

**CSD 2015
COUNTRY PROFILES**

**NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21 IN
THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbon
CSD	Commission for Sustainable Development
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ELCI	Environmental Liaison Centre International
EMAS	Eco Management and Audit Scheme
EMS	Environmental management system
EST	Environmentally sound technology
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GAW	Global Atmosphere Watch (WMO)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEMS	Global Environmental Monitoring System (UNEP)
GESAMP	Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GIPME	Global Investigation of Pollution in Marine Environment (UNESCO)
GIS	Geographical Information System
GOS	Global Observing System (WMO/WWW)
GRID	Global Resource Information Database
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
HCFC	Hydrochlorofluorocarbon
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAP-WASAD	International Action Programme on Water and Sustainable Agricultural Development
IARC	International Agency for Research on Cancer
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INFOTERRA	International Environment Information system (UNEP)
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPCS	International Programme on Chemical Safety
IPM	Integrated pest management
IRPTC	International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals
ISO	International Standards Organization
ITC	International Tin Council
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PIC	Prior informed consent procedure
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNU	United Nations University
WCP	World Climate Programme (WMO/UNEP/ICSU/UNESCO)
WEC	World Environmental Centrum
WFC	World Food Council
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature (also called World Wildlife Fund)

LIST OF NATIONAL ABBREVIATIONS

AIES	Association of Industrial Ecology in Slovakia
ADR	International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EC	European Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
MF SR	Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic
MoEc SR	Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic
MC SR	Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
MD SR	Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic
MARD SR	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic
MLSAF SR	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic
MJ SR	Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic
MESRS SR	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
MI SR	Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic
MTCRD SR	Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic
MH SR	Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic
MFEA SR	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
MoEn SR	Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
NEAP	National Environment Action Plan
NHPP	National Health Promotion Programme
NC SR	National Council of the Slovak Republic
NFC	National Forests Center
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
NEA	National Employment Authority
NRA SR	Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic
UNO	United Nations Organisation
RW	Radioactive Waste
RTC	Regional Training Centre
SAS	Slovak Academy of Sciences
SD	Sustainable Development
SEA	Slovak Environment Agency
SHMI	Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SNCPC	Slovak National Cleaner Production Centre
SEI	Slovak Environmental Inspection
SO SR	Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic
TU	Technical University
VÚVH	Water Research Institute

NCSD - STRUCTURE OF COORDINATION OF AGENDA 21 ACTIONS ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

(Basic data)

The national coordinator (mechanism) for the sustainable development (e.g. council, commission, interdepartmental working group).

COORDINATOR: The Government Office of the SR

On the basis of the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 655 of 16 September 1997, in 1999, the **Slovak Republic Government Council for Sustainable Development** was established by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 78 of 27 January 1999.

Since 2 March 2011, the Government Council for Sustainable Development was cancelled by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 135/2011 and all the competences thereof were transferred to the newly established **Committee of Ministers**.

The newly established Committee of Ministers was assigned the competences previously held by:

- The Board of Ministers for Drug Addiction and Drug Control,
- The Government Council of Ministers for European Union Affairs,
- The Government Council for Sustainable Development
- The Government Council for Regional Policy and Supervision of Structural Operations.

At present, several **advisory bodies for the SR Government** operate in the SR, holding the competences related to the sustainable development issues. They include mainly:

- The Economic and Social Council
- The SR Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality
- The SR Government Council for Science, Technology, and Innovations
- The SR Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-profit Organisations
- The SR Government Council for Export and Investment Promotion

SECTION I. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

CHAPTER 2

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND RELATED DOMESTIC POLICIES (FOCUSED ON TRADE)

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEc SR, MFEA SR, MARD SR

Within the international cooperation, the SR promotes economy growth in developing countries and actively engages in the initiatives aimed at trade liberalization and export promotion.

The Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 107/2014 approved the **Strategy for External Economic Relations for the Period of 2014 - 2020** which also covers the relations with developing countries. The umbrella institutional structure for the field of external relations is the **SR Government Council for Export and Investment Promotion** associating the representatives of governmental authorities and the private sector. It is an advisory and coordination body of the Slovak Government for the field of state support of international economic cooperation and presenting the SR abroad.

Since 2001, a round of multilateral trade negotiations has been held at the premises of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, with the focus thereof being the further liberalization of the global trade, referred to as the **“Doha Development Agenda (DDA)”**. Its main objective is more intensive engagement of developing and least developed countries in the multilateral trade system which would facilitate their economic development by means of trading. Solving the problems of developing countries in the field of foreign trade primarily relates to the improvement of their access to global markets, applying the exceptions from the WTO rules within the so-called special and differential treatment, increasing the capacity-building technical assistance and support. Negotiations on DDA continued in years 2014 and 2015. At the same time, the Trade Facilitation Agreement ratification process was in progress. The Agreement was approved at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2013 and it is concentrated on the simplification of customs procedures, reduction of bureaucracy, combating corruption, and reduction of foreign trading costs incurred to entrepreneurs. The outcome of this Agreement will bring benefits to all WTO member countries, including those developing ones. This Agreement is expected to bring additional increase in the global GDP in as much as 100 billion USD per year. The Agreement also contains, inter alia, the provisions regarding capacity-building technical assistance and support which is aimed at facilitation of future implementation of the adopted commitments in developing countries and the least developed countries. By now, the Agreement was ratified by more than 60 countries (ratification in 109 countries is required for the Agreement to become effective).

At the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference in Nairobi, held in December 2015, several ministerial decisions regarding the developing countries were adopted– a special protective mechanism for members from developing countries in the field of agriculture, creation of public reserves for the food safety purposes, trade with cotton, preferential rules of origin for the least developed countries (LDCs), implementation of the preferential treatment in favour of services and service providers from the LDCs, and increasing the participation of LDCs in the trade in services. In December 2015, the multilateral agreement on trade in information technology was concluded as well. Parties to this agreement include 53 WTO member states, including the European Union. The agreement covers 201 products and the annual turnover of trade with these commodities amounts to 1.3 billion USD, representing approximately 10 % of the global trade. The agreement will be beneficial also for other WTO member states, including the developing countries, which are not parties to the agreement, as the elimination of duties for these products will apply to all WTO members. This fact will have a positive

impact on the global economy, as lower prices of the information technology products will also be reflected in other segments where these products are used.

The SR operations in the field of foreign trade with third countries outside the EU, i.e. also within the WTO, comply with the common commercial policy which falls within the exclusive competency of the EU. The SR interests and positions regarding the issues related to the EU common commercial policy are defended by the MoEc SR through the coordination mechanism which includes, on the expert level, the meetings of the Trade Policy Committee established with the EU Commission