessment of EAC 2.2. Next Generation Network (NGN) Infrastructure: The existence of national or regional NGN Plans which take account of regional actions in order to reach the Union high-speed Internet access targets, focusing on areas where the market fails to provide an open infrastructure at an affordable cost and of a quality in line with the Union competition and State aid rules, and to provide accessible services to vulnerable groups.			

Action plans for the fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
Thematic ex ante conditionalities				
<p>1.1. Research and innovation: The existence of a national or regional smart specialisation strategy in line with the National Reform Program, to leverage private research and innovation expenditure, which complies with the features of well-performing national or regional R&I systems.</p>	<p>- A national or regional smart specialisation strategy is in place that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contains a monitoring mechanism. <p>A framework outlining available budgetary resources for research and innovation has been adopted.</p>	<p>Elaborating RIS3's implementing Action Plan 2014 - 2016.</p> <p>It will contain the most relevant thematic fields, frameworks and actions that are essential to a successful implementation of RIS3 and take into account the requirements for fulfilment the ex-ante conditionalities, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - completion of financial frameworks with indicative allocations by individual measures, sources of funding and types of financial instruments, - completion of the monitoring system to verify compliance with RIS 3 objectives and with measurable indicators (the monitoring system is being prepared and will be designed to provide early identification of the need to make necessary adjustments, if any, to objectives and actions set under RIS3 so that they could better reflect the current needs and developments), completion of the links between the proposed specialisation areas. Within the monitoring system, this will primarily concern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - precise determination of a baseline value, target value, definition and source of date for each indicator, - control of output indicators in RIS3, - linking output and result indicators, - completion of the monitoring process from RIS3 - collection of primary data for assessment and monitoring of indicators, responsibility, periodicity, etc. The mechanism expected to be a part of the monitoring setup must also address the way and setup of the evaluation of monitored data and modifications of RIS3 SK based on interim findings on the fulfilment of individual RIS3 	<p>30 November 2014</p>	<p>MESRS SR ME SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		objectives.		
1.2 Research and Innovation infrastructure. The existence of a multi-annual plan for budgeting and prioritisation of investments.	An indicative multi-annual plan for budgeting and prioritisation of investments linked to Union priorities, and, where appropriate, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) has been adopted.	<p>Elaborating RIS3's implementing Action Plan 2014 - 2016.</p> <p>Investment prioritisation will also be related to an SK roadmap on research infrastructure which will identify the existing national facilities of infrastructure suitable for participation in the ESFRI, including a critical analysis (which R&D centres, centres of competence and centres of excellence are sustainable in the long term and can become part of ESFRI projects), as well as the potential for further development in connection with the fields of specialisation defined in RIS3. The possibility of creating links between the RIS3 in the priority industry and participation in ESFRI initiatives will be an important aspect. The roadmap will create conditions for professional management of research infrastructure in order to generate a high added value, including supporting services for the business sector. Building the infrastructure using the roadmap will prevent duplicate investments in similar infrastructure located in a nearby region or locality.</p>	30 November 2014	MESRS SR ME SR
3.1. Specific actions have been carried out to underpin the promotion of entrepreneurship taking into account the Small Business Act (SBA).	- a mechanism is in place to monitor the implementation of the measures of the SBA which have been put in place and assess the impact on SMEs.	<p>3) Act on Support of SMEs</p> <p>The need to adopted legislation on SME support arose from an analysis of SME conditions and the Strategy for SMEs development in Slovakia.</p> <p>This is the first ever piece of Slovak legislation focused particularly on the support for SMEs. Its aim is to create a systematic framework to support SMEs. One of its purposes is to introduce a mechanism to monitor the implementation of "Small Business Act" measures and to assess their impacts of small and medium sized enterprises. The new</p>		

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>act will govern the testing of regulatory impacts on SMEs (SME test) and regular monitoring of the implementation of SBA measures. Submission of the draft Act for an inter-ministerial review procedure</p> <p>Submission of the draft Act to the Government of the SR for discussion</p> <p>Adoption of the Act by the National Council of the SR</p> <p>Putting the mechanism to monitor the implementation of SBA measures and assess the impact on SMEs into operation.</p>	<p>31 July 2014</p> <p>30 August 2014</p> <p>31 October 2014</p> <p>1 January 2015</p>	<p>ME SR</p> <p>NADSME</p>
		<p>4) Methodology for the application of the SME test</p> <p>Preparation of the methodology for the application of the SME test is related to the introduction of the mechanism to assess the impact of regulations of SMEs as defined in the Act on Support of SMEs and in the Strategy for SME development. The SME test is a process of comprehensive assessment of the impacts of both the planned and already applicable laws and regulations on SMEs. The goal of the methodology for the application of SME test is to integrate SME test rules and procedures into a single methodology for the assessment of selected impacts, thus ensuring their application in the legislative</p>	<p>30 June 2014</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>practice.</p> <p>Submission of the draft methodology for an inter-ministerial review procedure</p> <p>Submission of the methodology to the Government of the SR for discussion</p> <p>Putting the methodology for the application of the SME test into operation</p>	<p>31 August 2014</p> <p>1 January 2015</p>	
5.1. Risk prevention and risk management: the existence of national or regional risk assessments for disaster management taking into account climate change adaptation.	<p>National or regional risk assessments will be introduced, containing the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a description of the process, methodology, methods, and non-sensitive data used for risk assessment as well as of the risk-based criteria for the prioritisation of investment 	<p>In accordance with Article 6 of Decision 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, Slovakia will prepare a risk assessment at national level and make available to the Commission a summary of relevant elements thereof by 22 December 2015 and every three years thereafter based on the existing and implemented risk assessment procedures and methods.</p>	22 December 2015	MI SR

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
<p>6.1. Water sector The existence of a) a water pricing policy which provides adequate incentives for users to use water resources efficiently and b) an adequate contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services at a rate determined in the approved river basin management plan for investment supported by the programmes.</p>	<p>In sectors supported by the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, a Member State has ensured a contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services by sector consistent with the first indent of Article 9(1) of Directive 2000/60/EC having regard, where appropriate, to the social, environmental and economic effects of the recovery as well as the geographic and climatic conditions of the region or regions affected.</p>	<p>Introduction of the obligation to pay the costs for water services associated the irrigation of agricultural land (hereinafter as “irrigation”) in the form of adequate contribution (payment) as recovery of the costs for water services in line with the introduction of the incentivising pricing policy according to Article 9 of the Water Framework Directive in the amendment to Act No 364/2004 Coll. on water (the Water Act), followed by an amendment to Government Resolution No 755/2005 Coll. laying down amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use (amendment in Government Resolution No 367/2008 Coll.)</p> <p><i>SR has prepared an amendment to Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters (Water Act) which also includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction of cost for water used for irrigation, which was cancelled through a political decision in 2004, - the relevant draft amendments to the Act must undergo the entire legislative process. Subsequently, an implementing regulation for the legislative process will be prepared – Government Resolution No 755/2005 Coll. laying down the amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use. <p><i>It has to be stated that in the SR, water management services are regulated as regards:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - production, distribution and supply of drinking water by public water supply system, and disposal and treatment of waste water through the public sewerage system, - use of hydropower potential of water streams, - off-take of energy water from water streams on water facilities, - off-take of surface water from water streams. <p><i>The regulation of the above water management services is carried out by RONI. Costs for all water management services are uniform for all sectors (households, industry, and agriculture). This method of regulation is set in the Regulatory Policy of the RONI applicable for the respective period (currently for the years 2012 - 2016).</i></p>	<p>31 December 2014</p>	
	<p>The adoption of a river basin management plan for the river basin district consistent with Article 13 of Directive</p>	<p>Implementation of the monitoring programme for the respective year in accordance with the approved Monitoring Framework Programme for the years 2010 - 2015 (hereinafter as the “Monitoring Framework Programme”).</p>	<p>every year in accordance with the 2010 - 2015 Monitoring Framework Programme</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	2000/60/EC.	Assessment of the ecological status/potential and chemical status of surface water bodies.	31 August 2014	MEn SR
		Assessment of the quantitative and chemical status of groundwater bodies.	31 August 2014	
		Evaluation of progress made in achieving environmental objectives.	2014	
		Testing, revision and updating of the programme of measures.	2014	
		Draft river basin management plans in line with Article 13 of the WFD.	2013 - 2015	
6.2. Waste sector: Promoting economically and environmentally sustainable investments in the waste sector particularly through the development of waste management plans consistent with Directive 2008/98/EC, and with the waste hierarchy.	d) Necessary measures to achieve the targets on preparation for re-use and recycling by 2020 consistent with Article 11(2) of Directive 2008/98/EC have been adopted.	<p>Introduction of a ban on the landfilling of separated biodegradable waste in order to restrict landfilling of biodegradable wastes in line with the objectives under Directive 1999/31/EC (upon entry into force of a new Act on Waste).</p> <p>Introduction of a ban on the landfilling of separated municipal waste in line with the objectives under Directive 2008/98/EC concerning the re-use and recycling of municipal waste (upon entry into force of a new Act on Waste).</p> <p>Implementation of a comprehensive principle of manufacturer's extended responsibility - the current "partial" principle of manufacturer's extended responsibility covering packaging, electrical equipment and batteries and accumulators will be extended to include new commodities: tyres, oils, old vehicles, waste from human and veterinary medicinal products, non-packaging commodities (paper, glass, plastics). The proposed principle of manufacturer's extended responsibility will considerably be made more stringent and transparent, with engagement of all stakeholders in the waste management infrastructure, including municipalities (in compliance with the provisions of a new Act on Waste).</p> <p>Adoption of a 2016-2025 of Waste Management Plan considerably focused on the promotion of re-use and recycling of waste.</p>	<p>31 December 2015</p> <p>31 January 2015</p> <p>31 December 2015</p> <p>31 December 2015</p>	MEn SR
7.1. Transport: The existence of a comprehensive plan or plans or framework or	The existence of a comprehensive transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks for transport investment which complies with legal requirements for	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I)</i></p> <p>Completing the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR</p>	30 June 2014	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
<p>frameworks for transport investment in accordance with the Member States' institutional set-up (including public transport at regional and local level) which supports infrastructure development and improves connectivity to the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks.</p>	<p>strategic environmental assessment and sets out:</p>	<p>until 2020 (Stage I), including the <i>Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020</i>, which constitutes an annex to the Plan.</p>		MTCRD SR
	<p>- a realistic and mature pipeline for projects for which support from the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund is envisaged;</p>	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Stage II)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the transport model of the SR with a view to assessing the needs and planning the further development of Slovakia's transport infrastructure more effectively. - Preparation based on outputs from Slovakia's transport model. - Performing the strategic environmental assessment. - Submission of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Stage II) to the session of the Economic and Social Council of the SR for discussion. - Submission to the Government of the SR for discussion. - Submission to the EC to assess the complete fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities set for the transport sector. 	<p>31 October 2015</p> <p>30 June 2016</p> <p>31 October 2016</p> <p>30 November 2016</p> <p>31 December 2016</p> <p>31 December 2016</p>	
	<p>Measures to ensure the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries to deliver the project pipeline.</p>	<p>Preparation of an analysis of the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries. The analysis should identify the measures that need to be approved to enhance the capacity for delivering the project pipeline in order to prevent problems encountered during the implementation within the 2007 - 2013 programming period.</p>	<p>30 June 2014</p> <p>31 May 2014</p>	
		<p>Application of measures identified in the analysis, i.e. taking the necessary steps for the practical implementation of the measures.</p>	<p>31 October 2014</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
<p>7.2. Railway: The existence within the comprehensive transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks of a specific section on railway development in accordance with the Member States' institutional set-up (including concerning public transport at regional and local level) which supports infrastructure development and improves connectivity to the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks. The investments cover mobile assets, interoperability and capacity- building.</p>	<p>The existence of a section on railway development within the transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks as set out above which complies with legal requirements for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and sets out a realistic and mature project pipeline (including a timetable and budgetary framework).</p>	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I)</i></p> <p>Completing the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I), including the Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020, which constitutes an annex to the Plan.</p>	<p>30 June 2014</p>	
		<p>Preparation of <i>an implementation plan for projects funded under the CF, ERDF and CEF</i> as part of the action plan for fulfilment of ex ante conditionality 7 based on the form defined in the Commission Guidance Note on the content of action plans.</p>	<p>31 May 2014</p>	
		<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Stage II)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the transport model of the SR with a view to assessing the needs and planning the further development of Slovakia's transport infrastructure more effectively. - Preparation based on outputs from Slovakia's transport model. - Performing the strategic environmental assessment. - Submission of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Stage II) to the session of the Economic and Social Council of the SR for discussion. - Submission to the Government of the SR for discussion. - Submission to the EC to assess the complete fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities set for the transport sector. 	<p>31 October 2015</p> <p>30 June 2016</p> <p>31 October 2016</p> <p>30 November 2016</p> <p>31 December 2016</p> <p>31 December 2016</p>	
			<p>Measures to ensure the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries to deliver the project pipeline.</p>	
	<p>Application of measures identified in the analysis, i.e. taking the necessary steps for the practical implementation of the measures.</p>	<p>31 October 2014</p>		

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
<p>7.3 Other modes of transport, including inland-waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure: the existence within the comprehensive transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks of a specific section on inland-waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure, which contribute to improving connectivity to the TEN-T comprehensive and core networks and to promoting sustainable regional and local mobility.</p>	<p>The existence of a section on inland-waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure within the transport plan or plans or framework or frameworks which:</p>	<p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I)</i></p> <p>Completing the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I), including the <i>Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020</i>, which constitutes an annex to the Plan.</p> <p><i>Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Stage II)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the transport model of the SR with a view to assessing the needs and planning the further development of Slovakia's transport infrastructure more effectively. - Preparation based on outputs from Slovakia's transport model. - Performing the strategic environmental assessment. - Submission of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Stage II) to the session of the Economic and Social Council of the SR for discussion. - Submission to the Government of the SR for discussion. - Submission to the EC to assess the complete fulfilment of ex ante conditionalities set for the transport sector. 	<p>30 June 2014</p> <p>31 October 2015</p> <p>30 June 2016</p> <p>31 October 2016</p> <p>30 October 2016</p> <p>31 December 2016</p> <p>31 December 2016</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - complies with legal requirements for strategic environmental assessment; 	<p>Completing the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2020 (Stage I), including the Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger Transport and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR until 2020, which constitutes an annex to the Plan.</p>	<p>30 June 2014</p>	
		<p>Performing the strategic environmental assessment of the Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure Development in the SR until 2030 (Stage II)</p>	<p>31 October 2016</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sets out a realistic and mature project pipeline (including a timetable and budgetary framework); 	<p>Preparation of an implementation plan for projects funded under the CF, ERDF and CEF as part of the action plan for fulfilment of ex ante conditionality 7 based on the Commission Guidance Note on the content of action plans.</p>	<p>30 May 2014</p>	
	<p>Measures to ensure the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries to</p>	<p>Preparation of an analysis of the capacity of intermediary bodies and beneficiaries. The analysis should identify the measures that need to be approved to enhance the capacity for delivering the project pipeline</p>	<p>30 May 2014</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	deliver the project pipeline.	in order to prevent problems encountered during the implementation within the current programming period.		
		Application of measures identified in the analysis, i.e. taking the necessary steps for the practical implementation of the measures.	31 October 2014	
8.1. Active labour market policies are designed and delivered in the light of the Employment guidelines.	Employment services have the capacity to, and do, deliver: - personalised services and active and preventive labour market measures at an early stage, which are open to all jobseekers while focusing on people at highest risk of social exclusion, including people from marginalised communities;	<p>1) Prepare and adopt a National Employment Strategy:</p> <p>An analysis of mechanisms facilitating employment development, including employment services.</p> <p>A draft National Employment Strategy.</p> <p>Submission of the strategy for a review procedure and to a session of the Economic and Social Council of the SR.</p> <p>Submission to the Government of the SR for discussion.</p> <p>2) Ensure the preparation and implementation of an innovative solution for cooperation with non-governmental employment services:</p> <p>Prepare a project proposal for networking of public employment services and non-governmental employment services connecting public employment services with non-governmental employment services.</p> <p>Deliver the networking of public employment services with non-governmental employment services.</p> <p>3) Provide for a training system for employees in public employment services delivering personalised services (front-line officers) in order to improve the quality of services provided to job seekers, especially to</p>	<p>31 May 2014</p> <p>31 October 2014</p> <p>30 November 2014</p> <p>31 December 2014</p> <p>31 May 2014</p> <p>31 December 2016</p> <p>31 December 2015</p>	<p>MLSAF SR</p> <p>MLSAF SR Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family</p> <p>MLSAF SR Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		persons at the greatest risk of social exclusion.		
<p>8.3. Labour market institutions are modernised and strengthened in the light of the Employment Guidelines;</p> <p>Reforms of labour market institutions will be preceded by a clear strategic policy framework and ex ante assessment including with regard to the gender dimension.</p>	<p>Actions to reform employment services, aiming at providing them with the capacity to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - personalised services and active and preventive labour market measures at an early stage, which are open to all jobseekers while focusing on people at highest risk of social exclusion, including people from marginalised communities. 	<p>Reinforce personnel capacities at offices of labour, social affairs and family, especially in the area of personalised services, active and preventive labour market measures and direct contact with job seekers, especially those at the greatest risk of social exclusion, including MRC:</p> <p>Conducting a capacity analysis to identify measures to be adopted in order to reinforce capacities and increase their quality and effectiveness.</p> <p>Application of measures identified in the analysis, i.e. taking the necessary steps to reinforce capacities.</p>	<p>31 December 2014</p> <p>31 December 2016</p>	<p>MLSAF SR</p> <p>Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family</p>
<p>8.5. Adaptation of workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs to change: The existence of policies aimed at favouring anticipation and good management of change and restructuring.</p>	<p>Instruments are in place to support social partners and public authorities to develop and monitor proactive approaches towards change and restructuring which include measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to promote anticipation of change; - to promote the preparation and management of the restructuring process. 	<p>Preparation of the forecast of labour market development in the SR.</p>	<p>31 December 2015</p>	<p>MLSAF SR</p>
<p>9.1. The existence and the implementation of a national strategic policy framework for poverty</p>	<p>A national strategic policy framework for poverty reduction, aiming at active inclusion, is in place that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides a sufficient 			<p>MLSAF SR</p> <p>Institute for Labour and Family Research</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
reduction aiming at the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market in the light of the Employment guidelines.	<p>evidence base to develop policies for poverty reduction and monitor developments;</p> <p>- contains measures supporting the achievement of the national poverty and social exclusion target (as defined in the National Reform Programme), which includes the promotion of sustainable and quality employment opportunities for people at the highest risk of social exclusion, including people from marginalised communities;</p> <p>Upon request and where justified, relevant stakeholders will be provided with support for submitting project applications and for implementing and managing the selected projects.</p>	<p>Implementation of the project <i>Preparation of the National Framework Strategy.</i></p> <p>Creation of the analytical part of the <i>National Framework Strategy.</i></p>	<p>31 August 2013 – 30 June 2014</p> <p>By 28 February 2014</p>	
9.2. A national Roma inclusion strategic policy framework is in place	<p>A national Roma inclusion strategic policy framework is in place that:</p> <p>- includes strong monitoring methods to evaluate the impact of Roma integration actions and a review mechanism for the adaptation of the strategy;</p> <p>- is designed, implemented and monitored in close cooperation and continuous dialogue with Roma civil society, regional and local</p>	<p>Monitoring set up of the Strategy of the SR for Integration of Roma up to 2020</p> <p>a) Technical and administrative line - the first monitoring report of the Strategy will be submitted to the Government of the SR.</p> <p>b) Qualitative line- After the issuance of Atlas 2013, baseline and target indicators of the Strategy will be updated.</p> <p>To ensure the fulfilment of the criterion the OPGRC will set up a working group to implement and monitor the strategy, comprising representatives of local and regional self-governments, ministries responsible for delivering measures and activities of the approved Strategy for the Integration of Roma until 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "Strategy") and representatives of civic society (NGOs).</p>	<p>30 June 2014</p> <p>31 December 2014</p>	Office of the Government Plenipotentiary of the SR for Roma Communities

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>authorities.</p> <p>Upon request and where justified, relevant stakeholders will be provided with support for submitting project applications and for implementing and managing the selected projects.</p>	<p>Preparation and approval of the statute of the monitoring working group, defining the responsibilities and tasks of its members in the process of regular monitoring of the Strategy.</p> <p>"Proposal for the stabilisation of administrative capacities in 2014 and 2015" which defines the need for administrative capacities for the 2014 – 2020 programming period due to the criterion under ex ante conditionality 9.2. https://lt.justice.gov.sk/Material/MaterialHome.aspx?instEID=-1&matEID=6983&langEID=1</p> <p>Setting up the provision of support to relevant stakeholders for submitting project applications and for implementing and managing the selected projects, and their inclusion into the relevant managing documents.</p> <p>Submission to the Government of the SR for discussion.</p>	<p>31 December 2014</p> <p>30 June 2014</p>	
<p>9.3. Health: The existence of a national or regional strategic policy framework for health within the limits of Article 168 TFEU ensuring economic sustainability.</p>	<p>Coordinated measures to improve access to health services.</p>	<p>Updating the "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" (the Action plan was approved by a Health Ministry board on 11 February 2014 pursuant to point 1 in chapter 6 of the strategic framework). The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is a key instrument for the coordination of individual measures under the strategic framework. The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is approved and updated by a Health Ministry board.</p> <p>Preparation of an implementation strategy for integrated health care services. One of the key implementation strategies for the use of ESI Funds; a more detailed draft budget will also be included.</p> <p>Preparation of an implementation strategy for implementation of standardised preventive and clinical procedures. One of the key implementation strategies for the use of ESI Funds; a more detailed draft budget will also be included.</p>	<p>By 30 June 2014</p> <p>By 31 July 2014</p> <p>By 31 July 2014</p>	<p>MH SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>Measures to stimulate efficiency in the health sector, through deployment of service delivery models and infrastructure.</p> <p>A monitoring and review system.</p>	<p>Submission of the complete documentation to the Commission to assess whether all formal requirements of the ex-ante conditionality criterion has been fulfilled.</p> <p>Updating the "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" (the Action plan was approved by a Health Ministry board on 11 February 2014 pursuant to point 1 in chapter 6 of the strategic framework). The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is a key instrument for the coordination of individual measures under the strategic framework. The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is approved and updated by a Health Ministry board.</p> <p>Preparation of an implementation strategy for integrated health care services. One of the key implementation strategies for the use of ESI Funds; a more detailed draft budget will also be included.</p> <p>Preparation of implementation strategies for implementation of standardised preventive and clinical procedures. One of the key implementation strategy for the use of ESI Funds; a more detailed draft budget will also be included.</p> <p>Updating the "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" (the Action plan was approved by a Health Ministry board on 11 February 2014 pursuant to point 1 in chapter 6 of the strategic framework). The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is a key instrument for the coordination of individual measures under the strategic framework. The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is approved and updated by a Health Ministry board.</p> <p>Preparation of a document describing a system of monitoring and control of the implementation and fulfilment of implementation sub-strategies and their revisions. The document will, among other things, describe in more detail the work of a monitoring committee (the monitoring committee has already been established pursuant to point 2 in chapter 6 of the strategic framework. The statute of the monitoring committee is available to public in the MH SR journal) in</p>	<p>By 31 August 2014</p> <p>By 30 June 2014</p> <p>By 31 July 2014</p> <p>By 31 July 2014</p> <p>By 30 June 2014</p> <p>By 31 August 2014</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>A Member State or region has adopted a framework outlining available budgetary resources on an indicative basis and a cost-effective concentration of resources on prioritised needs for health care.</p>	<p>the area of monitoring and control.</p> <p>Approval of the document describing a system of monitoring and control of the implementation and fulfilment of implementation sub-strategies and their revision by the monitoring committee. The monitoring and control system become functional upon approval.</p> <p>Submission of the complete documentation to the EC to assess whether all formal requirements of the ex-ante conditionality criterion has been fulfilled.</p> <p>Updating the "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" (the action plan was approved by a Health Ministry board on 11 February 2014 pursuant to point 1 in chapter 6 of the strategic framework). The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is a key instrument for the coordination of individual measures under the strategic framework. The "Action plan for the preparation of sub-strategies/tools of change" is approved and updated by a Health Ministry board.</p> <p>Preparation of an implementation strategy for integrated health care services. One of the key implementation strategies for the use of ESI Funds; a more detailed draft budget will also be included.</p> <p>Preparation of implementation strategies for implementation of standardised preventive and clinical procedures. One of the key implementation strategies for the use of ESI Funds; a more detailed draft budget will also be included.</p> <p>Preparation of a document describing a system of monitoring and control of the implementation and fulfilment of implementation sub-strategies and their revisions. The document will, among other things, describe in more detail the work of a monitoring committee (the monitoring committee has already been established pursuant to point 2 in chapter 6 of the strategic framework. The statute of the monitoring committee is available to public in the MH SR journal.) in the area of monitoring and control.</p>	<p>By 31 October 2014</p> <p>31 October 2014</p> <p>By 30 June 2014</p> <p>By 31 July 2014</p> <p>By 31 July 2014</p> <p>By 31 August 2014</p> <p>By 31 October 2014</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>Approval of the document describing a system of monitoring and control of the implementation and fulfilment of implementation sub-strategies and their revision by the monitoring committee. The monitoring and control system become functional upon approval.</p> <p>Submission of the complete documentation to the EC to assess whether all formal requirements of the ex-ante conditionality criterion has been fulfilled.</p>	31 October 2014	
<p>10.1. Early school leaving: The existence of a strategic policy framework to reduce early school leaving (ESL) within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.</p>	<p>A system for collecting and analysing data and information on ESL at relevant levels is in place that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides a sufficient evidence- base to develop targeted policies and monitors developments. 	<p>Launching the <i>Resort Information System</i> (ReIS)</p> <p>The Resort Information System is expected to be fully operational in the end of second quarter of 2014, provided the following activities are performed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - collection of data on the qualification of pedagogical staff; - updating registers of schools and school facilities; - updating contacts on pedagogical staff and students at primary and secondary schools; - updating basic code-books; - updating the register of non-pedagogical staff at schools and school facilities. 	30 June 2014	MESRS SR
<p>10.2. Higher education: the existence of a national or regional strategic policy framework for increasing tertiary education attainment, quality and efficiency within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.</p>	<p>A national or regional strategic policy framework for tertiary education is in place with the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where necessary, measures to increase participation and attainment that: - increase higher education participation among low income groups and other under-represented groups with special regard to disadvantaged people, including people from marginalised communities. 	<p>National Strategic Policy Framework for Tertiary Education for 2014 - 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submitting the proposal for the public discussion. - Submission of the proposal to the Government of the SR for discussion. 	<p>By 31 August 2014</p> <p>By 31 December 2014</p>	MESRS SR

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>- encourage innovative content and programme design;</p>	<p>National Strategic Policy Framework for Tertiary Education for 2014 - 2020 (see above)</p> <p>Project "Universities as drivers of knowledge-based society development". http://www.vysokoskolacidopraxe.sk/</p> <p>– equipment and support to selected prospective study programs through equipment in the educational training contact centres at universities - study aids, textbooks, study aids with licenses, software process modelling tools in practice, carriers/tools/licenses with innovative digital educational content ,</p> <p>– improvement of educational content and support of innovative forms of education to labour market needs in selected prospective study fields</p>	<p>30 May 2013 – 30 November 2015</p> <p>By 31 December 2014</p> <p>By 31 October 2015</p>	<p>Centre for scientific and technical information</p>
<p>10.3. Lifelong learning (LL): The existence of a national and/or regional strategic policy framework for lifelong learning within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.</p>	<p>A national or regional strategic policy framework for lifelong learning is in place that contains measures:</p> <p>- for the provision of skills development for various target groups where these are identified as priorities in national or regional strategic policy frameworks (for example young people in vocational training, adults, parents returning to the labour market, low skilled and older workers, migrants and other disadvantaged groups, in particular people with disabilities);</p>	<p><i>Act on the recognition of non-formal education and informal learning</i></p> <p>- (because of the necessity to finalize the outputs of the national project of the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education "Creation of National Qualification System", the Act on the recognition of non-formal education and informal learning must be submitted to the Parliament</p> <p>Implementation of two key national projects:</p> <p><i>Creation of National Qualifications System</i></p> <p>http://www.tvorbansk.sk/</p>	<p>By 31 December 2015</p> <p>1 March 2013 – 31 October 2015</p>	<p>MESRS SR</p> <p>MESRS SR State Training Institute</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>- to widen access to LL including through efforts to effectively implement transparency tools (for example the European Qualifications Framework, National Qualifications Framework, European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training, European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training).</p>	<p>- creation and development of the information system of the National Qualifications Framework and National Qualifications System,</p> <p>- further education of the target group for the creation and use of the National Qualifications Framework, the National Qualifications System and the Information System.</p> <p><i>Further education and counselling for adults as a tool for better employability in the labour market</i></p> <p>http://nuczv.sk/dalsie-vzdelavanie-a-poradenstvo-pre-dospelych-ako-nastroj-lepsei-uplatnitelnosti-na-trhu-prace/</p> <p>- define requirements and create training programs for trainers, managers, chairmen and members of examination committees, develop quality standards of further education institutions,</p> <p>- provide modular training programs of further education with recognition of results of the further education and informal learning; operation of a network of advisory centres for adults and advising; creation and implementation of the system of the monitoring and forecasting of training needs; further development of electronic tools for further education in the context of lifelong learning.</p>	<p>31 October 2015</p> <p>By 30 June 2015</p> <p>15 March 2013 – 30 September 2015</p> <p>By 28 February 2014</p> <p>By 30 September 2015</p>	<p>National Lifelong Learning Institute</p>
<p>10.4 The existence of a national or regional strategic policy framework for increasing the quality and efficiency of VET systems within the limits of Article 165 TFEU.</p>	<p>2. A national or regional strategic policy framework is in place for increasing the quality and efficiency of VET systems within the limits of Article 165 TFEU which includes measures for the following:</p> <p>- to increase the quality and</p>	<p>- submit a draft of a new act on vocational training to present elements of dual training and education: apprenticeship agreement, agreement between a school and employer on the organisation of practical training, practical training directly in employer's premises, more effective link between labour market demand and in-work vocational training, preparation of model curricula and curricula for dual VET, compulsory participation of employers' in final, school leaving and graduate exams, verifying employer's capacity to provide practical training in the dual education and training system</p>	<p>The act to take effect on 1 September 2015.</p>	<p>MESRS SR MLSAF SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>attractiveness of VET including through establishing a national approach for quality assurance for VET (for example in line with the, European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training) and implementing the transparency and recognition tools, for example European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training. (ECVET).</p>	<p>Implementation of three key national projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for occupational orientation of primary school pupils towards vocational education and training through the development of polytechnic education with a focus on developing occupational skills, as well as working with talented individuals <p>equipment for science labs in primary schools, development of continuing education programmes for teachers of natural sciences</p> <p>http://www.siov.sk/narodny-projekt-/24512s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of National Qualifications System <p>Creation of 1,000 partial and full qualifications in the form of establishing qualification standards based on learning outcomes and evaluation standards, creation of the National Qualification System, including within the Bologna process.</p> <p>http://www.tvorbansk.sk/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of secondary vocational education and training - Analysis of how the graduates' skills match the labour market supply - Audit of secondary vocational schools - Analytical-methodological activities in relation to the trends in the unemployment of graduates from secondary vocational schools and the impact on vocational education and training <p>http://www.siov.sk/rozvoj-stredneho-odborneho-vzdelavania-rsov/24505s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy on ensuring quality in initial vocation education and training in Slovakia (Feasibility study) 	<p>1 April 2013 – 31 October 2015</p> <p>1 March 2013 – 31 October 2015</p> <p>23 March 2013 – 31 October 2015</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>	<p>MESRS SR Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education</p> <p>MESRS SR Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education</p> <p>MESRS SR Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education</p> <p>MESRS SR Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
<p>11. The existence of a strategic policy framework for reinforcing the Member States' administrative efficiency including public administration reform.</p>	<p>A strategic policy framework is in place and implemented to reinforce efficiency and competences of the Member State's public administration authorities that cover the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an analysis and strategic planning of legal, organisational and/or procedural reform actions 	<p>Development of reform concepts in individual segments of public administration in Slovakia.</p> <p>Defining a baseline strategy for a public administration reform in Slovakia.</p> <p>The strategy will contain targets, priorities, milestones and an indicative allocation of budgetary funds of public administration in individual segments.</p> <p>Adoption of an Action plan containing a timetable and monitoring plan for the implementation of the strategy</p>	<p>31 December 2015</p>	<p>Steering Committee members</p>
		<p>Stage III of the ESO reform is in the process of being implemented. Other specialised local authorities of the public administration (regional veterinary and food administration, regional authorities of public health administration and offices for labour, social affairs and family) will be restructured and reorganised. Potential integration, or reorganisation and restructuring of said specialised government authorities is currently subject to negotiations by relevant central government authorities. See Act No 180/2013 Coll. on the organisation of local public administration and on amendments to certain acts, which is available at: http://bit.ly/1dv8NiS and http://bit.ly/1eRyIFp</p>	<p>31 December 2014</p>	<p>MLSAF SR, MH SR, MARD SR in cooperation with MI SR</p>
		<p>The police force presidium as a competent body for "Setting up a legislative framework to protect corruption whistle-blowers" submitted a draft act on certain measures related to reporting antisocial activities and on amendments to certain acts for an inter-ministerial review procedure. New legislative amendments are also being drafted in various other areas: labour law regulations, complaint procedures, criminal law regulations, the Press Act and the Antidiscrimination Act. See Government Resolution No 137 of 20 March 2013 http://bit.ly/HW5MhO</p>	<p>31 March 2014</p>	<p>GO SR in cooperation with MI SR (police force presidium), OGP SR DCS, NGOs)</p>
		<p>The Concept of the Modernisation and Stabilization of the Judiciary is a key strategic document being prepared, and will be submitted to the Government for approval in the foreseeable future. Measures to be</p>	<p>30 June 2014</p>	<p>MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>taken in the judiciary and justice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of tools and systems to enhance transparency of the judiciary and to suppress corruption in the judiciary; reinforcing ethical principles in the judiciary; • support for effective avoidance of conflicts of interests in the judiciary; • enhancing transparency in the justice system by making relevant information on the work, activities and decision-making by courts available to the public (providing access to open data on the judiciary); • implementation of regulation impact assessment (RIA) in the judiciary; • supporting engagement of the non-governmental sector, expert and professional organisation in the process of development, monitoring and assessment of courts' activities, activities of the Judiciary Council, reform strategies and concepts, while consistently preserving the independent status of the judiciary; • supporting a structural reform and process optimisation in the judiciary, including unification of systems and procedures; • ensuring continuing learning and implementing educational activities for employees in the judiciary system with the focus on specialisation on individual practical areas and with the focus on learning digital skills, as well as education provided by alternative institutions, including NGOs; • supporting strategic and budgetary planning; • enhancing quality and persuasiveness of judicial decisions and removing procedural errors in order to increase credibility of the judiciary; • creating conditions of ICT-enabled (electronic) case files; • development and support for alternative dispute resolution methods; • implementation of an effective system for monitoring and evaluation of the functioning and performance of the judiciary system; • support for system-level changes to shorten judicial proceedings and remove delays in judicial proceedings, strengthening specialisation of courts and judges. 		

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		The Concept of the Centre for Legal Assistance for 2016 – 2018 is also under preparation and will provide increased access to legal assistance for those who need it the most.	31 December 2006	MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR and the Legal Assistance Centre
		The act on criminal liability of legal persons is being prepared and is currently subject to inter-ministerial review procedure, with comments currently being evaluated. The act will provide for the so-called corporate criminal liability, i.e. direct prosecution of legal persons irrespective of being proven guilty of a particular natural person. The comments submitted under the inter-ministerial review procedure are currently being evaluated.	30 June 2014	MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR
		<p>The amendment to Act No 7/2005 Coll. on bankruptcy and restructuring will regulate the solutions to insolvency of the debtor by selling the property of the debtor; by collective satisfying of the debtor's creditors; by gradual satisfying debtor's creditors in a manner agreed in the restructuring plan; the Act will govern solutions to threatening insolvency of the debtor and debt disencumbering of natural persons. More information can be found at: http://bit.ly/HTmPAB</p> <p>Amendments implemented in the Commercial Code in 2014 will be interlinked with bankruptcy legislation; as a result, several rules will be changed, in particular as regards improving the position of creditors in cases where assets of a company become subject to bankruptcy proceedings at a point when such company no longer owns any assets. The regulation will also reflect the implementation of the so-called Register of Debtors, which should be set up in 2015 in order to allow the creditors to keep track of the bankruptcy proceedings without having to peruse the bankruptcy proceedings file or the file kept by the trustee-in-bankruptcy.</p>	31 December 2015	MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR
		<p>The preparation of an amendment to Act No 244/2002 Coll. on arbitration proceedings is underway, the draft amendment will be available at http://bit.ly/l1FERz. It involves two separate draft acts for business arbitration and alternative solutions to consumer's disputes. The draft acts have been drawn up and submitted for a review procedure; comments submitted under the review procedure are currently being evaluated.</p>	30 June 2014	MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR
		<p>The recast of civil procedure law, Act No 99/1963 Coll. "the Civil Procedure Code".</p>	31 December 2016	MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		The new Civil Procedure Code will supersede the current Civil Procedure Code and consist of three new parts, i.e.: (1) Civil Litigation Code, (2) Civil Extra-Litigation Code,, (3) Administrative Judicial Code. More information can be found at http://bit.ly/17tFkSp		
		The recast of Act No 40/1964 Coll., the Civil Code , The recast of private law in the SR.	31 December 2016	MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR
		<p>Amendments to Act No. 300/2005 Coll. as amended and to Act No. 301/2005 Coll., the Criminal Code, as amended. In terms of a more detailed regulation, the draft Act primarily affects the following legal concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - categorisation of crimes, by means of establishing three categories for crimes, i.e., minor offences, crimes and particularly serious crimes, - increasing the minimum custodial penalty for particularly serious crimes from ten to twelve years, - concurrent sentencing with the possibility to increase the upper limit of the sentencing range, - the “three strikes and out” principle in relation to the most serious forms of crimes, - the definition of a "thing" now includes funds held on an account, - the introduction of criminal liability for dog owners whose negligence resulted a bodily injury to a person attacked by a dog, - differentiation between psychological and physical forms of torture with respect to criminal offences involving battery against a close person and a person entrusted to one’s care - elimination of other identified application shortcomings of the Criminal Code More information can be found at: http://bit.ly/1asFEV5 	30 June 2014	MJ SR in cooperation with MI SR
		The Concept of integrating the tax and duties collection with the collection of insurance contributions - stage II of the UNITAS II. A draft concept has been prepared and will be elaborated further.	no new deadline has yet been set	MF SR (Financial Directorate) in cooperation with MI SR
		The implementation of projects related to the reform intentions of the UNITAS programme is carried out in line with the approved conceptual intentions and is covered by a draft “Concept of Developing the Financial Administration”.	31 December 2016	MF SR (Financial Directorate) in cooperation with MI SR
	The development of quality	Ensuring the assessment of the needs of relevant stakeholders , including citizens, business and other interested parties (social	31 December 2014	Steering Committee members

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	management systems (QMS)	<p>partners, NGOs) and goals to improve their delivery through QMS (main gaps, main needs, main practice and models used) in public administration.</p> <p>Building on the basic outlines of the public administration reform and the National Quality Programme 2013 - 2016, a concept to implement quality management systems and the state and public administration will be developed.</p> <p>Adoption of the concept to implement quality management systems and the state and public administration</p> <p>Creating a list of actions referring to the establishment or use of already established QMS in a sustainable way.</p>	<p>31 December 2014</p> <p>31 March 2015</p> <p>31 December 2015</p>	<p>UMNS in cooperation with the MI SR</p> <p>Steering Committee members</p>
		<p>MI SR has a pilot project: "Quality management and monitoring system" and is in the process of setting the parameters for monitoring the quality and performance of local public administration. The MoI SR is looking into using the CAF model or other QMS models. The mapping process is underway and a list of activities to introduce QMS models is under preparation. The project has introduced a queue management system at client centres to monitor the time spent and agenda resolved by the client at a particular office. A central registry system at district offices has also been set up. Customer satisfaction questionnaires are currently being collected.</p>	30 June 2014	MI SR
		<p>Implementation of the project "QMS for Performance of the Financial Administration" and the provision for SW instruments, training, consulting and workshops is subject to the draft of the Concept of the Development of the Financial Administration. A Financial Administration management meeting approved on 25 March 2014 a Card of balance performance of financial administration for 2014 (CBP FA) as one of the means to monitor and evaluate fulfilment of strategic objectives approved under the 2014 - 2020 Concept of Developing Financial Administration. The year 2014 is a pilot year for CBP FA implementation.</p>	31 December 2015	MF SR (Financial Directorate) in cooperation with MI SR
	Development and implementation of human resources strategies and policies covering the main gaps identified in this field;	<p>The national project for capacity building and improving effectiveness in public administration follows up on the ongoing reform of the public administration that should horizontally contribute to the improvement of the quality of its functioning. The project focuses on the creation of a long-term strategy for HR management and will lead to the optimisation and streamlining of public administration and to costs</p>	31 December 2014	MI SR (public administration section), OGP SR DCS in cooperation with GO SR

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>savings. The public administration also faces a lack of analytical capacities that could contribute to the successful implementation of structural reforms. The project will significantly contribute to the fulfilment of ex-ante conditionality 11.1. The OECD will substantially reinforce the professional aspects of the reform, and will help transfer the OECD know-how taking into account the conditions in Slovakia.</p>		
		<p>Analytical capacities have already been established within at the MF SR, MEn SR, MLSAF SR, MTCRD SR, MH SR, MESRS SR, and will be further strengthened. Analytical capacities will also be established in other central bodies of the public administration. These sectors are project partners for “Building Professional Capacities of the MF SR and Other Bodies of the Public Administration in the Bratislava Self-Government Region” whose lead authority is the MF SR – Institute for Financial Policy. The project will be implemented based on one main activity focused on the participation of employees in internships/events organised and/or provided by the most prestigious institutions in the field of analyses, creation and evaluation of economic policies at the international level. A need analysis will be elaborated in more detail. An agency will be contracted to ensure the effectiveness of the entire process. The project will start in April 2014.</p>	31 December 2016	MF SR in cooperation with MI SR, ME SR, MLSAF SR, MTCRD SR, MH SR, MESRS SR
		<p>The amendment to Act No 400/2009 Coll. on civil service and on amendments to certain acts as last amended. Preparation of a uniform HR development strategy (panel of GO SR experts).</p> <p>Within the project for capacity building and improving effectiveness of public administration implemented with a non-repayable grant provided by the MLSAF SR and MI SR in cooperation with the OECD, an analysis will be prepared to provide justification for the preparation of a new act on civil service. The analysis will compare Slovakia civil service system, including its legislative framework, as well as methodology and practical implementation, with civil service system in at least five EU and OECD member states. The objective of the analysis is to define individual systems in civil services with the focus on legislative conditions of civil services in each country, legislative framework on civil service and legislative arrangements for certain mechanisms. The analysis will contain information on the overall functioning of the civil service, with the emphasis put on the analysis and comparison of individual systems of operation in terms of effectiveness, stability and apolitical nature of their performance, case studies and benchmarking of analysed systems, including proposals for application of outputs and recommendations in comparison with the</p>	2015	GO SR in cooperation with MI SR

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		conditions in Slovakia.		
		Adoption of a new legislative arrangement on the financial administration to provide for an equal status of employees performing activities in the area of tax and customs agenda.	31 December 2016	MF SR (Financial Directorate) in cooperation with MI SR
		Further meetings of the Steering Committee will jointly consult further steps and measures to ensure fulfilment of this ex ante conditionality.	31 December 2014	Steering Committee members
	Development of skills at all levels of the professional hierarchy within public authorities;	<p>The MI SR is building an education and training system in public administration and working on educational programmes for public administration employees in Slovakia. Training and education in public administration is delivered by the Institute for Public Administration. The Institute continuously monitors requirements on education and quality of education in public administration and modifies training activities accordingly. Based on the needs identified with respect to expanding skills and competence of public administration employees at all levels, the Institute will submit project proposals to implement national projects to be funded under the ESF.</p>	31 December 2014	MI SR
		<p>In order to prepare a new draft act on civil service the GO SR set up, in cooperation with other ministries and central government authorities, working groups, comprising experts on civil services. One of the working groups focuses on training and education</p> <p>The working group will identify needs in the field of education, training and development of skills for civil servants taking into account a new uniform HR development strategy for public administration. Equally, it will contribute to drafting analyses and a plan for development of competence and skills at all levels of professional hierarchy within public administration institutions.</p>	31 May 2015	GO SR in cooperation with MI SR
		<p>Analysis of the current situation; setting of the desirable situation, definition of education needs at the level of the front office.</p> <p>In accordance with educational needs, training activities will be delivered for client centre employees who are primarily responsible for direct interaction with clients, as well as for their managers. Training will be delivered at individual client centres. The aim of training courses is to familiarise employees with a new approach to changing people's mindset and working processes, eliminate managerial rules on retaining and functioning of inflexible standards and provide guidance who to implement a change in mindset and working processes. In addition, the course will aim to expand and support participants' skills in communicating with different target</p>	31 December 2014	MI SR in cooperation with MLSAF SR

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		groups of population while respecting their cultural and socio-economic specifics; to promote the use of techniques and procedures facilitating mutual understanding, identification of needs of target groups and choice of effective communication procedures; to provide training participants with tools for identification and effective solution of crisis situations; to teach them identify a crisis at its early stages, or even before its outbreak; to teach them various ways of communication in crisis situations; to teach them to respond to a crisis at all its stages. Training courses for managers will be designed to reinforce their leadership positions and skills.		
		Completion of the education system designed for the staff of the Financial Administration – ensuring the development of human resources. The FA SR prepares an educational and training programme for financial administration with reference to unifying the educational and training system for employees of the Financial Directorate of the SR.	31 December 2016	MF SR (Financial Directorate) in cooperation with MI SR
	The development of procedures and tools for monitoring and evaluation.	Optimisation of the processes of the local public administration - audit of the processes at the level of district bodies. Collection and setup of statistical and analytical outputs focused on the performance of district offices.	31 December 2014	MI SR
Audit of central bodies of the public administration. Currently, surveys are conducted on sub-agencies of central government authorities and surveys on central government authorities are planned to be finalised by 30 June 2014. Visits were made in 49 central government authorities and their sub-agencies. Another 15 organisations are expected to be surveyed by 30 June 2014.		30 June 2014	MI SR	
The building and implementation of information systems (DWH, etc.) designed for analysing data, monitoring and evaluation of the financial administration's performance. Based on the study " How to Measure Progress – a proposal of result indicators for ministries", an institutional and methodology proposal to evaluate public policies will be prepared, linked to the state budget and containing input, output and result indicators monitoring the performance of state and public administration. Identification of objectives and needs for the development of monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of public policies Identification of procedures and tools for monitoring and evaluation Identification of measurable indicators and baseline values		31 December 2015 31 June 2015	MF SR (Financial Directorate) in cooperation with MI SR Steering Committee members	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		Adoption of a monitoring and evaluation plan/strategy		
General ex ante conditionalities				
Fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
1. Non-discrimination The existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union anti-discrimination law and policy in the field of ESI Funds.	Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the involvement of bodies responsible for the promotion of equal treatment of all persons throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including the provision of advice on equality in ESI fund-related activities.	<p>Ensuring the institutional and strategic framework</p> <p>Reinforcing the administrative capacity of the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities at the MLSAF SR.</p> <p>Increasing the administrative capacity of the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities at the MLSAF SR.</p> <p>Based on a proposal for the management and control system for the 2014 - 2020 programming period we observe that due to the cross-cutting nature of tasks delivered by the coordinator for HP non-discrimination, accessibility and equality between men and women coupled with the extended scope of its competence in the new programming period, administrative capacities of the current coordinator for HP equal opportunities (HP EO) must be reinforced. An institutional mechanism for HP coordination will be developed with the focus on methodology guidance, publicity, training and educational activities, evaluation and selection process, as well as monitoring and control. An independent entity for the coordination of horizontal principles will be set up, with 7 new job positions planned to be created, plus one assistant. All job positions within the entity will be refunded under the Technical Assistance. The created job positions will focus on methodological guidance, as well as analytical, strategic, legislative and educational activities related to the implementation of</p>	<p>1 June 2014 - increasing administrative capacities by two contracted employees; headcount achieved: 2 regular employees + 3 contracted employees + DGEE head</p> <p>31 August 2014 - attaining the optimised number of administrative capacities by creating a department for implementation of horizontal principles of non-discrimination and equality between men and women consisting of 7 full-time employees plus 1 assistant. The activity is supposed to be funded from technical assistance for the current programming period and, later from technical assistance for the new programming period. The project is expected to be submitted in July 2014.</p>	MLSAF SR

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>both horizontal priorities within the ESI Funds. The job descriptions will be oriented at activities related to the tasks of every entity of funds with a focus on the thematic cross-sectoral aspect of the horizontal principles.</p> <p>Engagement of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights as amended as an "equality body".</p> <p><i>(Commission observation: Meeting a requirement under Article 13 of Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.)</i></p> <p>Slovakia is aware of certain problems in the functioning of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (SNCHR) that have repeatedly been discussed by the Government council for human rights, national minorities and gender quality. To improve SNCHR performance, the following actions are planned and implemented:</p> <p>An amendment to Act No 308/1993 Coll. on the establishment of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights. The legislative amendment was drafted by the MJ SR and has been subject to the first-round of review procedure. The amendment should ensure more effective functioning of the SNCHR in accordance with the so-called Paris principles, as well as its role as an "equality body". The amendment is expected to be discussed by the Government of the SR in 3.Q 2014.</p> <p>Engaging the SNCHR in the enforcement of Union anti-discrimination law and policy with respect to the ESI Funds. A SNCHR representative will be a member of the working group for HP EO which is currently responsible also for HP non-discrimination and equality between men and women for the new programming period and for the fulfilment of EAC. The SNCHR will be involved in evaluation, monitoring and provision of consultancy in the field of equal treatment for entities involved in the ESI Funds.</p> <p><i>Note: SNCHR's comment on the fulfilment of EAC is attached in the annex.</i></p>	<p>30 September 2014</p> <p>The DGEEO discussed the fulfilment of EAC with the SNCHR 27 April 2014.</p> <p>A meeting of the working group for HP EO to extend its membership will be held at the MLSAF SR on 27 May 2014.</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	Arrangements for training	<p>National action plan for the prevention and elimination of discrimination</p> <p>In November 2011, the Government of the SR undertook to prepare a Nation-wide strategy on the protection and promotion of human rights in the SR. Coordination of the preparation of the strategy and its submission to the Government for discussion is in the responsibility of a deputy prime minister and minister of foreign and European affairs who is also a chairman of the Government council for human rights, national minorities and gender equality. The aim of this government paper is to refine the system of national protection and promotion of human rights, including identification of needs and requirements of vulnerable groups. The strategy is prepared using a participatory approach. In addition to government authorities, the broadest range of non-governmental organisations and other relevant representatives of civic society will also be involved in defining the content and priorities to be pursued by the strategy.</p> <p>The strategy should define the need to prepare various action plans and concepts, including, <i>inter alia</i>, the task to adopt a National action plan for the prevention and elimination of discrimination with the aim to strengthen mechanisms to comply with the principle of equal treatment in accordance with the Antidiscrimination Act.</p>	<p>Submission to the Government of the SR for discussion: 30 June 2014</p> <p>Preparation of the NAP: 30 June 2015</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of Union anti-discrimination law and policy.</p>	<p>Elaboration of a strategy for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the funds and the subsequent submission of a project under the OP TA to finance the training.</p> <p>Training and education activities (courses, seminars, training, and dissemination of information to the staff involved in the use of the funds; conferences, publications and promotional printed materials, publication of reports in the national and regional/local mass media, etc., will be carried out by the lead authority for the HP for the following target groups:</p> <p>The MA staff responsible for the preparation of the OP, contact persons for the HP EO responsible for the coordination of HP EO at the level of individual operational programmes, members of the HP EO Working Group, monitoring and evaluation managers, senior management, as well as project evaluators and the staff of bodies involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the field of EU antidiscrimination law and policy. The training will focus on the method of evaluation and the implementation, monitoring and control process.</p> <p>Training will be provided by the DGEE0 in cooperation with SNCHR lecturers and representatives of civic society.</p>	<p>Preparation and submission of the project under OP TA: 30 June 2014</p> <p>Delivery of training activities for MA's initial training: 30 June 2015.</p> <p>Training activities will continue throughout the entire programming period and will focus on specific needs of a relevant MA.</p>	
<p>2. Gender equality</p> <p>The existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of Union gender equality law and policy in the field of ESI Funds</p>	<p>Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the involvement of bodies responsible for gender equality throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes, including the provision of advice on gender equality in ESI Fund-related activities.</p>	<p>Ensuring the institutional and strategic framework</p> <p>Reinforcing the administrative capacity of the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities at the MLSAF SR.</p> <p>Based on a proposal for the management and control system for the 2014 - 2020 programming period we observe that due to the cross-cutting nature of tasks delivered by the coordinator for HP non-discrimination, accessibility and equality between men and women coupled with the extended scope of its competence in the new programming period, administrative capacities of the current coordinator for HP equal opportunities must be reinforced. An</p>	<p>1 June 2014 - increasing administrative capacities by external employees (job performance contract); headcount achieved: 2 employees + 3 contracted employees + DGEE0 head</p> <p>31 August 2014 - attaining the optimised number of administrative capacities by creating a department for implementation of horizontal principles of non-discrimination and equality between men and women consisting of</p>	<p>MLSAF SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>institutional mechanism for HP coordination will be developed with the focus on methodology guidance, publicity, training and educational activities, evaluation and selection process, as well as monitoring and control. An independent entity for the coordination of horizontal principles will be set up, with 7 new job positions planned to be created, plus one assistant. All job positions within the entity will be refunded under the Technical Assistance. The created job positions will focus on methodological guidance, as well as analytical, strategic, legislative and educational activities related to the implementation of both horizontal priorities within the ESI Funds. The job descriptions will be oriented at activities related to the tasks of every entity of funds with a focus on the thematic cross-sectoral aspect of the horizontal principles.</p>	<p>7 employees plus 1 assistant.</p>	
		<p>The National Gender Equality Strategy for 2014 - 2020.</p> <p>The DGEEO is currently evaluating the fulfilment of the existing National Gender Equality Strategy for 2009 - 2013 and related NAP. Based on the tasks evaluated and in response to the need to define new activities, a new gender equality strategy and, as a follow-up, a relevant action plan, will be drafted in cooperation with civic society representatives involved in the Committee for gender equality. Both documents will highlight the need for synergies between their tasks and ESI Funds programmes, especially with respect to the OP Human Resources; concrete activities of the OP HR will be reflected in the strategy and, subsequently, in the action plan.</p>	<p>Deadline for evaluation of the current gender equality strategy: 30 June 2014</p> <p>Deadline for the submission of a new gender equality strategy to the Government for discussion: 30 October 2014</p>	
		<p>Nation-wide strategy on the protection and promotion of human rights in the SR</p> <p>In November 2011, the Government of the SR undertook to prepare a Nation-wide strategy on the protection and promotion of human rights in the SR. Coordination of the preparation of the strategy and its submission to the Government of the SR for discussion is in the responsibility of a deputy prime minister and minister of foreign and</p>	<p>Submission of the human rights strategy to the Government of the SR for discussion: 30 June 2014</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>European affairs of the SR who is also a chairman of the Government council for human rights, national minorities and gender equality. The aim of this government paper is to refine the system of national protection and promotion of human rights, including identification of needs and requirements of vulnerable groups. The strategy is prepared using a participatory approach. In addition to government authorities, the broadest range of non-governmental organisations and other relevant representatives of civic society will also be involved in defining the content and priorities to be pursued by the strategy.</p> <p>The strategy contains, <i>inter alia</i>, a chapter on gender equality and women's rights. The chapter defines the basic needs for the fulfilment of recommendations made by the Commission on the Status of Women responsible for the monitoring of compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in such fields as institutional and strategic arrangements, civil and political rights, economic and social rights and dignity and bodily integrity of women.</p>		
	<p>Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of Union gender equality law and policy as well as on gender mainstreaming.</p>	<p>Elaboration of a strategy for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the funds and the subsequent submission of a project under the OP TA to finance the training.</p> <p>Training and education activities (courses, seminars, training, and dissemination of information to the staff involved in the use of the funds; conferences, publications and promotional printed materials, publication of reports in the national and regional/local mass media, etc., will be carried out by the lead authority for the HP for the following target groups:</p> <p>The MA staff responsible for the preparation of the OP, contact persons for the HP EO responsible for the coordination of HP EO at the level of the individual operational programmes, members of the HP EO Working Group, monitoring and evaluation managers, senior management, as well as project evaluators and the staff of bodies involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the field of EU gender equality and "gender mainstreaming" law and policy. The</p>	<p>Preparation and submission of the project under the OP TA: 30 June 2014</p> <p>Delivery of training activities for MA's initial training: 30 June 2015.</p> <p>Training activities will continue throughout the entire programming period and will focus on specific needs of a relevant MA.</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>training will focus on the method of evaluation and the implementation, monitoring and control process.</p> <p>Training will be provided by the DGEEO in cooperation with SNCHR lecturers and representatives of civic society.</p>		
<p>3. Disability</p> <p>The existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) in the field of ESI Funds in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC</p>	<p>Arrangements in accordance with the institutional and legal framework of Member States for the consultation and involvement of bodies in charge of protection of rights of persons with disabilities or representative organisations of persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes;</p>	<p>Reinforcing administrative capacities of the bodies responsible for the implementation of the UN convention</p> <p>Based on a proposal for the management and control system for the 2014 - 2020 programming period we observe that due to the cross-cutting nature of tasks delivered by the coordinator for HP non-discrimination, accessibility and equality between men and women coupled with the extended scope of its competence, administrative capacities of the current coordinator for HP EO, which was reflected in the foregoing EACs.</p> <p>The need to reinforce administrative capacities at the Department for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities is directly driven by the HPs which, as part of non-discrimination efforts, pay due attention to accessibility that has to be taken into consideration at the project level, as well.</p> <p><i>Other activities to fulfil the EAC:</i></p> <p>Slovakia is currently working on a Nation-wide strategy on the protection and promotion of human rights in the SR which should also define the tasks in the field of guaranteeing the rights of people with disabilities.</p>	<p>31 August 2014 - strengthening of administrative capacities at the Department for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities by three full-time employees.</p> <p>These employees will cooperate with the department for the implementation of horizontal priorities of non-discrimination and equality between men and women with respect complying with the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.</p> <p>Submission of the human rights strategy to the Government of the SR for discussion: 30 June 2014</p>	<p>MLSAF SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>Arrangements for training for staff of the authorities involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the fields of applicable Union and national disability law and policy, including accessibility and the practical application of the UNCRPD as reflected in Union and national legislation, as appropriate;</p>	<p>Elaboration of a strategy for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the funds and the subsequent submission of a project under the OP TA to finance the training. The training will focus on the method of evaluation and the implementation, monitoring and control process.</p> <p>Training and education activities (courses, seminars, training, and dissemination of information to the staff involved in the use of the funds; conferences, publications and promotional printed materials, publication of reports in the national and regional/local mass media, etc., will be carried out by the lead authority for the HP for the following target groups:</p> <p>The MA staff responsible for the preparation of the OP, contact persons for the HP EO responsible for the coordination of HP EO at the level of the individual operational programmes, members of the HP EO Working Group, monitoring and evaluation managers, senior management, as well as project evaluators and the staff of bodies involved in the management and control of the ESI Funds in the field of EU law and policy on people with disabilities and application of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The training will focus on the method of evaluation and the implementation, monitoring and control process.</p> <p>Training will be provided by the HP EO coordinator in close cooperation with employees responsible for the performance of tasks of a main contact point for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is the MLSAF SR, as well as with civic society experts.</p>	<p>Preparation of the employee training and information strategy: 30 June 2014</p> <p>Preparation and submission of the project under the OP TA: 30 June 2014</p> <p>Delivery of training activities for MA's initial training: 30 June 2015.</p> <p>Training activities will continue throughout the entire programming period and will focus on specific needs of a relevant MA.</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
	<p>Arrangements to ensure monitoring of the implementation of Article 9 of the UNCRPD in relation to the ESI Funds throughout the preparation and the implementation of the programmes.</p>	<p>The process of monitoring the fulfilment of horizontal principles will be monitored at the project level by means of monitoring reports that will include a separate document containing information about horizontal principles (i.e. description of the activities carried out, their outcomes and assessment of how they contributed to the achievement of the set objectives of horizontal principles), as well as on-the-spot controls of the implementation of projects and, subsequently, evaluation of their contribution to the objectives of horizontal principles. This separate document containing information on the application of the horizontal principles will form a basis for the process of assessment of the contribution of ESI Funds to the objectives identified in the national strategic document. A review of the level of achievement of the objectives set down in the national strategy document, including proposals for corrective measures and recommendations for achieving them, will be submitted annually to the Government. The indicators concerning the people with disabilities (assessment grid) will be part of the monitoring report – annex to the HP.</p>	<p>31 October 2014</p> <p>By 30 June 2014 - incorporating Article 9 of the UN Convention in all OPs</p> <p>By 31 October 2014 – subsequently incorporated in the managing documents, application process with respect to evaluation, monitoring and control, preparation of the assessment grid.</p>	
<p>4. Public procurement</p> <p>The existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union public procurement</p>	<p>Arrangements for the effective application of Union public procurement rules through appropriate mechanisms.</p>	<p>In the area of legislation, all applicable EU directives on public procurement (PP) have been transposed into the currently valid and applicable Act No 25/2006 Coll. on public procurement and on amendments to certain acts as amended (hereinafter as the “Public Procurement Act”). New public procurement legislation, which will</p>	<p>Evaluation of the effectiveness of measures under criteria 1 through 4. Deadline: 30 June 2015</p> <p>By 18 April 2016: adoption of a new public procurement act to transpose</p>	<p>Public Procurement Office (PPO)</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
law in the field of the ESI Funds.		<p>transpose newly adopted EU directives into the Slovak legal system, will be adopted within a deadline specified under a new directive.</p> <p>Electronic public procurement</p> <p>End-to-end e-procurement as a means for modernisation of public administration is among the priorities of the SR. In accordance with Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU, the following will have to be adopted and ensured: a) direct and unrestricted access to procurement documents by electronic means; b) submission of tenders by electronic means; c) strengthening the role of e-Certis; d) electronic form (PAS) for tenderers and candidates to provide a proof of compliance with selection criteria; e) electronic catalogues as a form of electronic tender; f) dynamic purchasing system recast and refined into an electronic system.</p> <p>A central purchasing body is required to implement an end-to-end e-procurement system within 36 months of entry into force of said directives, that is, by 18 April 2017. Other bodies are required to implement an end-to-end e-procurement system within 54 months of entry into force of said directives.</p> <p>The PPO currently operates an electronic public procurement system called EVO. The system will be upgraded to meet the new requirements set out in EU directives in order to simplify electronic public procurement procedures and increase their effectiveness.</p> <p>Slovak authorities will prepare a national strategy for the timely and efficient transition to end-to-end e-procurement, as called for in section 5.3 of the Commission Communication “End-to-end e-procurement to modernise public administration” (COM(2013)453 final). The strategy will set out the specific objectives to be achieved, the process to be followed, the milestones, and any necessary indicators. Adequate assistance from the Structural Funds will be made for the implementation of this strategy, in particular for the development or improvement of end-to-end e-procurement infrastructure, the strengthening of administrative capacity, training, and awareness-raising. The strategy will ensure that the most efficient and cost-effective approach to the implementation of mandatory e-procurement in Slovakia is undertaken, and that duplication at</p>	<p>Directive 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU.</p> <p>Deadline: Within time limits set in EP and Council Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU, 2014/25/EU</p>	<p>Responsible: PPO in cooperation with OP EPA</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>national/regional level is avoided, as it may result in interoperability problems. The overall objective should be an improved, simpler, and more efficient public procurement system.</p> <p>The general measures to address deficiencies identified during controls will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased support from the PPO for organisations conducting public procurement control by means of a cooperation agreement Under the cooperation agreement, the MAs will be entitled to ask the PPO to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide an ex-ante assessment of documentation for planned public procurement; b) provide personal consultations on a partial issue in public procurement; c) prepare an opinion on the compliance of partial issues in public procurement with the Act on Public Procurement prior to the signing of a contract; d) perform a public procurement control; e) to cooperate in assessing EC audit findings concerning public procurement. - Introduction of a risk analysis in the conduct of PP control by the MA, which identifies contract risks in terms of the necessary cooperation with the PPO, namely by performing control in a manner set out under §146(4) of the Act on Public Procurement, while targeting PPO's expert support in risk-carrying public procurements will ensure an increased supervision of contracts with the potentially highest error rate. At the same time, it will eliminate a disproportionate workload of the PPO with respect to requests for control of public procurements that do not represent an increased risk in terms of their complexity or error rate and will help avoid disproportionate prolongation of controls. The analysis itself will include a set of data to be assessed (e.g., estimated contract value, procurement procedure, existence of review procedures, scope of participation criteria, etc.); each data item will 	<p>A new cooperation agreement will be signed for the new programming period of 2014 - 2020. Deadline: 30 September 2014</p> <p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p> <p>Deadline: 31 August 2016</p>	<p>CCA in cooperation with PPO</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>have a certain value representing the level of risk (e.g., an open procedure will be given a zero risk value, while a negotiated procedure will have a 15-point risk value). A summary value of all these partial items will represent a total risk value of a contract; based on this total value compared against an evaluation key, a MA will be entitled, not entitled or required to request the PPO to perform control over the public procurement in question.</p> <p>- Preparation of model documents used in the public procurement process (e.g. tender documents, drafts of notifications used in PP processes) and their publication and making available to aid beneficiaries. The measure is intended to reduce error rates in public procurement by contracting authorities or contracting entities and to enhance their transparency.</p> <p>As a follow-up to a new Act on Public Procurement to be adopted, model tender documents and notices to be used in public procurement will be prepared.</p> <p>- At the level of the management system, checklists for MA control will be prepared, taking into consideration specific aspect of different types of public procurement procedures (open procedures, restricted procedure, negotiate procedure, etc.) and most frequent errors in PP processed identified in the previous period of 2007 - 2013.</p> <p>- Preparation of uniform rules and requirements for PP and requirement for PP documentation. With respect to the application of the Act on Public Procurement, the PPO will provide for a transparent, consistent and foreseeable procurement framework through uniform methodological interpretations and uniform decision-making within control and review procedures.</p> <p>Under binding procedures defined in methodology and managing documents at the level of management system, to be followed by the MAs in the performance of controls as well as by beneficiaries in conducting public procurement and subsequent submission of documentation, procedures and preparation of uniform rules will be aligned (e.g., uniform control outputs, uniform requirements for beneficiaries concerning the scope of required documentation,</p>	<p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p> <p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p> <p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p> <p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p> <p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p>	<p>PPO</p> <p>CCA in cooperation with PPO</p> <p>PPO and CCA</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>uniform requirements on the level of publication of contract with a very low value, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of compulsory ex ante control of documentation by the MAs (review of drafts of tender documents and tender notices prior to publication) and control of public procurement prior to the signing of a contract with a successful tenderer. This type of control is designed to prevent and eliminate errors and deficiencies in draft documents for public procurement, thus reducing a risk of violation of the Act on Public Procurement. A MA will also cooperate with the PPO in this type of control. - Introduction of cooperation with the Antimonopoly Office in order to enhance competition protection by introducing cooperation of this entity with MA under the cooperation agreement. If risk factors, "red flags", are identified, the MAs will be required to ask the AMO for cooperation in the form of consultations or submission of a complaint. Another area of cooperation covers the preparation of a general methodology for the PP control system and training activities for employees performing controls. The AMO is responsible for competition protection in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) 1/2003 of 16 December 2002 on the implementation of the rules on competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty. - Introduction of price maps, benchmarks and limits to assess cost-effectiveness. At the level of the management system, an obligation will be introduced for MAs to consider a maximum amount of a non-repayable contribution sought, taking into account the system of price maps, benchmarks and limits for the most frequent and/or most relevant types of expenditure. The control of public procurement and/or of its outcome will subsequently verify whether these limits were observed. At the same time, a methodology procedure will be defined to set up these indicators in order to ensure they are set in a uniform and transparent manner. - Conflict of interests: Within the meaning and for the purposes of the Act on Public Procurement, conflicts of interests can only be resolved at a vertical level, i.e., at the level of conflict between the interests of a contracting authority/contracting entity/person referred to in §7 and 	<p>18 April 2016</p> <p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p> <p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p>	<p>CCA in cooperation with PPO</p> <p>CCA in cooperation with AMO</p> <p>CCA</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>tenderer/candidate.</p> <p>Where impartial and objective performance of public procurement is at risk or disrupted, which may lead to distortions in competition or which may prejudice the principle of equal treatment of all tenderers/candidate, directly or indirectly, due to conflicting family or emotional ties, economic, political or professional interest or any other personal interests (conflict of interest), such conduct is in conflict with the fundamental principles of public procurement under §9(3) of the Act on Public Procurement.</p> <p>- This issue will be addressed at the legislative and system level. At the legislative level, Slovakia will fully transpose the provisions on the conflict of interests based on the new EU public procurement directive. At the level of the PP management and control system, procedures for administrative control by the MA will be defined to identify conflicts of interest and further assess and address them.</p> <p>- Insufficient competition - only one tender submitted: The deficiency was addressed at the legislative and system level. At the legislative level, an amendment to the Act on Public Procurement enabled the contracting authority to cancel the award procedure in cases where only one or two tenders have been received. At the systemic level, this issue was addressed by modifying the system of management, where the MA is required to request that the PPO oversee the whole PP process if it identifies PP in which only one tender has been received. This obligation will also be transferred into a new management and control system. At the same time, competition protection will be strengthened through cooperation controlling bodies with the Antimonopoly Office.</p> <p>- Discriminatory tendering conditions: Elimination and/or identification of discriminatory tendering conditions are covered by several of the aforementioned measures, such as cooperation with the PPO, ex-ante assessment of tender notices and documentation prior to publication, as well as measures referred to in the part concerning training of employees and use of technical assistance to introduce and apply EU public procurement rules (e.g., employee training, beneficiary training,</p>		<p>CCA in cooperation with PPO</p> <p>CCA in cooperation with PPO and AMO</p> <p>Responsible: depending on a specific measure contained in this Action plan</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		publication and information about identified deficiencies).		
	Arrangements which ensure transparent contract award procedures.	The area of contract awarding not subject to the relevant EU directives on PP (below-threshold contracts) is covered by the PP Act itself in Slovak legislation. This provides for the obligation to proceed according to this Act in the procurement of works, goods and services for contracting authorities, contracting entities and individuals who are beneficiaries of grants. The procedures for these contracts are based on the basic principles of public procurement referred to in the relevant EU directives, thus ensuring transparent public procurement procedures even for contracts not falling under EU directives on public procurement. The public procurement procedures for this type of contracts will be covered by the same measures as specified, under criterion 1.	Deadline: 30 June 2015	Responsible: depending on the type of measure referred to under criterion 1
	Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds.	<p>3.1 Providing training by the CCA relating to procedures of administrative control of public procurement in the context of the management system, presentation of the most common deficiencies identified in public procurement controls.</p> <p>The CCA already provides training for MA/IBMA relating to procedures of administrative control of public procurement in the context of the management system, presentation of the most common deficiencies identified in public procurement controls, and interpretation of CCA methodology concerning public procurement. 179 employees received this training in 2013. In 2014 - 2015, the CCA also plans to organise and provide training focused on these issues; the basic module for the training of all employees is planned to be completed by 30 June 2015.</p> <p>Introduction of a uniform employee training system under the ESI Funds control and management system. The MA will be required to provide regular training and seminars for all staff involved in the implementation of the funds, while making participation in this training compulsory for this staff. The training system will be setup with the focus on ensuring targeted training for a particular group of</p>	<p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p> <p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p>	<p>CCA in cooperation with a relevant organisational unit of the Government Office of the SR</p> <p>CCA in cooperation with a relevant organisational unit of the Government Office of the SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>employees (e.g. PP controllers). Said training will involve seminars provided the CCA, PPO, as well as those organised by the Antimonopoly Office on competition protection.</p> <p>The existing forms of dissemination of information about deficiencies identified by PP controls will also be used in the 2014 - 2020 programming period, with an emphasis put on their enhanced information value.</p> <p>A proposal has also been made to establish a Coordinating Committee For Cooperation In Public Procurement This committee of experts, primarily from the CCA, PPO, CA, AA, RAs, will ensure a joint approach to the application of public procurement rules (cooperating in issuing methodology interpretations, instructions and guidelines adjusted to the needs of EU funds implementation). A clear advantage of constituting this body will be the instant identification of any serious misconduct (system-level irregularities) in MA/IBMA procedures in PP control and effective opportunities to take appropriate corrective measures to eliminate them. A uniform approach followed by all bodies and formulation of a joint statement will indirectly increase pressure for timely identification of errors in public procurement by bodies performing public procurement (this joint approach will ensure a faster and more effective response to identified errors).</p>	<p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p> <p>Deadline: 30 September 2014</p>	<p>CCA, PPO, MAs</p> <p>CCA</p>
	<p>Arrangements to ensure administrative capacity for implementation and application of Union public procurement rules.</p>	<p>In order to intensify cooperation between government agencies participating in PP and competition control, this cooperation will be reinforced between the PPO and the Antimonopoly Office and at the level of ensuring administrative capacity for these bodies through technical assistance.</p> <p>In the course of 2014, the increased demands for cooperation and control activities of the PPO will necessitate an increase in personnel capacity by around 25 employees, who will be recruited gradually depending on the amount of activities required by the CCA and MA.</p> <p>For the purposes of more effective management of this cooperation and more consistent application of EU public procurement rules in the activities related to the implementation of EU funds, these agendas</p>	<p>Deadline for PPO: 31 December 2014</p> <p>Deadline for AMO: 30 May 2015</p>	<p>Reinforcing administrative capacities: OP TA.</p> <p>Consultancy on the application of EU public procurement rules: PPO</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>were entrusted to a dedicated PPO deputy chairman.</p> <p>Using technical assistance within cooperation with the PPO to refund wage costs of employees delivering support activities for MAs, IBMAs, AA and CA under the cooperation agreement.</p> <p>Using technical assistance within cooperation with the PPO to refund costs of expert appraisals and expert opinions that will be necessary for delivering support activities for MAs, IBMAs, AA and CA under the cooperation agreement.</p> <p>Technical assistance for cooperation with the Antimonopoly Office of the SR.</p> <p>Methodology guidance provided by the PPO to parties involved in public procurement and publication of guidelines in a publicly accessible place - PPO's web site.</p> <p>Technical assistance for training of beneficiaries</p> <p>Training will focus on beneficiaries/applicants and will be designed, for example, to present the applicable control system, to highlight contractual requirements and obligations concerning the performance of PP control and submission of documentation for control, to inform beneficiaries of most frequent deficiencies identified by PP controls while presenting examples of best practice. Training should primarily be delivered by individual MAs so that its content and focus respond to the specific aspects of a given operational programme (e.g., customary subject matters of procurement).</p>	<p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p> <p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p> <p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p> <p>Deadline: 30 June 2015</p>	<p>OP TA in cooperation with CCA and PPO</p> <p>OP TA in cooperation with CCA and AMO</p> <p>PPO</p> <p>OP TA and individual MAs within their TA</p>
<p>5. State aid</p> <p>The existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union State aid rules in the field of the ESI Funds.</p>	<p>Arrangements for the effective application of Union State aid rules.</p>	<p>An amendment to Act No 231/1999 Coll. on State aid as amended, intended to:</p> <p>- strengthen the role of a State aid coordinator to make its statements and positions binding and to require each State aid provider to submit, prior to granting State aid, an application for State aid to the State aid coordinator (under Government Resolution No 156 of 9 April 2014, statements and position issued by the State aid coordinators are</p>	<p>31 July 2015</p>	<p>MF SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>already binding for all MAs and IBMAs);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - set up a legislative framework for the establishment of a central IT register for State aid which should cover individual aid and aid subject to general block exemption; - establish a central IT register for State aid having the scope and structure to be defined by a new GBER, due to come into force on 1 July 2014, and relevant Commission guidelines. 	<p>31 July 2015</p> <p>31 December 2015</p>	
	Arrangements to ensure administrative capacity for implementation and application of Union State aid rules	<p>Reinforcing administrative capacity of the State aid coordinator by 10 to 15 job positions (an increase of 100-150 %).</p> <p>The State aid coordinator unit will also fulfil the role a knowledge centre to provide necessary guidance on State aid.</p>	31 December 2014	MF SR
<p>6. Environmental legislation relating to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</p> <p>The existence of arrangements for the effective application of Union environmental legislation related to EIA and SEA.</p>	Arrangements for the effective application of Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (EIA) and of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (SEA).	Planned effective date of the legislative amendment	1 December 2014	MEn SR
	<p>Methodological guidance for competent authorities regarding the impact assessment in the “transition” period (until the amended legislative is adopted and becomes effective):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - written form to respective state administrative bodies acting in the field of environmental impact assessment specifying proper use of selection criteria for the screening procedure (Annex III of the EIA directive, reflected within Annex 10 of the EIA Act), - written form to respective state administrative bodies acting in the field of environmental impact assessment specifying sound procedure for rationalisation of decisions based on screening procedure by providing information on how the standpoints of bodies and municipalities concerned were 	<p>31 May 2014</p> <p>(depending on the progress in the preparation of legislative amendments, the deadline may be postponed)</p> <p>Note: The MEn SR already provides methodological guidance for the ongoing assessment processes both at the level of the ministry and at the level of other relevant authorities</p>		

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		<p>taken into account,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - written form to the permission authority on how to publish the information on launching the permitting procedure, including the right on access to the complete permission request. 		<p>MEn SR in cooperation with central bodies of public administration</p> <p>MEn SR, CCA, relevant MAS</p>
		<p>Following review procedures, the legislative arrangement were submitted to the EC and technical consultations will be held in the form of regular communication through the Permanent Representation of the SR to the EU.</p> <p>Submission of respective legislative arrangements to the Government of the SR for approval.</p> <p>Submission of respective legislative arrangements for to the National Council of the SR for approval.</p>	<p>31 May 2014</p> <p>30 June 2014</p> <p>30 September 2014</p>	
		<p>Preparation of the 3rd international conference SEA/EIA 2014 http://www.enviroportal.sk/kalendar-udalosti/den/27-05-2014</p> <p>Verification of material, technical and personnel capacities for the application of the legislative amendment.</p> <p>Adoption of a measure for direct application of the EIA Directive: Within an application procedure - in the case of applications for which a final assessment document was issued before the effective date of the amendment to the Act on Environmental Impact Assessment, compliance of the submitted project with the subject-matter of assessment will be examined. In cases where changes in the project occurred, re-assessment will be performed and, if necessary, re-permitting, as well.</p> <p>Measures related to examination of the compliance of the submitted project with the subject-matter of assessment will be specified in the ESI Funds management and control system for the 2014 - 2020 programming period.</p>	<p>By 28 May 2014</p> <p>30 June 2015</p> <p>31 December 2014</p>	
	<p>Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds</p>	<p>Delivery of trainings reflecting the legislative amendments.</p>	<p>31 December 2014</p>	

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
Ex ante conditionalities for the Rural Development Programme				
<p>5.2 Water sector: The existence of a) a water pricing policy which provides adequate incentives for users to use water resources efficiently and b) an adequate contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services at a rate determined in the approved river basin management plan for investment supported by the programmes.</p>	<p>In sectors supported by the EAFRD, a Member State has ensured a contribution of the different water uses to the recovery of the costs of water services by sector consistent with Article 9 paragraph 1 first indent of the Water Framework Directive having regard, where appropriate, to the social, environmental and economic effects of the recovery as well as the geographic and climatic conditions of the region or regions affected.</p>	<p>Introduction of the obligation to pay the costs for water services associated the irrigation of agricultural land (hereinafter as "irrigation") in the form of adequate contribution (payment) as recovery of the costs for water services in line with the introduction of the incentivising pricing policy according to Article 9 of the Water Framework Directive in the amendment to Act No. 364/2004 Coll. on water (the Water Act), followed by an amendment to Government Resolution No 755/2005 Coll. laying down amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use (amendment in Government Resolution No 367/2008 Coll.).</p> <p>SR has prepared an amendment to Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters (Water Act) which also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction of cost for water used for irrigation, which was cancelled through a political decision in 2004, - the relevant draft amendments to the Act must undergo the entire legislative process. Subsequently, an implementing regulation for the legislative process will be prepared – Government Resolution No 755/2005 Coll. laying down the amounts of non-regulated payments, amounts of fees and details related to the payment for water use. <p>It has to be stated that in the SR, water management services are regulated as regards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - production, distribution and supply of drinking water by public water supply system, and disposal and treatment of waste water through the public sewerage system, - use of hydropower potential of water streams, - offtake of energy water from water streams on water facilities, - offtake of surface water from water streams. <p>The regulation of the above water management services is carried out by RONI. Costs for all water management services are uniform for all</p>	<p>31 December 2014</p>	<p>MEn SR</p>

Not fulfilled or partially fulfilled ex ante conditionality	Not fulfilled criteria	Planned activities	Deadlines	Responsible bodies
		sectors (households, industry, and agriculture). This method of regulation is set in the Regulatory Policy of the RONI applicable for the respective period (currently for the years 2012 - 2016).		

2.4 The methodology mechanisms to ensure consistency in the functioning of the performance framework

Performance framework is one of the building elements for a result oriented approach in the programming period 2014 – 2020. In order to have performance framework successfully implemented, it is crucial to set up appropriate and effective set of indicators. A proposed approach represents minimum requirements for implementation of performance framework in the ESI Funds in the SR. In order to maintain consistency in selecting indicators and setting up milestones, it is necessary to base it on solid analytical background which will be prepared by MAs. The analysis involves four steps to be taken by MAs:

a) Selection of appropriate indicators;

- Selection of indicators is subject to fund-specific legislative rules within the individual ESI Funds. Selected indicators should be representative, realistic, verifiable and achievable;

b) Determination of target values of indicators to be achieved by 31 December 2023 based on expenditures necessary to perform activities with the most significant contribution to the objectives of priority axes³²³.

- It is appropriate to carry out the Value for Money analysis in relation to the desirable value of the indicator to be achieved through the use of the allocation. It is necessary to distinguish between the already implemented activities which provide useful experience from the past and new activities. Implemented activities represent a database of activities which enable to determine the cost of activities for the 2014-2020 programming period based on the project costs in the 2007-2013 programming period or other relevant project schemes with similar activities. The new activities, with no existing project experience to determine their costs, shall be valued on the basis of standardized price lists, conducted market surveys, statistical surveys, studies, analyses and relevant reports. In order to achieve verifiable values of costs for new activities, it is recommended to use recognized quantitative or qualitative methods, either those established under the ESF or other relevant international methods. If relevant input data are not at disposal to determine the value for money, qualified expert estimate shall be applied. Even though the entire exercise is rather complex, it is necessary for the MA to carry it out thoroughly allowing to identify a link between expected outputs and a given allocation. This means, it will be possible to estimate how many outputs will be realistically generated through the implementation of proposed activities with a given allocation.

c) Selection of appropriate indicators to determine milestones based on planned activities with regard to their potential to generate outputs by 2018;

- In order to select the most appropriate indicator for the performance framework, when choosing between an output indicator and key implementation step, the MA shall analyse the type of activities with regard to their potential to generate outputs by 2018. The analysis shall reflect the time needed for the preparatory and implementation phase of given types of operations.

d) Determination of milestones to be achieved by 31 December 2018 based on projected progress in implementation.

- Milestones are intermediate targets representing first outputs to be assessed by the EC. Their values are set out on the basis of activities generating outputs by 2018. In order to set proper values of milestones, it will be necessary to design a projected implementation curve specific to the type of indicator (financial indicator; output indicator or key implementation step; or result indicator).

Correct application of methods, expert estimates and determined target values of indicators and milestones are assessed by ex ante evaluation of the OP.

³²³For the purposes of this chapter instead of “priority axis”, it is referred to ‘union priority’ under EMFF and EAFRD

In the case of EAFRD, the selection of indicators, targets and milestones for the purposes of performance assessment will be set on the basis of the common monitoring and evaluation system, the rules of which will be defined directly for the EAFRD, including relevant monitoring mechanisms. Targets will be set on the basis of an analysis and intervention logic of the RDP. Milestone values will be specified and justified in the RDP.

Selection of indicators and setting up targets and milestones is the first step in the implementation of performance framework. The second step is to design mechanism of monitoring and evaluation of milestones and targets. There are two necessary preconditions for the existence of such mechanism:

1) Monitored period:

- The objective is to ensure monitoring and evaluation throughout the entire programming period, starting in 2014, which means not limited only to years 2018 to 2023. Monitoring and evaluation will be done on an annual basis and summarized in the Report on the State of Implementation of the ESI Funds prepared by the CCA in cooperation with MAs and approved by the Government. Equally, monitoring and evaluation will also be included in annual implementation reports to be prepared by MAs;

2) The milestones and targets are subject to the detection and correction mechanism as from 2014:

- In addition to setting the milestones and targets, the MAs will also set the partial values of indicators for every year of the 2014 - 2020 programming period including years 2021 and 2022. The MA will set the partial values of indicators based on the planned development of the implementation curve, the project cycle, experience from the 2007 – 2013 programming period, or any other relevant perspective.

Monitoring and evaluation is a two-phased process. The first phase ends after 2018 by the evaluation of milestones and the second after 2023 by the evaluation of targets. In the first phase, the purpose of assessing is to prepare conditions for allocating a reserve³²⁴ for well-performing priority axes and to minimise the risk of suspension of interim payments. Furthermore, well-performing priority axes may also benefit from the allocation of an additional reserve from underperforming priority axes. The allocation of the additional reserve will be subject to analysis of needs concerning identification of priorities to determine which priority axes are the most appropriate candidates to benefit from an additional performance reserve. The analysis will also take into account the absorption capacity of priority axes with regard to their potentially increased allocation, considering the external factors which may affect the implementation of priority axes, e.g. current macroeconomic situation. The analysis will be prepared by the CCA in cooperation with the MAs and the representatives of HP. To increase the number of well-performing axes, a mechanism for underperformance detection will be introduced based on correction measures. This means that annual programme implementation reports will comprise of assessment of achieving partial values of indicators and milestones. If underperformance of a priority axis is detected, the respective MA in cooperation with the CCA shall prepare Action Plan for an early correction to be approved by the Government to increase political legitimacy of the Action Plan. On the other hand, underperformance preventing allocation of the performance reserve shall by no means be a cause hampering fulfilment of criteria for thematic concentration, notably earmarking. The purpose of assessing in the second phase starting in 2019 is to prepare conditions for meeting target values of indicators and to minimise the risk of financial corrections. For this purpose, early detection mechanism for underperformance based on correction measures, shall be applied similarly as for the first phase.

The details concerning the performance framework implementation mechanism will be specified in the

³²⁴ With the exception of priority axes that are not subject to the specification of the performance reserve. For these priority axes, the obligation to fulfil milestones applies equally, however, without the allocation of a performance reserve.

performance reserve methodological instruction to be issued by the CCA.

2.5 An assessment of whether there is a need to reinforce the administrative capacity of the authorities involved in the management and control of programmes and, where appropriate, of the beneficiaries, as well as, where necessary, a summary of the actions to be taken for this purpose

The current implementation of the EU cohesion policy in the SR has been significantly affected by shortcomings regarding administrative capacity (hereinafter referred to as the “AC”). The competence, structure, responsibilities and flexibility of ACs are of prime importance for the efficient use of the ESI Funds, taking into account the specifications of the EAFRD and EMFF. Experience from the previous programming periods shows that there is a need for a more efficient coordination among the authorities involved in the administration and financial management of the ESI Funds, a need for measures providing stability and support of the ACs, as well as the need to adequately target and use technical assistance of the EU, in order to enhance human resources efficiency and to reduce administrative burden related to the programming, management, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and control of the ESI Funds.

The main reasons for the current state of ACs in the 2007 - 2013 programming period include:

- complicated management and financial management system setting and ambiguous division of responsibilities among the coordination authorities;
- reduced resistance of public administration to political influences affecting the implementation and management of the EU cohesion policy;
- high ACs turnover, especially leading management ACs, as the consequence of the political cycle and changes, as well as other factors;
- insufficient integrity of information services within the implementing bodies to applicants and beneficiaries;
- lack of instruments for the monitoring and evaluation of the work performance of ACs.

The SR is fully aware of the strategic importance of ACs as a precondition for effective and efficient implementation of the ESI Funds. The strategy of strengthening ACs focuses on systematic enhancement of performance and efficiency of ACs in management and control of the ESI Funds, taking into account the needs of the EAFRD and EMFF. With respect to ACs, changes and corrective and preventive measures are expected to be taken in a number of areas, such as in regulation and management of processes and mechanisms at all stages of the programmes/project implementation, precise quantification of ACs and optimization of working positions and process roles of persons employed by ESI Funds coordination authorities, introduction of motivation tools for the consolidation of ACs into a dynamic and interrelated system.

In order to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the EAFRD and EMFF, it will be necessary to strengthen ACs in relation to the new elements of the CAP and in the area of monitoring and evaluation under both CAP pillars, as well as to define the needs in regard to ensuring efficient and effective performance of management and control.

Structure and Process Optimization of Administrative Capacities

In accordance with principle of thematic concentration, the number of subjects involved in the ESI Funds implementation will be reduced. However, mere reduction of implementation levels would not be sufficient. It is necessary to evaluate administrative operation and rationalize structures and processes, simplify methods, rules and procedures of the ESI Funds implementation. Regarding the performance of the ACs, it is of importance to implement actions to enable sound and correct PP that appeared to be the most problematic area in the implementation of the ESI Funds and to involve the Public Procurement Office

(hereinafter referred to as “PPO”) more intensely in the control of the PP. Specific measures designed to improve the smoothness and correctness of the PP in terms of ACs will be based on intensified cooperation between the PPO and MA. The MA will be obliged, based on a centrally defined risk analysis, sent any risky PP cases for control by the PPO within the framework of formalised cooperation in the provision of support from the ESI Funds which will be coordinated by the CCA³²⁵. The PPO will draw up a uniform interpretation and methodology for the application of PP rules for the needs of the ESI Funds.

A procedural change will also focus on ensuring more efficient division and delegation of tasks and powers at the level of MA.

The central regulatory position of the CCA will be strengthened in the preparatory phase (programming, methodology, etc.) and during implementation in all phases. This will be ensured through an effective system of monitoring and evaluation of meeting the objectives under individual programmes, with a possibility of influencing the design of specific corrective measures if the objectives are not met. The specific rights and obligations connected with the implementation of corrective and preventive measures will be defined in the Slovak legislation and in the ESI Funds governing documents (e.g. Act on Support from the ESI Funds, System of Management and Control of the ESI Funds, action plans, etc.). Effective performance of the tasks outlined above requires institutional stabilisation of the CCA by strengthening its administrative capacities and making its structure more efficient, including the building of analytical capacities.

Administrative capacity management

ACs are not only confronted with the challenge of mutual cooperation and efficient inner structure and division of activities and competencies, but also with the demand for high quality personal management and human resources development. For the purposes of ACs, the set of measures will be reflected in a comprehensive strategy for the strengthening and management of administrative capacities focusing on the systemic improvement of performance and positive changes right from the start of the 2014 – 2020 programming period.

Based on the results of the analysis of ACs³²⁶, a comprehensive strategy for the strengthening and management of administrative capacities is planned to be adopted in the SR. The measures implemented under this strategy will mainly focus on enhancing the quality of ACs, with particular emphasis on the following areas:

- standardization of working positions, identification and elimination of the duplicate functions and establishment of a standardized personal structure for the administration of the project (programme) cycle;
- development of a standardized system of performance assessment and introduction of a unified remuneration system, applying equal rules for all authorities to prevent staff turnover in bodies involved in management and control and eliminate transfers of ACs between individual bodies;
- establishment of a standardized system of career development and education with the perspective for administrative capacity development;
- statement of criteria for the quantification of administrative and human resources requirement and qualification standards for individual working positions;
- development of systematic actions for solving problems of the ACs on the basis of analyses, audits and control mechanisms;
- the limitation of the impact of political cycles on personal changes will be ensured through the

³²⁵ The measures in the area of PP are specified in greater detail in the evaluation of the ex ante conditionality “Public Procurement”

³²⁶ Analysis of ACs and effectiveness of the bodies responsible for European Structural and Investment Funds and of ACs of beneficiaries, 2014

adoption of a new Act on State Service (by 31 December 2014). This Act will govern the rules and procedures for the selection, re-assignment and dismissal of state servants respecting the principles of objective and transparent management of ACs. It will be complemented by specific measures of relevance to the ESI Funds, mainly:

- definition of the proposal for the optimisation of organisational structure and the creation of a standardised personnel structure within the entities involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds;
 - special central supervision over the organisational changes performed at the level of the entities involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds;
 - link between the eligibility of expenditures and the funding of ACs – identification of ineligible expenditures in the case of politically or otherwise improperly motivated interventions in the area of ACs.
- introduction of systemic measures aimed at controlling the conduct of public authorities and supporting fight against corruption. The ministry responsible at the national level is the MI SR which will coordinate, within the framework of the comprehensive reform of public administration, also activities in this area, in close cooperation with the Section of Control and Fight against Corruption at the Office of the Government – OLAF. The specific measures in the system of the ESI Funds management will be covered by the CCA in close cooperation with the MI SR as the lead ministry at the national level, and with other relevant entities. In this connection, the CCA will prepare a strategy³²⁷ containing specific measures, which will be based on the following principles:
 - Increased transparency of processes through effective involvement of the representatives of partners in activities and intensified cooperation with these representatives;
 - Enhanced public control through providing access to the largest possible volume of data;
 - Introduction of measures aimed at combating fraud³²⁸ and increased CCA supervision, in cooperation with the Section of Control and Fight against Corruption at the Office of the Government - OLAF, over the decision-making powers of the MAs at the level of two riskiest processes (e.g. centralised selection of evaluators, process of project selection and the PP);
 - reinforcement of the ACs of applicants and beneficiaries of the support. The measures³²⁹ planned in this area can be divided into the following key areas:
 - Improved access for applicant and beneficiaries to information and advisory services³³⁰;
 - Change in the system of implementation of national projects and major projects – increased emphasis on active cooperation between the MA and beneficiary of the support in the preparation of projects, mainly in the preparatory phase, through appropriate engagement of JASPERS experts (major projects);
 - System of training for applicants/beneficiaries of the support focusing on the conditions for the ESI Funds implementation (training courses, seminars, etc.).

The number of ACs involved in the ESI Funds will be determined based on the results of AC analysis³³¹, taking into account:

- the current level of ACs (about 2,500 AC);
- the need for increased ACs during the concurrence of two programming periods;
- the new structure of entities and identified needs for ACs in the 2014 – 2020 programming period.

³²⁷ Central Coordinating Authority will submit the strategy to the Government for approval and will keep the EC informed on detailed steps

³²⁸ Mandatory introduction of the minimum standards required under Article 125(4)(c) in line with the Guidance Note on Fraud Risk Assessment and Effective and Proportionate Measures to Combat Fraud

³²⁹ Additional measures will be adopted based on the results and recommendations which will be a part of the analysis of administrative capacities, a significant part of which also focuses on the improvement of capacities of beneficiaries

³³⁰ The specific and most appropriate form of strengthening the area of the provision of information will be selected based on the results of the analysis of administrative capacities in combination with the results of a questionnaire designed to identify the most appropriate ways for the elimination of administrative burden, mentioned in relation to the measures contained in Chapter 2.6 of the Partnership Agreement.

³³¹ Analysis of ACs and effectiveness of the bodies responsible for European Structural and Investment Funds and of ACs of beneficiaries, 2014

Measures to combat corruption and fraud

Slovakia pays due attention to efforts to combat corruption and fraud. The adoption of the “Strategic plan to combat corruption in the SR”³³² created a framework for a policy solution concerning the efforts to combat corruption and fraud and, at the same time, highlights Slovakia’s commitment to continue adopting effective measures in this area.

Taking into consideration EC recommendations to Slovak authorities (especially the Position Paper and the Anti-Corruption Report adopted by the Commission on 3 February 2014), the SR will adopt legislation governing the protection of corruption whistleblowers and introduce provisions on criminal liability of legal persons in this area into its legal system in order to facilitate identification and more effective penalisation of serious anti-social activities. Further measures intended to strengthen a transparent and corruption-free environment adopted, or planned to be adopted by SR, including with the use of funding from EU funds, also involve:

a) measures to reinforce a repressive component in combating corruption and fraud

A set of measures to reinforce a repressive component in combating corruption is defined in Government Resolution No 137/2013 of 20 March 2013 on the Proposal of Measures to Provide for the Fulfilment of the Recommendations adopted for the SR by the OECD Working Group for Bribery in International Business Transactions". Under said document, Slovakia undertakes to reinforce investigation capacities of specialised investigation units for combating corruption and related money-laundering activities. In this respect, the SR plans to increase financial allocations to fund the operation of the financial police and specialised investigation units for combating corruption and related money-laundering activities, including by providing training and educational programmes for officers of specialised investigation units for combating corruption.

The planned measures focus on applying a merit-based principle when appointing officers for managerial positions in the Police Corps and on the need for developing a strategy for more effective identification and criminal penalisation of corruption-related crimes. An inter-ministerial expert coordinating body to combat crime established at the Police Corps of the SR ensures a coordinated approach to, and exchange of information for, the adoption and implementation of measures to combat corruption and fraud. A number of actors are involved in proposing specific measures under this mechanism, including representatives of general government authorities, the Prosecutor General's Office, Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia, while representatives of non-governmental organisations are granted an observer status. This approach represent a system-level solution having a potential to ensure coordination, concurrence and succession of measures and activities in terms of time, space as well as methods of their implementation.

b) measures for transparent financing of political parties

The MI SR prepared a government draft of an amendment to Act No 85/2005 Coll. on political parties and political movements as amended in order to enhance transparency and control of the financing of political parties. The amendment includes a provision concerning the financing and control of financing of political parties that stipulates that a political party may only accept financial donations by wire transfer to its bank account. Also, a provision has been introduced that requires political parties to keep transparent records of financial donations, donations in kind and donors, and publish them on their web sites, thus making the rules on accepting financial and in-kind donations, as well as the rule for keeping records thereof. In addition, annual reports presented by political parties have to contain additional documents proving their financial discipline and reports on costs of election campaigns. At the same time, stricter penalties have been stipulated for infringements of the rules on financing political parties.

³³² The “Strategic plan to combat corruption in the Slovak Republic” was adopted by the Government on 10 August 2011; an assessment of the measures adopted was acknowledged by the Government on 2 April 2014.

The draft amendment to Act No 85/2005 Coll. on political parties and political movements as amended was submitted to the National Council of the SR which approved it in the first reading on 11 September 2013. The draft amendment to Act No 85/2005 Coll. on political parties and political movements as amended will be discussed at a plenary session of the National Council of the SR in the second reading on 27 May 2014.

c) measures in the field of implementation of EU funds

The SR is aware of the need of adoption effective measures to combat corruption, fraud and cronyism in the implementation of EU funds. In this regards, the SR plans to adopt a generally binding regulation to specify in detail the rights and obligation of bodies involved in the implementation process, including through introduction of new mechanisms to enhance its objectiveness and transparency. They will primarily include a definition of the prohibition of a conflict of interests for persons involved in the implementation process, extending possibilities to seek redress in case an application for support is dismissed, as well as effective engagement of partners overseeing the approval process, including through strengthening their capacities to oversee transparency and objectiveness in the implementation process. A special body to be established for the purposes of overseeing objectiveness and transparency in the implementation process will be a CCA Council.

More specific measures in the area of the implementation of EU funds are being prepared at the level of the ESI Funds management and control system as a set of binding rules for the provision of EU funds for all bodies which should focus on enhancing transparency and control in the highest risk processes (selection/approval process, public procurement and control).

d) measures in public procurement

The SR will adopt new comprehensive public procurement legislation by the first half of 2015 at the latest, which will transpose new EU directives and reflect the experience from the application of the current public procurement law. Specific measures are contained in an action plan for the public procurement ex-ante conditionality.

Systems and Tools of Effective Public Administration and Assessment of Future Capacity Needs

Based on the conducted analysis of the ACs³³³, performance assessment and productivity, as well as the scope of synergy and the stability of ACs in the 2007 – 2013 programming period, the need for ACs and tools for the 2014 – 2020 programming period has been projected with the emphasis on the following fields:

- introduction of common methodology for the implementation of financial support from the ESI Funds while taking account of the EAFRD and EMFF specificities;
- simplification of management and financial management procedures and making it more understandable; identification of possibilities for process automation and enlarging the electronic exchange of documents and data;
- undertaking measures to increase the quality, availability, transparency and reliability of public services and consulting and guidance services in the field of the ESI Funds, introduction of electronic services;
- development and implementation of unified methodology and unified interpretation of public procurement rules and procedures including public procurement control on the central level and also in cooperation with the PPO;

³³³ Analysis of administrative capacities (AC) and effectiveness of the bodies responsible for European Structural and Investment Funds and of administrative capacities of beneficiaries, 2014

- strengthening the evaluation of programmes and carrying out relevant studies and analyses using technical assistance of the EU;
- monitoring and regular evaluation of programme/project results and application of standard procedures for the allocation and distribution of funds in line with these evaluations and according to the rules of strategic evaluation;
- regular comparison of the performance of bodies and benchmarking of the implementation system, as a tool for identifying differences and deficiencies in the implementation of the ESI Funds and for the use of „best practice“.

Use of resources of technical assistance will fully respect listed measures, focused primarily on improving ACs at the strategic level with respect to the PA SR level, as well as at the programme level. In order to ensure an overall improvement in the quality and effectiveness of the ESI Funds implementation in the 2014 – 2020 programming period by achieving the above targets, it is necessary to optimise the processes of the ACs involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds and strengthen the management and measures to enhance the quality of implementation with support through EU technical assistance.

2.6 A summary of the actions planned in the programmes, including an indicative timetable, to achieve a reduction in the administrative burden for beneficiaries

In the context of measures to achieve a reduction of administrative burdens it is necessary to identify and remove the barriers all the way to the level of beneficiaries of support from the ESI Funds, taking into account the particularities of the EAFRD and EMFF. Several measures in this area have been or continuously are adopted in the programming period 2007 - 2013 (such as requiring official confirmation demonstrating compliance with the conditions for granting support until the decision on approval is reached; not requiring submission of such confirmation by the majority of unsuccessful applicants; running the test version of the centralized system for requesting the documents proving fulfilment of certain conditions for granting the support). Inclusion of other measures that increase efficiency in this area is expected in the programming period 2014 – 2020. The potential for reducing administrative burden for the programming period 2014 – 2020 identified by experience of the CCA and other Authorities, which took a part on the implementation process of the programming period 2007 – 2013³³⁴, is mainly in the following areas:

- The need to simplify, clarify and unify forms of calls for submission of applications for support within the different ESI Funds;
- The need to implement the possibility of two-round selection of applications for support with an emphasis on minimizing administrative and financial requirements of the first round of selection;
- The need to improve the availability of information on the possibilities and conditions for receiving support from the ESI Funds and the need to provide centralized high-quality and expert advice in this field, including awareness-raising and publicity about the ESI Funds via print and electronic media;
- The need for standardization of documents relating to the conditions of support and preparation of such documents in a “user-friendly” format;
- The need to ensure the exchange of relevant information on applicants and projects held by public

³³⁴ Proposed areas with identified potential for administrative burden reduction arise from experience of the Central Coordination Authority in the programming period 2007 – 2013 (these are areas with the greatest problems related to the administrative burden). In order to identify weaknesses at the level of current national implementation rules, Central Coordination Authority organized a round of discussions and consultations with Managing Authorities. The aim of these meetings was to identify weaknesses in current implementation rules with the objective to raise effectiveness of the support provided and to eliminate administrative barriers. The conclusions served as basis for focusing on areas with the biggest potential to reduce administrative burden and make the implementation rules more effective for applicants/beneficiaries; summary of which is provided in the chapter. Since the purpose of the administrative burden reduction is to simplify administrative processes primarily at the level of applicants/beneficiaries, the proposed systemic measures will be complemented by specific proposals to emerge from a questionnaire-based survey at the level of partners and beneficiaries. The results of the survey will be used to devise the most suitable ways of reducing administrative burden and incorporated into the Management and Control System for the 2014 – 2020 programming period.

authorities through direct mutual communication, without requiring them from the applicants of support and maximizing the positive effects associated with the introduction of an effective IT system, even when communicating in relation provider - beneficiary ;

- The update of existing information systems in the context of e-cohesion principles, which will drastically reduce the administrative burden and labor intensity of ESI Funds implementation for the applicant, recipient, provider, audit and control. Further expected benefits of introducing e-cohesion principles are described in section 4.1.

It is desirable that these measures are built upon also when setting up the processes of implementation of projects and requirements placed on the administration in respect of the beneficiaries (mainly in respect of accessible, high-quality and clear information in form enabling easy work with them, verification of information on the beneficiaries and projects through direct communication with relevant government organizations without requiring them from beneficiaries, etc.). In addition to these areas, the following measures directed at reducing the administrative burden on the part of beneficiaries are proposed:

Planned activity	Measure Implementation start date	Full measure implementation
Involving employees in the system of continuous training of those involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds with effect on streamlining the implementation processes and directly reducing administrative burdens on the part of beneficiaries	1 January 2014	31 December 2014 and subsequently continuously throughout the entire programming period 2014 – 2020
For the ESI Funds except the EAFRD - Conversion of an existing information system ITMS II to the system, which fully takes into account the requirements of e-cohesion, the design and functionality of which, will comply with the current world-wide standards for smart and open information systems. As far as the RDP for 2014 – 2020 is concerned, the Agricultural paying agency plans to introduce the electronic exchange of communication within the same timeframe set for the full implementation of the measure taking into account world-wide standards for smart and open IT systems	1 January 2014	31 December 2015
The introduction of uniform, clear and effective rules of the change procedure enabling optimal response to the changed conditions of the project	1 January 2014	31 December 2014
Best practice templates/models of tender documentation for public procurement (PP) at the level of the Public Procurement Office (PPO) will be published on-line in a user-friendly way in order to disseminate best practices in the ambit of PP	1 November 2013	1 July 2015

At the same time, the following areas with significant potential for further reducing of the administrative burden on the part of beneficiaries and providers were also identified:

- Ensuring the widest possible use of simplified reporting of project expenditures under those programmes, the character of which is suitable for applying the individual methods of reporting such expenditures (a significant proportion of errors related to eligibility of expenditure is due to the complexity of expenditures reporting being used for the programming period 2007 – 2013, the so-called actual expenditures principle;
- Establishing a single, unified documentation which modifies procedures and ways of the implementation of projects, including regular updating of lists of repeated shortcomings, errors and dissemination of best practice in the implementation of projects;

- Ensuring a single network of entities providing consultancy and information services in order to increase the availability of information to beneficiaries, to facilitate the preparation of documents related to the project implementation and reduce the financial costs of project management associated with the need for outsourced consulting services during the project implementation. With regard to provide information on possible financing from the RDP, possibility to ensure availability of information at the level of this single network of entities will be explored in order to ensure availability of providing comprehensive information at one place;
- Introducing a requirement of compliance with the rules of transparent and efficient project management and provision of expert advice in this area to beneficiaries within the framework of a single network of information and advisory centres. Likewise, in the course of implementation, ultimate goal will be to ensure complex availability of information at one place including the effective interface between communication channels for the RDP and other programmes co-financed from the ESI Funds;
- With reference to identified weaknesses in providing support from the EMFF, the additional measures planned to address them focus on emphasis on the obligation of beneficiary to implement project in line with approved grant agreement and obligation to observe the sustainability condition of the project. The goal is to eliminate the several requests for amendments of grant agreements or early termination of grant agreement from the side of beneficiary. Measures for reduction of administrative burden for EMFF focus on reduction of obligatory annexes to the grant application and will be linked to the measures of submitting reduced number of annexes only for those applicants who fulfilled other conditions required for approving the grant application;
- In the case of projects related to MRC, effective monitoring and evaluation will be ensured as an integral part of the national strategic framework. This will constitute the basic attribute inevitable for measuring the progress that has been made so far, by introducing a regular and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism, predominantly in programmes aimed at promoting labour mobility, social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination, and educational programmes, training and development of skills, including lifelong learning.

Above mentioned measures will be applied to all the ESI Funds taking into account particular needs of the EMFF and the EAFRD. Ultimate goal is to embed measures for reduction of the administrative burden in the widest possible extent at the central level which will ensure their obligatory implementation at the level of bodies providing support from the ESI Funds. Regarding the application of concrete measures in the RDP 2014 – 2020 co-financed from the EAFRD, an effective system for exchange of information and regular consultations will be put in place and enable to make use of particular measures for projects co-financed by the EAFRD if relevant.

APA has long been working on improvements in IT equipment to adapt it to open solutions. As regards IT systems, it prefers the use of open standards that prevent dependence on suppliers and facilitates the exchange of information. The currently deployed IT modules for AGIS PRV and AGIS MFR meet the open standard requirements in technical terms. The requirements are based on nation-wide e-Government standards, regulations and laws.

3 Integrated approach to territorial development supported by the ESI Funds, or a summary of integrated approaches to territorial development based on the content of the programmes

In the 2007 – 2013 programming period, the territorial concentration approach focused on targeting investments in a particular territory on a thematic basis has been applied. The municipalities and cities were divided into the innovation and cohesion growth poles and rural areas. However, these projects were implemented as demand-oriented, which exerted pressure on administration and beneficiaries incurred high financial cost in the connection with the preparation of project applications. The experience from the 2007 – 2013 programming period showed deficiencies in the preparatory phase, in planning and in the decision-making processes at the local, regional and national level. In the absence of an integrated approach, preference tends to be given to individual projects which have a lesser impact on the overall ability to meet the objectives set in the National Strategic Reference Framework for the years 2007 – 2013.

In the 2014 – 2020 programming period, integrated approach will be applied in order to ensure the highest possible contribution of the ESI Funds towards meeting the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy. The application of integrated approach requires better strategic planning and decision-making mechanisms with direct involvement and responsibility of stakeholders in territorial development in the form of partnership, with an emphasis on the competitiveness of the territory of the region. The strategic documents of the SR in the area of regional development and territorial planning serve as the basis for the implementation of the integrated approach. The main role of territorial concentration for individual thematic objectives is the division of territories based on their characteristics, functions and development potential, in order to focus investments from the ESI Funds on addressing specific regional problems and making the best possible use of the local potential and resources. The baseline document of the territorial division is the national spatial planning document, the CTDS (See part 1.1.1 “Territorial concentration of the investment priorities under thematic objectives”).

Slovakia will also be using global grants, in particular for non-government organisations, which will be thematically and territorially focused, namely through support from the ESF and the ERDF. These global grants will be implemented through small projects administered by intermediate non-government organisations in order to ensure the broadest possible application of the simplified expenditure system.

3.1 The arrangements to ensure an integrated approach to the use of the ESI Funds for the territorial development of specific sub-regional areas

The arrangements designed to ensure an integrated approach to the use of the ESI Funds, to be implemented at various levels, will be based on enhancing multi-level planning and cooperation.

3.1.1 Community-led local development (CLLD)

The community-led local development (CLLD) instrument will be used to address challenges at the local level in a manner known so far under the LEADER approach. The local level is typical for a great variety of needs and challenges faced by individual territories. Their identification and solution have a direct impact on the territory concerned, provided that the local community has the necessary organisational, technical and financial capacities for their implementation.

The main challenges at local level are:

- A. Reducing social and economic backwardness
 - improving the competitiveness of lagging rural areas,
 - increasing the support for the self-employed, independently operating farmers, and for micro and small companies, particularly in the agricultural sector,

- improving the qualification and experience of labour,
 - reducing the high unemployment rate mainly among the young in rural areas, and thus reducing the risk of poverty,
 - expanding the opportunities for the development of local markets and for the creation of short producer-consumer chains (e.g., in the food chain),
 - developing the local economy and improving the deployment of innovation at local level,
 - improving the utilisation of resources in rural areas, e.g., natural and cultural heritage.
- B. Improving the quality of life
- improving the social and technical infrastructure in rural areas,
 - increasing the attractiveness of the area for inhabitants and improving the opportunities for alternative leisure-time activities,
 - raising awareness of the values of cultural heritage and of the need to protect natural resources in rural areas,
 - increasing the resilience to and protection against emergencies affected by climate change in rural areas,
 - enhancing the deployment of new progressive (green) technologies and innovation in rural areas,
 - increasing the support for social inclusion, reducing poverty and increasing the economic growth in rural areas.
- C. Improving the infrastructure of local services in rural areas
- increasing the efficiency, quality and diversity of local services,
 - increasing the involvement of local partners in the preparation and implementation of projects and reducing the dominance of support provided from the public sector.

The main priority areas implemented through the CLLD approach include:

- Development of local economy and employment through the use of local resources and establishment of innovations in rural areas, as well as support for various types of employment in rural areas,
- Protection of the environment and adaptation to the consequences of climate change, efficient and sustainable utilisation of resources in rural areas,
- Capacity building and development of civil society in regions,
- Increased quality and safety of local infrastructures and physical regeneration of rural areas.

The application of the CLLD-approach will primarily contribute towards achieving TO9. Individual rural development strategies will also contribute towards achieving other thematic objectives depending on the goals of local strategies, namely thematic objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10.

Target territory

The target territory for CLLD is the entire territory of the SR, i.e., rural areas and rural-urban areas. In this territory, the formation of one type of LAGs will be supported - rural LAGs. The rural character of a LAG is defined by a maximum population density of 150 people/km². LAGs may also involve small or medium-sized cities or municipal districts. They will represent rural-urban links within a LAG territory. The criterion for the LAG eligibility is the territory of the entire LAG, as opposed to the territories (as registered in the cadastre) of its individual members. The number of inhabitants in the LAG territory must be above 10,000 and below 150,000. Within the framework of CLLD, a municipality with a population of more than 20,000 will be excluded as eligible applicant for support. Such municipalities/cities, as legal persons, may be members of the LAG, however, only entities operating or registered in their territory may become eligible applicants for support. The purpose of the CLLD is to foster the economic, social and territorial cohesion of rural or mostly rural areas and provide for their long-term sustainable development by building synergies between rural development centres and their functional hinterlands using the multi-fund community-led local development approach with the potential of complementarity towards integrated territorial

investments (hereinafter “ITI”) and sustainable urban development (hereinafter “SUD”).

Identification of the ESI Funds used for CLLD and their allocation

The CLLD will be supported from the EAFRD through the RDP SR (LEADER Initiative) and the ERDF through the IROP. The CLLD will not be implemented directly through the ESF and the EMFF. However, the ESF will contribute to the defined CLLD objectives on a complementary basis through open calls for LAGs under the OP HR. The EAFRD allocation for CLLD support will be at least 5 % of the Fund’s contribution under the RDP SR allocation. The ERDF indicative allocation through the IROP will reach EUR 100 million.

Since CLLD will support only one type of LAG, the role of the ERDF and EAFRD will not be differentiated by different types of territories, but both funds will be used on the same LAG territory. In term support for business development and employment, the EAFRD will focus, under the RDP, on agriculture, food processing industry, forestry, rural tourism and diversification of agricultural activities. ERDF support will concentrate on other business activities in a LAG territory. In terms of improvements in physical recovery of the territory, the ERDF will strengthen urban-rural links and relations between development centres and their surrounding within a LAG territory; the EAFRD will focus on enhancing the quality of life in rural areas through investments in minor infrastructure and improvements in local services.

Scope of local development strategies

The integrated local development strategies will be prepared as multi-fund strategies, i.e., funded from both the EAFRD and the ERDF. In order to increase their contribution towards meeting the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, their scope may be wider so as to cover the implementation of activities supported from other EU and national funding instruments other than the ESI Funds.

Slovakia will not use financing to cover the operating costs of LAG and the strategy recovery costs (animation) through the lead fund. These costs will be funded from the EAFRD and the ERDF as follows: LAG operating costs (except for LAG in the territory of the BSR) will be funded from the ERDF and the costs for strategy recovery (animation) from the EAFRD. The EAFRD will also cover operating costs of LAGs outside the territory of the BSR.

An effective implementation of the CLLD instrument requires the mobilisation of stakeholders in the given territory with a view to analysing the territory, involving the stakeholders in the decision-making and preparation processes and, subsequently, implementing a high quality local development strategy. Of the funds allocated for the implementation of the CLLD instrument, a certain amount will be earmarked for preparatory support, in particular for those partnerships and territories which have not implemented the bottom-up approach (LEADER) yet. Preparatory support will cover the costs of capacity building (training, courses for local stakeholders), the costs of studies and analyses of the given territory, the costs related to the preparation of a strategy, including administration costs, etc. For partnerships and territories that have not implemented a bottom-up approach yet, a call for preparatory support will be announced. The preparatory support will be funded from the EAFRD. With a sufficient time interval after the provision of the preparatory support, a call to select LAGs will be announced, open for partnerships and territories that have so far not implemented a bottom-up approach and which used the preparatory support, as well as for LAGs that did not use the preparatory support. The preparatory support will be funded from the EAFRD. Activities performed by the relevant MAs with a view to informing the relevant partners about the CLLD instrument, possibilities for support, the development of a strategy, etc., will represent an important part of thorough preparation.

CLLD coordination and administration

The main authority responsible for the coordination of CLLD preparation and implementation at the national level will be the MARD SR in its capacity as MA for the RDP 2014 – 2020 (also referred to as “CLLD Lead Ministry”). The CLLD Lead Ministry, together with the IROP MA, will create a joint authority for the coordination of CLLD preparation and implementation, the main task of which will be to synchronise activities in relation to the CLLD in terms of time and substance. CLLD Lead Ministry will be responsible for

the announcement of the call(s) for LAG selection. For the selection of local development strategies and subsequent award of the LAG status, CLLD Lead Ministry will set up a selection committee where the IROP MA will also be represented. In the areas requiring joint coordinated approach, CLLD Lead Ministry will cooperate with the IROP MA and other relevant partners in CLLD implementation.

The minimum tasks of the LAGs are defined in Article 34 of Regulation No 1303/2013 and include:

- building the capacity of local actors to develop and implement operations including fostering their project management capabilities;
- drawing up a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations, which avoid conflicts of interest, ensure that at least 50 % of the votes in selection decisions are cast by partners which are not public authorities, and allow selection by written procedure;
- ensuring coherence with the community-led local development strategy when selecting operations, by prioritising those operations according to their contribution to meeting that strategy's objectives and targets;
- preparing and publishing calls for the submission of applications for support, including defining selection criteria;
- receiving and assessing applications for support;
- selecting operations and fixing the amount of support and, where relevant, presenting the proposals to the body responsible for final verification of eligibility before approval;
- monitoring the implementation of the community-led local development strategy and the operations supported and carrying out specific evaluation activities linked to that strategy.

Further tasks of the Lags include:

- publicity and information on the area concerned and on the results of the local development strategy;
- networking and cooperation with other LAGs and/or rural stakeholders;
- other tasks defined in the relevant programmes.

3.1.2 Integrated Territorial Investments (ITIs)

The basic requirement for the implementation of ITIs is the existence of a strategic document that defines, in particular, overall objectives, including expected results, a relevant territory where ITIs should be made; investment priorities under corresponding programmes; implementing procedures for the performance of strategies, and a monitoring mechanism, including result indicators.

ITIs will be made on the basis of so-called regional integrated territorial strategies (hereinafter referred to as "RITS") under the IROP. The RITS will be the baseline strategic document for the implementation of ITIs at the regional level, having impacts on the local level. Under the RITS, ITIs will be implemented at the regional level in accordance with individual and integrated projects whose joint delivery contributes to meeting the objectives under the relevant RITS. A RITS will contain an analytical and strategic section (analysis, thematic areas of support, expected results) and a programme section (planned measures to be implemented within the RITS-covered territory, time schedule of their implementation and the monitoring process of the relevant RITS). The integrated approach across the relevant functional territory will be ensured by the requirement to identify, through the RITS, such planned measures which will contribute to the development of the entire RITS-covered territory. Each RITS will cover a NUTS 3 territory, i.e., a total of eight RITS will be implemented, including the BSR, covering the entire territory of the SR.

The planned measures and actions based on the RITS will be financed from a majority of the thematic priority axes of the IROP. In order to ensure an integrated approach and comprehensive solutions, the planned measures funded under the IROP will be complemented by "soft" measures funded from the ESF through the OP HR. The RITS will also contain proposals of "soft" measures which will be complementary to the IROP investment activities. The funding under the IROP and OP HR will be coordinated by the MA

through working groups for the deinstitutionalisation of the provision of social services and substitute care and for the area of education. The RITS may also identify those planned measures, the implementation of which will fall under other OPs. The applications for grants, which will be submitted for approval under OPs other than IROP and whose objectives will be in line with the planned measures in the approved RITS, will be given priority in the evaluation and selection process.

The RITS model represents the application of the partnership principle in line with Article 5 of Regulation No 1303/2013 of the EP and of the Council. The RITS holder will be a “partnership for the preparation and implementation of RITS” (hereinafter referred to as the “partnership”) made up of the representatives of regional authorities (higher territorial units), local authorities (municipalities), government authorities, local initiatives (LAG, associations of municipalities) and other socio-economic partners (business sector, NGOs, etc.). A regional partnership will be institutionalised through a Partnership Council for RITS consisting of selected representatives of entities associated in the partnership. The Partnership Council for RITS will play a decisive role in RITS preparation, mainly as regards the definition of the territorial application of RITS objectives to be implemented in the RITS-covered territory.

Higher territorial units (NUTS 3) will act as the lead authorities for RITS preparation and implementation (hereinafter referred to as a “RITS Lead Authorities”). All main decisions and outputs of RITS Lead Authorities will be subject to approval by the Partnership Council for RITS. The role of the MA for the IROP in relation to the partnership will be to confirm decisions adopted by the partnership; for example, approve the RITS, approve the grant applications submitted on the basis of planned measures approved by the Partnership Council for RITS, and supervise the implementation of the RITS strategy. At the national level, the monitoring and evaluation process will be implemented by the IROP MA in cooperation with RITS Lead Authorities.

The RITS will be based on economic and social development programmes adopted by individual self-governing regions and municipalities, as well as on regional, sectoral, conceptual and other relevant strategic documents. The RITS will represent a binding strategic document for the implementation of the IROP in the respective region, defining particular planned measures which will serve as the basis for applications for support, with a focus on integrated approach to territorial development.

Table 7: Indicative financial allocation for the ITIs, except for the SUD

Priority axis	Fund	Indicative allocation in EUR (EU sources)
PA 1 Safe and environmentally friendly transport in regions	ERDF	312,000,000.00
PA 2 Easier access to effective and quality public services	ERDF	473,183,197.00
PA 3 Mobilisation of creative potential in regions	ERDF	55,015,548.00
PA 4 Improving the quality of life in regions with an emphasis on the environment	ERDF	60,328,116.00
IROP Total	ERDF	900,526,861.00

3.1.3 Sustainable urban development, including the principles for identifying the urban areas where integrated actions for sustainable urban development are to be implemented and an indicative allocation for these actions under the ERDF at national level

In Slovakia, the legislative framework for urban development is defined by Act No 539/2008 Coll. on the support of regional development under which higher territorial units and municipalities are required to prepare their economic and social development programmes if they want to apply for public funding. They must primarily respect the outputs of territorial planning instruments established by the Building Act which

continuously and comprehensively address the spatial arrangement and functional use of the territory, define the principles of its development and propose measures to coordinate, in terms of substance and time, activities having impacts on the environment, ecological stability, cultural and historical values, territorial development and landscape management in line with the principles of sustainable development.

CTDS, as hierarchically highest spatial planning tool, has defined the most significant areas of urban development based on the comprehensive assessment of the settlement system in Slovakia. This has been set as the main criterion to identify urban areas to be supported, as the CTDS is an exhaustive, consistently discussed and long applied document approved by the Government of the SR, which is regularly updated.

Cities and towns proposed to be supported include Bratislava, Košice and population centres of the first category which represent its first sub-category defined by the CTDS, i.e., all regional capitals in Slovakia. Areas eligible for the support of SUD involve both the actual administrative territory of the town and/or city and the core zone of the population centre of the first category defined by the CTDS, which together represent urban functional territories³³⁵ (See part 1.1.1).

The capital of Bratislava is the centre of the highest significance where the most important educational, research, health, financial, cultural and other institutions of a nation-wide significance are concentrated. The second most important centre is Košice, followed by regional capitals Banská Bystrica, Nitra, Prešov, Trenčín, Trnava and Žilina, all of which are centres both of international and nation-wide significance.

A very important factor complementing the aforementioned main criterion is experience from the previous programming period, existence of a sufficient potential and capacity to meet the objectives in the form of economic growth and job creation while respecting the requirements of social development and environmental sustainability. For all regional capitals, a sufficient level of preparedness, capacity and achievement of multiplying and synergic effects is expected. Also, they are expected to have an increased ability to support innovation measures (studies and pilot projects) to identify and implement new solutions to SUD-related issues and problems.

The integrated SUD measures will be funded within the scope of IROP priority axes.

The SUD measures will be implemented as part of the RITS model, with each RITS containing a separate strategic section on the SUD actions with respect to the defined urban functional territories. To prepare a SUD strategy, the regional capital will form a partnership consisting of representatives of partners from the relevant urban functional territory. At least one regional capital official will represent an urban functional territory in the Regional Partnership Council for RITS. The approval of planned measures based on strategies for SUD will be done by urban and municipal authorities in the SUD functional areas. Other processes related to the approval and implementation of SUD strategies will be similar to those associated with the RITS.

Table 87: The indicative allocation at national level to integrated actions for SUD under the ERDF

Fund	The indicative allocation at national level to integrated actions for sustainable urban development(EUR)	Proportion of the total allocation to the Fund (%)
ERDF	368,100,000	5.00

³³⁵The urban functional territories of regional capitals are specified in the Analysis of the development potential of Slovak regions and their disparities, taking into consideration the thematic concentration of the ESI Funds in the Partnership Agreement SR for 2014 - 2020.

3.1.4 The main priority areas for cooperation under the ESI Funds, taking account, where appropriate, of macro-regional strategies

In the 2014 - 2020 programming period, Slovakia will cooperate in the implementation of cross-border cooperation programmes (SK – CZ, HU – SK, PL – SK, SK – AT and HU – SK – RO – UA) in line with national and transnational strategies in order to ensure the complementarity with the mainstream programmes of the SR in identifying joint challenges which influence specific geographical areas.

Investments within the framework of cross-border cooperation will primarily focus on improving the quality of life and the functioning of public and private institutions in the territory concerned. Based on this assumption, cross-border cooperation in the upcoming period will focus on adding value to the existing potential of local communities aimed at ensuring balanced development of border-adjacent areas.

For the activities aimed at support of the projects which meet the criterion of integrated approach in the given territory, the following areas of complementary support will be relevant:

- In the area of transport, cross-border cooperation programmes will mainly focus on those activities that improve the quality and safety of cross-border sections of the road network in order to enhance access from secondary and tertiary nodes to the TEN-T network and to stimulate the use of the green modes of transport;
- In the area of the environment, activities will be focused on the protection and development of cultural and natural heritage, and on the protection and maintenance of biodiversity;
- In the area of R&I, the programmes of cross-border cooperation will support activities designed to support cross-border cooperation between the R&D actors and the business community, creation of cross-border innovation platforms (networks), transfer of the results of applied research into practice and its further commercial exploitation by stakeholders in border regions;
- In the area of education, the programmes of cross-border cooperation will focus on the activities that enhance vocational training and lifelong learning in order to meet the market demand;
- In the area of strengthening institutional capacity and efficient public administration, the programmes of cross-border cooperation will focus on the activities which strengthen links through local initiatives and enhance institutional cooperation, including human resources development and strategic planning.

Based on the experience from the 2007 - 2013 programming period, there is a great deal of interest in fostering cross-border relations through the implementation of small projects involving the “people-to-people” type of activities. The support should focus on broad-spectral activities, particular of non-investment type.

The Operational Programme ENI HU – SK – RO - UA 2014 – 2020 will continue to support the intensification and deepening of various areas of mutual cooperation between individual regions, with particular emphasis on the social, environmental and economic sustainability. The program also declares the need for increased support of quadrilateral cooperation in the preparation of strategic projects.

The LEADER initiative of the RDP SR for 2014 - 2020, as a follow-up to the experience gained from the 2007 - 2013 programming period, will continue to support transnational cooperation of LAGs, within the EU and in third countries. The support will focus on activities aimed at identifying joint development potential, developing common traditions, fostering tourism potential of cooperating territories, exchanging experience, as well as on the promotion and information activities in rural areas, etc. In order to ensure complementarity between the ETC programmes and transnational cooperation projects, cooperation between LAGs within the LEADER initiative and partners from the neighbouring countries active in the ETC programmes will focus on preparing territorial development strategies and on the planning of cooperation projects within the LEADER initiative.

The complementarity and synergies within the framework of identified joint activities will be ensured solely through support to joint projects with significant cross-border impact. Their implementation will be focused

on addressing common cross-border issues, creation of new joint products and tools, and their use by target groups on both sides of the border. The cross-border cooperation programmes will thus create favourable conditions for the intensification of cross-border links, which clearly underscores their additionality to mainstream programmes. At the same time, in the interest of ensuring complementarity with other programmes funded from the ESI Funds, the process will be coordinated at the management level, namely by setting up a formal working commission which will meet on a regular basis in order to ensure coordination between the ESI Funds programmes and the programmes of the ETC and/or other support instruments of the EU and the SR (See Chapter 2.1).

The focus of the cross-border cooperation programmes in which Slovakia participates may contribute towards meeting the objective of the Danube Region Strategy (the “Danube Strategy”) through the implementation of activities in the area of environmental protection, protection of the natural and cultural heritage, sustainable transport, enhanced institutional cooperation and a more effective cooperation in the area of education, R&D, as well as support for cross-border cooperation between entrepreneurs. The mainstream programmes, through their objectives, will synergistically underpin the meeting of the Danube Strategy priorities, also through actions to support the development of knowledge-based society through research, education and ICT, as well as through investment in people and their skills, support for employment and social inclusion, including the inclusion of MRCs.

The Transnational ETC Programme for Central Europe for the period 2014 – 2020 will focus on strengthening the transnational dimension of cooperation among Member States on issues of strategic significance. The programme will continue to support cooperation among the Central Europe countries and regions and thus contribute towards improving R&I and competitiveness, utilisation of renewable energy sources and low-carbon strategies, environmental protection and sustainable use of the cultural and natural heritage, regeneration of unused and environmentally-burdened industrial zones and areas, increased utilisation of regional transport systems, and support for transition to low-carbon transport. The programme is also expected to support the implementation of the Danube Strategy in the Central Europe region. The Danube area potential for the development of research, development and innovation, with the participation of both the private and public sectors, will be supported through the preparation of the so-called “Danube Study” and its practical implementation.

The ETC programme for the Danube Region (“ETC Danube”) will geographically focus on the same countries as the Danube Strategy; Slovakia will play an active role in ensuring sustainable development of the region. The programme will focus on strengthening those activities that generate value added in the form of cross-border solutions and cooperation and the activities which address, in a sustainable manner, various topical issues, whether environmental, social, cultural or economic. The ETC Danube will perform the function of a supplementary source of funding for the Danube Strategy, in particular to ensure better identification, networking and coordination of joint measures and activities. The programme will primarily focus on the issues of climate change and risk prevention, environmental protection, utilisation of resources and sustainable transport. The projects identified in these areas will, in a synergic manner, contribute towards meeting the Objective 1: Investment for Growth and Jobs and Objective 2: ETC. The ETC Danube programme has identified thematic objectives which are in correlation with the thematically concentrated resources identified in the mainstream programmes of the SR. For the purposes of cooperation and knowledge transfer in the area of R&I, the 2nd stage of the implementation phase of broader cooperation with CZ, AT, HU, DE, RO, RS, HR, SI is expected to be launched and the Innovation Fund for the Danube Region will be set up. In order to increase competitiveness and employment, it is necessary to step up cooperation in key areas in order to support networking and cooperation involving transnational corporations, SMEs, universities, research centres and the regional and local governments. In the field of RD&I, Slovakia is interested to develop international cooperation within the framework of the Danube Strategy in building the ESFRI³³⁶ structures. It is also desirable to initiate a broader cooperation among the

³³⁶European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures

regional groups of the CEE region by involving the countries of the Western Balkans, mainly in the energy sector, with particular focus on security, enhanced efficiency of materials and of the systems used for the transfer of energy, including the creation of networks, in order to facilitate Slovakia's participation in global projects in these areas.

Slovakia attaches one of its main priorities to the development of transport infrastructure, including the Danube water route and navigability of the Danube. In the area of transport, it is necessary to utilise the navigability potential of the Danube in its original watercourse, including the TEN-T development, so as to shift the burden of traffic from the regional road network (trucks, in particular), protect the environment, and facilitate the fast and cost-efficient waterborne transport of goods. The development of transport infrastructure, through the completion of the 2nd and 3rd class roads, needs to be implemented through direct connection to TEN-T network corridors. The ETC context also envisages the funding of local roads and bridges as part of operations focusing on increased mobility of workers in the border regions. This will require the development of integrated transport through the cooperation between SK and PL, HU and AT. The interconnection among individual parts of the region will facilitate full-fledged development of towns and municipalities, and foster their competitiveness and cohesion.

In part, the Danube Strategy will also be implemented through joint activities within the framework of the European Research Area or Horizon 2020, as well as through measures facilitating the competitiveness of enterprises, including development of clusters through the creation of cross-border cooperation networks, joint activities within the Danube region, and support of links between the institutions that deal with innovations and those that support entrepreneurship.

Managing authorities must ensure that road construction has a direct contribution to the achievement of the specific objectives of given investment priorities. Such road construction must complement other related investments financed by the cross-border programmes or other programmes under the Investments for Growth and Jobs objective in the 2014 - 2020 period. The cross-border relevance of the road construction concerned needs to be assessed in each case. Complementary road investments under respective investment priorities should not outweigh in financial terms other projects financed under the given investment priority. The cross-border impact should in each case be ensured³³⁷.

From the perspective of Slovakia's energy security and sustainable development of the entire Danube region, the building of energy infrastructures is indispensable. Energy security can also be enhanced by increased utilisation of geothermal energy in full compliance with the requirements for environmental protection. A better utilisation of the energy potential of the Danube River, including its tributaries, as a source of renewable energy, in combination with the diversification of energy sources, will contribute towards meeting the targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In order to foster the energy security of the Danube region, it is necessary to ensure compatibility and interconnection between the national energy grids. For this reason, Slovakia will exert utmost effort to identify new possibilities and solutions to improve coordination of activities and cooperation aimed at intensifying real regional integration, whilst respecting changes in national policies for energy infrastructure development. As part of building energy infrastructure projects (cross-border connections), support for the financing of these projects through the Connecting Europe Facility is considered.

The implementation of activities in the area of the environment will facilitate the meeting of priorities defined under the 2nd pillar of the Danube Strategy "Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region". One of the parts of the integrated approach of the Danube region in the area of the environment, which deserve particular attention, is the quality of water and the capacity of water sources. The activities which are expected to contribute towards meeting the Danube Strategy also relate to the removal of

³³⁷ Source: Official letter by DG REGIO Director General Walter Deffa, dated 7 March 2014

environmental burdens, protection of biodiversity and habitats, the NATURA 2000 system, including the activities focusing on better waste management, in a manner which avoids duplicity with the activities implemented under the mainstream programmes. Within the framework of transnational cooperation, it is necessary to increase the involvement of the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (“EGTC”) in the partnership.

In practice, the synergies will be achieved by concentrating the institutional and administrative capacities in the coordination of the Danube Strategy and the transnational cooperation programmes, including the LEADER initiative. The funds from the transnational cooperation programmes should be primarily used for projects pursuing the objectives of the Danube Strategy. In practices, the implementation of the Danube Strategy’s priority areas will take place through the relevant thematic objectives of the transnational cooperation programmes (Table 18).

In Slovakia, the synergies between the priority areas of the Danube Strategy, the mainstream programmes, the ETC programmes as well as other funding instruments, will also be ensured by setting up a separate working group in order to ensure the implementation of the Danube Strategy. In the case of those activities which contribute towards meeting the objectives of the Danube Strategy, the Managing Authority will evaluate the complementarity and synergy of individual calls with the activities of the Danube Strategy before announcing the calls, and will submit the results of its evaluation to the working group for comments.

Table 18

Priority areas of the Danube Strategy	ETC Central Europe				ETC Danube				
	TO 1	TO 4	TO 6	TO 7	TO 1	TO 5	TO 6	TO 7	TO 11
1. To improve mobility and intermodality		X		X				X	
2. To encourage more sustainable energy		X	X				X		
3. To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts			X						
4. To restore and maintain the quality of waters			X				X		
5. To manage environmental risks			X			X	X		
6. To preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils			X				X		
7. To develop knowledge society through research, education and ICT	X				X				
8. To support the competitiveness of enterprises, including development of groupings	X				X				
9. To invest in people and skills	X				X				X
10. To step up institutional capacity and cooperation									X
11. To work together to tackle security and organised crime									

The meeting of the Danube Strategy objectives can also be achieved through the mainstream programmes in the relevant fields of activity. Table 19 depicts the synergies between the priority areas of the Danube Strategy and the mainstream programmes supported by the ESI Funds.

Table 19

Priority areas of the Danube Strategy	OP R&I	OP II	OP HR	OP EQ	IROP	OP EG	RDP
1. To improve mobility and intermodality		X			X		
2. To encourage more sustainable energy	X			X	X		
3. To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts					X		X
4. To restore and maintain the quality of waters				X	X		X

Priority areas of the Danube Strategy	OP R&I	OP II	OP HR	OP EQ	IROP	OP EG	RDP
5. To manage environmental risks				X			
6. To preserve biodiversity, landscapes and the quality of air and soils				X	X		X
7. To develop knowledge society through research, education and ICT	X	X	X				
8. To support the competitiveness of enterprises, including development of groupings	X				X	X	X
9. To invest in people and skills	X		X		X	X	X
10. To step up institutional capacity and cooperation						X	
11. To work together to tackle security and organised crime						X	

The objective of the interregional cooperation programme, INTERREG EUROPE, is to create a framework for the identification, spreading and exchange of experiences and best practice among regions and their subsequent transfer into the mainstream programmes of the SR. INTERREG EUROPE has identified the main thematic objectives which mirror the thematic concentration specified for Slovakia's mainstream programmes. The programme will support activities aimed at identifying best practice in the areas of R&I, support for SMEs across all stages of their life-cycle, the shift towards a low-carbon economy, protection of natural and cultural heritage, and efficient use of resources, including the transfer of this knowledge into the regional development policies and the mainstream programmes. At the time, this will contribute towards making their implementation better and more efficient.

The synergies with the mainstream programmes will be achieved through two types of interventions, namely the Policy Learning Platforms, which will ensure capitalisation of gained knowledge in individual thematic areas and support its transfer to Slovakia's mainstream programmes, as well as through the Interregional Cooperation Projects, resulting in action plans that describe the process of transferring the knowledge learned into Slovakia's mainstream programmes, the implementation of which will be monitored at the programme level. INTERREG EUROPE will equally cooperate with other ETC programmes, mainly in making the INTERREG EUROPE programme implementation more efficient and in capitalising on and transferring the knowledge learned into the mainstream programmes and ETC programmes.

In the 2014 - 2020 programming period, the INTERACT III programme will support regions and Member States in their effective and efficient implementation of the ETC programmes. The programme will continue to identify potential areas of cooperation and will focus on the aspects of methodology and innovation. The programme will focus particularly on shared management and expertise in the field of control, support for innovative approaches to cooperation, support for thematic links, and successful cooperation.

The objective of the ESPON 2014 – 2020 programme will be to deepen the evidence and knowledge of the European territorial structure and on the trends and perspectives, as well as to ensure smooth, efficient, targeted and integrated implementation of the Cohesion Policy and sectoral policies which include a territorial dimension. The programme will be using its potential to measure and evaluate the quality of territories based on indicators other than just GDP, which will complement the existing EU data and provide compatible information in a broader context. The thus created database will serve as a source of information for policy makers at all levels. The information will be shared at the national level through "information days" and the publication of information brochures. The synergies between other ETC programmes and ESPON 2014 – 2020 will be ensured through support for the implementation of Slovakia's mainstream programmes and the building of analytical capacities in the area of spatial planning.

The main mission of the URBACT III programme will be to support integrated approach towards SUD. To the stakeholders involved in the implementation of SUD, the programme will provide (through the cooperating networks of towns) the transfer of knowledge and exchange of experience necessary to facilitate effective preparation of policies for innovative urban solutions.

In Slovakia, the URBACT III programme will assist towns in implementing their integrated urban strategies and enable them to apply the techniques of integrated and participative urban planning. The synergies with Slovakia's mainstream programmes will also be achieved through the building of administrative capacities in towns which are necessary to support the tools of territorial development, as well as the capacities of public administration at the local, regional and national level.

Within the framework of territorial cooperation, support will continue to be provided to the EGTC with the aim to facilitate the preparation of joint strategic and programming documents of territorial cooperation and support the activities leading to the development of territorial specificities, with particular emphasis on developing natural and cultural heritage and creating partnerships.

3.1.5 Where appropriate, an integrated approach to address the specific needs of geographical areas most affected by poverty or of target groups at highest risk of discrimination or social exclusion, with special regard to marginalized communities, persons with disabilities, long term unemployed and young people not in employment, education or training

In Slovakia, an integrated approach to address the specific needs of geographical areas the most affected by poverty or target groups most at risk of discrimination or social exclusion will be implemented for the target group of marginalised Roma communities (MRC). In line with the principle of "special but not exclusive focus", activities targeted Roma (MRCs in particular) will be supported but they will also target other persons in similar socio-economic conditions.

In Slovakia, segregated and separated MRC are the most affected by poverty, which spatial dispersion is identified in the Atlas of Roma Communities 2013 at LAU2³³⁸. An integrated approach will be implemented particularly in the OP HR through the ESF and ERDF.

The Strategy for the Integration of Roma until 2020³³⁹ and Revised National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015 for the years 2011 – 2015³⁴⁰ is in line with the Council recommendation on effective measures for Roma integration in Member States³⁴¹ and with the Social Investment Package³⁴².

An integrated approach to the inclusion of MRC will be achieved with the investment support of four measures (education, employment, housing and healthcare).

The interdependence and interaction of these measures show that the mutual combination of one measure with another creates prerequisites for achieving the objectives of these measures e.g.:

- if the proportion of Roma households with access to housing and engineering networks is increased, it can be assumed that this also concomitantly increases hygienic standards and improve the quality of health of the target group, or
- by promoting and enhancing approach to quality inclusive education the participation rate of the target group at the labour market³⁴³ is increased,
- the investments in the functional community centres create a presumption for the implementation of targeted programmes and activities aimed at promoting community development, active participation of the MRC members and sensitizing activities.

³³⁸ Atlas of Roma Communities 2013 (http://www.minv.sk/?atlas_2013)

³³⁹ http://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/romovia/dokumenty/StrategiaSR_integraciaRomov.pdf

³⁴⁰ <http://www.minv.sk/?romske-komunity-uvod&subor=160529>

³⁴¹ COM(2013) 460 final http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/com_2013_460_en.pdf

³⁴² COM(2013) 83 final <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0083:FIN:SK:PDF>

³⁴³ In the Social Investment package is referred to (p. 13): "There is a general consensus that early and high-quality preschool education and care is an effective means for the prevention of early school leaving and reinforcing element for future education, health, future employment and social mobility".

The aim of parallel interventions of the EU Funds and the main types of activities listed in table 20 is to achieve greater integration of separated and segregated Roma communities in society, and also in relation to the priorities of the Strategy for the integration of Roma until 2020. Moreover, in the framework of OPs of the SR, also the social aspect is public procurement will be used, which should bring greater participation in the labour market not only for the MRC.

In terms of RDP contribution to the inclusion of marginalised groups of population, including MRCs, the possibilities of using EAFRD for the inclusion of marginalised groups will be considered within the framework of RDP. The RDP is open for different entities and groups of population and enables participation of all groups at risk of discrimination into its implementation. The RDP is required to respect the horizontal principles of equality between men and women and non-discrimination applying to all citizens of the SR, including marginalised groups of population. At the same time, the RDP will use several instruments that will directly contribute to social inclusion of marginalised groups of population, e.g., a social aspect will be required to be applied in public procurement under several measures. In terms of social inclusion of MRCs, this aspect will be applied in relation to projects carried out in municipalities identified in the Atlas of Roma Communities 2013. Under CLLD, a contribution of a territorial development strategy to social inclusion of marginalised groups of population will be one of the selection criteria for LAGs.

Table 20: The role and the contribution of the ESI Funds in the implementation of the integrated approach to address the specific needs of geographical areas most affected by poverty or of target groups at highest risk of discrimination or social exclusion

Specific target group or geographical area	Short description of the needs	The ESI Funds that will be used	Main types of planned actions which are part of the integrated approach	Programme
<p>In line with the inclusion of MRC, geographical areas will be identified at the level of self-governments.</p> <p>Eligible territories will be those local governments included in the Atlas of Roma communities reporting a defined level of segregation index.</p>	<p>Residents of MRC affected by poverty and high level of social exclusion due to unequal access to housing, education, employment and health care require an integrated approach.</p>	<p>ESF</p>	<p>Systematic support of children from the MRC in pre-primary education</p>	<p>OP HR</p>
			<p>Consultancy for the transition between the levels of education (from kindergarten to primary, from primary to secondary), including parental involvement</p>	
			<p>Support for second chance education programmes, with an emphasis on those that are directly linked to the labour market</p>	
			<p>Promoting systematic provision of social and assistance services aimed at increasing the employability of people living in MRC (i.e. field social workers, community workers / workers in social services)</p>	
			<p>Support of innovative programmes aimed at increasing local employment through the support of social economy entities</p>	

Specific target group or geographical area	Short description of the needs	The ESI Funds that will be used	Main types of planned actions which are part of the integrated approach	Programme
			<p>Support of existence and functioning of community centres in municipalities with the presence of MRC</p> <p>Promoting systematic provision of services and assistance through the programme of community workers in health education in communities involving separated and segregated MRC</p> <p>Support of programmes aimed at achieving a higher hygiene standard of marginalized Roma settlements and systematic reduction in the number of illegal dwellings characteristic with extremely low level of hygiene standards through the provision of technical assistance to municipalities involving MRC aimed at settling land</p> <p>Assistance programme to municipalities involving MRC aimed at increasing the absorption of the ESI Funds</p>	
		ERDF	<p>Promoting ladder housing programmes in social mobility and integration of the MRC members (construction and reconstruction of dwellings)</p> <p>Promoting access to drinking and sanitary water in separated and segregated MRC environment with an emphasis on low cost measures such as drilling and digging wells</p> <p>Promoting construction, reconstruction and modernization of preschool facilities</p> <p>Promoting construction, reconstruction and modernization of community centres</p> <p>Promoting micro financial instruments</p> <p>Supporting the reconstruction and construction of premises of social economy entities</p>	OP HR

Table 9: Contribution of the OP HR to solving specific needs of geographical areas/target groups most affected by poverty

Target group/geographical area	Main types of planned actions which are part of the integrated approach	Priority axis	Investment priorities	Fund	Category of region
<p>Residents of MRCs</p> <p>Eligible territories will be those local governments included in the Atlas of Roma communities reporting a defined level of segregation index</p>	<p>Systematic support of children from the MRC in pre-primary education</p> <p>Systematic support of educational, training and free time activities for children from MRC with focus on their mainstreaming</p> <p>Promoting systematic provision of social and assistance services in municipalities involving MRC aimed at increasing of the employability of MRC (i.e. field social workers, community workers / workers in social services)</p> <p>Support of innovative programmes aimed at increasing local employment through the promotion of social economy entities</p> <p>Support of existence and functioning of community centres involving MRC</p> <p>Promoting systematic provision of services and assistance through the programme of community workers in health education in communities involving separated and segregated MRC</p> <p>Support of programmes aimed at achieving a higher hygiene standard of marginalized Roma settlements and systematic reduction in the number of illegal dwellings characteristic with extremely low level of hygiene standards through the provision of technical assistance to municipalities involving MRC aimed at settling land</p> <p>Assistance programme to municipalities involving MRC aimed at increasing the absorption of the ESI Funds</p>	<p>Integration of MRCs</p>	<p>Social and economic integration of marginalized communities such as the Roma</p>	<p>ESF</p>	<p>Less developed region</p>
<p>Residents of MRC</p> <p>Eligible territories will be those local governments included in the Atlas of Roma</p>	<p>Promoting ladder housing programmes in social mobility and integration of the MRC members</p> <p>Promoting access to drinking and sanitary water in separated and segregated MRC environment with an</p>	<p>Technical amenities in municipalities with MRC</p>	<p>Provision of support for physical and economic regeneration of deprived</p>	<p>ERDF</p>	<p>Less developed region</p>

Target group/geographical area	Main types of planned actions which are part of the integrated approach	Priority axis	Investment priorities	Fund	Category of region
communities reporting a defined level of segregation index	emphasis on low cost measures such as drilling and digging wells Promoting construction, reconstruction and modernization of preschools facilities Promoting construction, reconstruction and modernization of community centres.		urban and rural communities		
Residents of MTC Eligible territories will be those local governments included in the Atlas of Roma communities reporting a defined level of segregation index	Supporting the purchase of equipment, technologies and licences necessary to implement a business plan by a social economy entity, with an emphasis on the use of micro-loans	Technical amenities in municipalities with MRC	Providing support to social enterprises	ERDF	Less developed region

4 Arrangements to ensure efficient implementation of the ESI Funds

4.1 An assessment of the existing systems for electronic data exchange, and a summary of the actions planned to gradually permit all exchanges of information between beneficiaries and authorities responsible for management and control of programmes to be carried out by electronic data exchange

Slovakia plans to modify the current information system ITMS for the ESI Funds except for EAFRD and the information system of the Agricultural paying agency for EAFRD (hereinafter referred to as "IS APA") to meet the requirements of e-Cohesion policy defined in Regulation No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and the requirements of the Act No 305/2013 Coll. on electronic performance of public authorities and amending certain acts („Act on e-Government“), which constitutes the general legal basis for delivery of electronic services by public administration.

The principles of e-Cohesion policy shall be implemented by creating centralised ISs, which shall be interlinked and integrated with other public administration ISs (hereinafter referred to as "PA IS"). The following ISs will be used for the ESI Funds: ITMS2014+ and IS PPA that will cover administration of the EAFRD and EAGF (not part of the ESI Funds), because these types of support are interlinked and their division into separate information system will be ineffective and costly.

The two separate information systems (ITMS2014+ and IS PPA) will, to a certain extent, share the data and information stored in the systems.

The existing ITMS partially covers some requirements for the implementation of e-Cohesion principles. They include the following:

- **Only once encoding** – ITMS is a centralized IS with a single database. Certain data and information is already entered only once in the ITMS. Subsequently, they are systematically updated and used by

users/authorities;

- **e-Submission** – ITMS supports some of the key forms in the form of intelligent electronic forms. Technology, filling and subsequent processing of forms do not always reach the necessary level of data structuring in the IS database, which could be effectively used for analytical and statistical purposes;
- **e-Signature** – At the moment, ITMS does not have implemented modules, components or functionalities that would, at least partially, meet the requirement of the EC as regards the electronic signature or a different type of authorisation of documents and information;
- **e-Storage** – ITMS is a system with a single database that already enables storing certain documents in an electronic form;
- **Interoperability** – ITMS has a module for managing the integration operations. Given the existing e-Government possibilities, interoperability is currently underdeveloped;
- **e-Audit** – ITMS provides basic processes and functionalities for tracking user activity.

The current IS APA partially covers some of the e-Cohesion policy requirements. The following requirements are partially implemented:

- **Only once encoding** – IS APA is a centralized IS with a single database. Certain data and information is already entered only once in the IS APA or is systematically updated and subsequently shared across different types of support;
- **e-Submission** – IS APA supports only a portion of forms, mainly regarding non-project support;
- **e-Signature** – At the moment, IS APA does not have implemented modules or functionalities that would meet the requirement of the EC as regards the electronic signature or a different type of authorisation of documents and information;
- **e-Storage** – Single database enables storing documentation relating mainly to the non-project support in electronic form;
- **Interoperability** – IS APA has a module for managing the integration operations in a very restricted scope mainly regarding non-project support;
- **e-Audit** – IS APA provides basic processes and functionalities for tracking user activity.

Act on e-Government lays down obligations for all PA IS to use following common modules in delivery of electronic services by public administration:

- a) eDesk module
- b) Identity and access management (IAM)
- c) eForm module (MEF)
- d) eDelivery module.

ITMS and IS APA systems currently lack integration to the above mentioned mandatory modules, or their natively implemented alternatives except for IAM module, which does not meet all the requirements defined by the Act on e-Government.

In order to meet the above-given principles of e-Cohesion and legislative conditions, it is necessary to modify the current ITMS and IS APA.

In the programming period 2014 – 2020, the IS for monitoring EAFRD, ESF, CF and EMFF (hereinafter referred to as "ITMS2014+") will serve as the key tool for monitoring the use of the financial support from EU Funds. ITMS2014+ shall be established by rebuilding the ITMS II based on the requirements defined by EU law, the law of the SR as well as managing documentation of relevant bodies. The ITMS2014+, as a tool for the collection, transmission, processing, storage and sharing of relevant information and data is one of the key instruments, which can significantly and positively affect the efficiency of the implementation of the ESI Funds in Slovakia. ITMS2014+ will serve all applicants and beneficiaries, governmental authorities, self-government, their contributory organizations and other entities involved in the preparation, administration, selection, control, analysis (advanced statistical methods, managerial reports, etc.), monitoring and evaluation of the use of the ESI Funds.

Planned adaptation of existing authentication processes in ITMS and IS APA will lead to ensuring their compliance with the requirements and standards defined by the law as well as with e-Cohesion principles. Modification of existing authentication ITMS module and creation of such module in IS APA will primarily ensure compliance with the *e-Audit* principle. Secondly, this will create the basic conditions for implementation of *Only once encoding*, *e-Submission* and *e-Signature* principles. By modifying of the authentication module, it will be possible and easier to achieve:

- clear identification, authentication and authorization of user in ITMS2014+,
- defining and assigning user roles and access rights to individual modules, functionalities and data structures of ITMS2014+,
- creating more sophisticated hierarchical groups of ITMS2014+ users which will reflect the distribution of competences of authorities involved in implementation of the ESI Funds in a more flexible way.

A unique identity within an upgraded ITMS audit module will ensure improved tracking of system users' activities. Modification of the authentication module will enable:

- a more sophisticated audit trails of performed operations and processes within the ITMS2014+,
- a more detailed and more exact informative capacity of automated processes performed in ITMS2014+,
- better transparency in performed user operations,
- a more user-friendly environment for searching and filtering within the audit module,
- a more user-friendly environment for the interpretation of collected and stored data,
- audit module as a separate block of ITMS2014+ database together with processes and backing up data, with an emphasis on improving data security and availability.

One of the weaknesses of the current ITMS is work with electronic documents and attachments which are required in the processes of implementation of SF and CF. To meet the requirements of *Only once encoding*, *e-Storage* and *e-Submission* principles, it is necessary to modify ITMS functionalities and processes related to work with documents in electronic form. Increasing the possibilities for working with documents and attachments in electronic form will be in accordance with following requirements, and principles:

- ensuring compliance with processes resulting from legislation in the field of registry management,
- creating user-friendly environment concerning work with documents and attachments in electronic format,
- processing large volumes of documents without having negative impacts on overall performance of the application, by means of even distribution of over time,
- maintaining integrity in the long term (archiving documents until 2025),
- durability, indelibility and accessibility of approved documents,
- defining basic metadata of documents,
- categorization or aggregation of documents based on metadata and different perspectives,
- introducing the idea of a folder for repeatedly used documents,
- introducing the idea of a project file,
- creating versions of certain types of documents,
- full text search within documents and their attachments,
- administration and privacy settings as regards the stored documents,
- creating document management workflow (approval, comments).

The requirement of *e-Submission* principle shall be provided in ITMS2014+ through modification of technology and selected forms in ITMS, which shall lead to:

- support for all commonly used web browsers without the need for installing any additional software special, support for mobile devices;
- unified and user-friendly design of forms,
- interactivity of forms for the user in the form of multimedia guide for easier understanding of forms and the way they need to be filled in,

- introduction of a simple tool for testing the compatibility of client station with the minimum technical requirements to enable work with ITMS2014+ and intelligent electronic forms,
- transformation of forms to support multilingual versions (at least English and Slovak language).

Despite the fact that reporting in current ITMS has been developed in a wide range – ranging from static reports, through dynamic reports, to tools based on OLAP technology, ITMS reporting is limited by insufficient structuring and informative capacity of data. Key aspects that will help to increase the informative value are:

- modification of logic data module,
- modification of reports with higher added value to a level in which the user can influence a higher number of factors leading to the correct result, i.e. the application will minimise the impacts of mistakes made by user when creating analyses and statistical overviews,
- modification of user interface for working with OLAP cubes and for simple, intuitive creation of analyses and statistical overviews,
- introduction of the idea of storing user-defined templates of reports and surveys,
- modification of sophisticated reports to a form which would contain so-called visual database model of extracted data for a better understanding of analysed domain/issue.

As regards scalability, functionality and auditability, the proprietary workflow mechanism in ITMS is currently on the edge of its capabilities. By its modification, it will be possible to achieve further flexibility of selected processes defined in the e-Cohesion policy principle and in the Act on e-Government, especially as concerns the requirement on *Interoperability*, i.e. integration of ITMS with other PA IS. The basic conditions for modification in this field are:

- modification of current static workflow configurator into a tool enabling better user interactivity – so-called „drag and drop“ workflow configurator. Such workflow configurator will allow workflow administrators to design and define individual statuses, phases and transitions in graphical-interpretative tool,
- expanding the possibilities for creation and administration of data fields and transition conditions between key statuses or phases of a workflow,
- simplification of communication when performing automated actions in ITMS2014+ during transferring the object to a particular status or phase of workflow. Certain set of transition operations can be defined directly in ITMS2014+ without the need to make changes in the source code, or without the need for service intervention by the supplier (as is the situation in the current ITMS),
- finalisation of the functionalities to monitor whether the pre-defined lead-times are adhered to, either at the level of process, individual statuses and selected groups of statuses. Processes and individual statuses can be monitored and set (possibility to suspend monitoring the lead-time of a process) either in calendar or business days within a workflow assigned to the given object,
- extending the functionalities of visual alerts and notifications when approaching or exceeding a milestone within a workflow. This group of modifications also includes the possibility to create a report with list of objects which have exceeded the workflow milestones.

The modification of current IS APA shall lead to:

- fully electronic communication with applicant or beneficiaries of support within all processes regarding administration of support and protection of EU financial interests,
- introduction of functionalities concerning work with electronic forms,
- electronic archive of attachments and supporting documentation,
- electronic communication and documentation circuit within IS APA,
- clear identification, authentication and authorization of user in IS APA,
- active defining and assigning user roles and access rights to individual modules, functionalities and

- data structures,
- interconnection of particular modules and processes with the control process within eControl module,
- creating more sophisticated hierarchical groups of IS APA users ,
- modification of reports and monitoring.

The ITMS2014+ will provide the applicant with access to information on currently open calls for proposals and opportunities to submit a grant application via a web portal. Pro-active services of ITMS2014+ will be used for this purpose. Upon approval of a grant application, the web portal shall enable beneficiaries to submit information on the implementation of project activities, information on expenditures incurred within the project in relation to its activities and expected results and outcomes of the project. The web portal will also provide applicants/beneficiaries with a tool for obtaining information on the status of the processing of submitted documents, for editing and managing information about their project, a tool for effective communication with the provider of support in electronic form and a tool for informing the general public on supported grant applications within the programming period 2014 – 2020.

ITMS2014+ shall be a user-acceptable, simple, intuitive and interactive IS. Architecture and design of ITMS2014+ shall correspond to the current standards for designing an intelligent open IS while respecting the efficient allocation and use of funds for further development, operation and maintenance of ITMS2014+.

Prerequisite for an effective system for information exchange and data between the beneficiary and the provider of support and other bodies involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds solely in electronic form is the integration of ITMS2014+ with other PA IS. Such integration shall result in lower administrative burden of all stakeholders involved, increase in consistency and data validity. External information systems which are to be integrated with ITMS2014+ can be divided into three basic groups: basic external information systems; validation and communication external information systems; and presentation external information systems. The group of basic external information systems comprises PA IS of the SR and of the EC, in case of which the integration with ITMS2014+ is essential for ensuring the implementation of the ESI Funds in Slovakia in programming period 2014 – 2020. These information systems include³⁴⁴: ISUF – IS for accounting funds, IS APA, State treasury, Budgetary Information System, SFC2014.

The group of validation and communication external information systems comprises information systems of public administration of the SR and of the EC, where integration with ITMS2014+ will contribute to reducing the administrative burden on entities involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds and also to increasing ITMS2014+ data validation processes. These information systems include, in particular:

- Central Portal of Public Administration and its modules (e.g. IAM, e-Desk, e-Notify, Electronic delivery module, etc.),
- Basic code lists and registers (e.g. code list of legal forms, register of natural persons, legal persons register, register of addresses, etc.),
- Electronic public procurement,
- Electronic Services of Social Insurance Agency and health insurance companies,
- Electronic Folder (e-Desk),
- CEDIS,
- Irregularity management system (IMS),

³⁴⁴ The Budgetary Information System and the State Treasury represent information systems for the management of public finances in the state budget and execution of payments; electronic exchange of information and networking for the implementation of the EU funds is ensured since 2004 by the system ISUF, which serves as a uniform accounting system for EU funds with connection to provision of information to the consolidated financial statements of the central governmental administration in the Slovak Republic, and ensures the processes of accounting and book-keeping, handling the beneficiaries' applications for payment, summary payment request, applications for payment addressed to the EC and the system of settlement of financial relations

- and other relevant IS.

The group of presentation external information systems comprises PA IS of the SR and of the EC, in case of which integration with ITMS2014+ will bring the distribution and exchange of data relating to the implementation of the ESI Funds with other information systems and will be used to generate data for secondary analyses of the impact of the ESI Funds implementation on Slovak economy. These information systems include, in particular: Electronic Services of the Statistical Office, Map of supported projects and beneficiaries in the programming period 2014 – 2020, other relevant IS and applications.

IS APA will be integrated with all aforementioned PA IS, except CEDIS and the Map of supported projects and beneficiaries in the programming period 2014 – 2020.

In Slovakia, an effective system for information and data exchange between the beneficiary and the provider of support and other bodies involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds in electronic form will be established by 31 December 2015. Information and data exchange between beneficiary and the provider of support and other relevant authorities involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds will be carried out only for certain processes, forms, and information, so that maximum efficiency of the funds is achieved. The strategy to comply with this requirement lies in gradual deployment of ITMS2014+ functionalities which will contribute to exchange of information and data in electronic form. General view of the steps follows the process of implementation of the ESI Funds and is as follows:

1. ITMS2014+ functionalities for automatic extraction/insertion of information and structured documents on applicants and beneficiaries from reference information systems. The date of release is set at 31 December 2014.
2. ITMS2014+ functionalities for automatic and manual extraction/insertion of information and structured documents relating to supporting documentation required for provision of financial contribution. The date of release is set at 31 December 2014.
3. ITMS2014+ functionalities for the submission and processing of various information and documents relating to the ESI Funds implementation in electronic form. The date of release is set at 31 December 2015.
4. Fully functional electronic data exchange within ITMS2014+ in line with eCohesion requirements. The date of release is set at 31 December 2015.

General overview of the implementation of individual actions for IS APA takes into account the progress made under the ongoing project and also depends on the building of other public administration IS in Slovakia:

1. A full launch of the backbone agenda systems constituting the basis of the IS APA to enable the payment of all types of support, including with the full acceptance of the new CAP rules, as well as the 2014 – 2020 programming period. The date of release is set at 31 December 2014.
2. IS APA functionalities ensure its two-way interconnection with external system and registers (ITMS, ST, ISUF, etc.) The date of release is set at 30 June 2015.
3. An IS APA functionality for electronic submission, processing and publication of various types of information and document related to the information and publicity and applications for all types of support. The date of release is set at 31 December 2015.
4. Fully functional electronic data exchange within IS APA in line with eCohesion requirements. The date of release is set at 31 December 2015.

During the transition period (until the full functionality of the system is achieved) functionalities enabling the transition from "paper" process to electronic process, will gradually be introduced. Paper communication ceases to be obligatory in those parts of ITMS2014+, for which the functionality will already have been launched. Parallel requirement for submission of documents in both paper and electronic form will be eliminated in time to achieve the minimum possible administrative burden.

Creation of effective IS for the ESI Funds monitoring is conditional on a change in the process model of the ESI Funds implementation in programming period 2014 – 2020, completion of validation and communication PA ISs.

The process model of the ESI Funds implementation shall be simple and clear at all levels of implementation. For an efficient development of ITMS2014+ it is necessary to reduce and optimize the processes and standardized forms associated with the implementation of the ESI Funds. By minimising the number of standardised forms and defining their content, a decrease in the number of processes and actions will be achieved both on the side of applicant/beneficiary as well as on the side of the provider of support. A detailed, simple and clear process model will help to achieve a better consistency, integrity and relevance of data in ITMS2014+.

ITMS2014+ will be integrated with relevant basic components of e-Government architecture in the SR. Moreover, it is envisaged that the *“only once encoding”* principle will be implemented so that all government entities will act towards the applicant/beneficiary as a “single entity”. This functionality is highly dependent on the level of interoperability of PA ISs as well as the time schedule for launching the individual PA ISs into operation.

Although a separate information system IS APA will be developed for the purpose of management of EAFRD, mutual interoperability with ITMS2014+ will be provided in order to ensure effective support for the implementation of programmes, collection and assessment of data necessary for the purpose of monitoring, evaluation and reporting to the EU, as well as reporting to the public on the use of EU financial support.

5 Strategic environmental assessment (SEA)

The draft PA as a strategic document was assessed regarding its effects on environment according to Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on environmental assessment (hereinafter referred to as "Act No 24/2006 Coll.") and alignment with provisions of the Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

The assessment of the strategic document consisted of assessment of its effects of environment including health (primary, secondary, cumulative, synergic, short-term, mid-term, long-term, permanent, temporary, positive and negative). The complex assessment of effects of the strategic document on environment was carried out with regard mainly to bearable charge of area; effects on population, its health and activities; soil structure; effects on air and climate conditions of an area concerned; effects on water conditions; effects on fauna, flora, its biotopes and protected areas including the ecological network of protected areas Natura 2000.

The report on assessment included conclusions of the assessment and was, together with the draft PA, made available to public and all other authorities concerned including the authorities responsible for environment and health protection. Reasonable requests and comments from the public and the authorities concerned on the draft of PD and the report on assessment were considered in preparing the final draft of PD.

In implementing the strategy document will be inevitable to accept the requirements arising from the generally binding legal regulations of the SR in the field of environmental protection and public health.

Possible negative effects of the strategic document on environment foreseen in the phase of strategic assessment may be eliminated or alleviated by implementing effective measures, e. g. re-assessment of the operating and usable potential of the RES in the SR; elaboration of principles on setting up carrying-capacity of particular regions regarding placement of energy facilities exploiting RES; more detailed elaboration of measures regarding the Danube Strategy; taking into account all the effects identified in process of strategic assessment of the draft PA as early as in the preparation of individual Slovak OPs for the 2014-

2020 programming period. The operational programmes being prepared shall be subject to strategic environmental assessment (SEA) according to the Act No 24/2006 Coll. before its approval, in the same manner as the PA was.

On 7 November 2013 a public hearing on the evaluation report of the PA and the draft PA was held according to Article 17(9) of Act No 24/2006 Coll. Relevant comments were incorporated into the draft PA. Based on expert opinion of the SEA evaluator as of 13 December 2013, a favourable opinion of the MEn SR on the draft PA was issued on 27 December 2013, which formally completed the SEA process.

Effects of the draft PA on environment foreseen and identified in the SEA process are not of such nature, that they would cause grave effect on environment of area concerned and that they would pose an objection of approval of the draft PA.

List of abbreviations

AA	Audit Authority
AB	Administrative Burden
AC	Administrative Capacity
ALMM	Active Labour Market Measures
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policy
ARRA	Academic Ranking and Rating Agency
ASFEU	Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for the Structural Funds of EU
AT	Austria
BAT	Best Available Technology
BQE	Biological Quality Element
BSR	Bratislava Self-governing Region
CA	Certifying Authority
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCA	Central Coordinating Authority
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
CF	Cohesion Fund
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
CLLD	Community-led Local Development
CR	Croatia
CTDS	Concept of the Territorial Development of Slovakia
CZ	Czech Republic
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EAGF	European Agricultural Guarantee Fund
EC	European Commission

EEC	European Economic Community
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ERA	European Research Area
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESFRI	European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures
ESI Funds	European Structural and Investment Funds
ESO	Effective, Reliable and Open Public Administration
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
ETS	Emission Trading Scheme
EU	European Union
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived
GAEC	Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions
GBER	General Block Exemption Regulation
GCCA SR	Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFCF	Gross Fixed Capital Formation
GO SR	Government Office of the Slovak Republic
HNV	High Nature Value
HR	Croatia
HTU	Higher Territorial Unit
HU	Hungary
IB	Intermediate Body under the Managing Authority
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IPPC	Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control
IROP	Integrated Regional Operational Programme
IRS	Integrated Rescue System
IS APA	Information System of the Agricultural Paying Agency
IS SAMA	Information System of the Slovak Aid Monitoring Authority
ISUF	Information System for the Accounting of Funds
IT	Information Technology
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investments
ITMS	IT Monitoring System

ITS	Integrated Transport System
JEREMIE	Joint European Resource for Micro to Medium Enterprises
KIBS	Knowledge Intensive Business Services
LAG	Local Action Groups
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de le Économie Rurale (Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy)
LFSS	Labour Force Sample Survey
LPIS	Land Parcel Information System
MA	Managing Authority
MARD SR	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic
MC SR	Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
MD SR	Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic
ME SR	Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
MEn SR	Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic
MESRS SR	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
MF SR	Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic
MFEA SR	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
MH SR	Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic
MI SR	Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic
MJ SR	Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic
MLSAF SR	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic
MRC	Marginalised Roma Communities
MTCRD SR	Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic
NADSME	National Agency for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises
NG	Non-repayable grant
NRP	National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGP SR DCS	Office of the Government Plenipotentiary of the SR for the Development of Civil Society
OGP SR RC	Office of the Government Plenipotentiary of the SR for Roma Communities
OP	Operational Programme
OP EPA	Operational Programme Effective Public Administration
OP E&SI	Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion
OP F	Operational Programme Fisheries
OP HR	Operational Programme Human Resources
OP II	Operational Programme Integrated Infrastructure

OP IS	Operational Programme Information Society
OP QE	Operational Programme Quality of the Environment
OP R&I	Operational Programme Research and Innovation
OP TA	Operational Programme Technical Assistance
PA IS	Public Administration Information System
PA SR and/or PA Partnership Agreement of the Slovak Republic for the years 2014 – 2020	
PE	People Equivalent
POVAPSYS	Flood warning and forecast system
PP	Public Procurement
PPO	Public Procurement Office
PPT	Public passenger transport
R&D	Research and Development
R&I	Research and Innovation
RD&I	Research, Development and Innovation
ReIS	Resort Information System
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
RIS	River Information System
RIS3	Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Slovak Republic
RITS	Regional Integrated Territorial Strategies
RONI	Regulatory Office for Network Industries
SARIO	Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency
SBA	Small Business Act
SCP	Single Contact Points
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHMI	Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute
SIEA	Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency
SIS	Sectoral Information System
SMEs	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SO SR	Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic
SR	The Slovak Republic
SRDA	Slovak Research and Development Agency
ST	State Treasury
SUD	Sustainable Urban Development
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Network
TO	Thematic Objective
WFD	Water Framework Directive

WMP SR	Waste Management Plan of the Slovak Republic
YEI	Youth Employment Initiative
ZSR	Žilina Self-governing Region
ŽSR	Slovak Railways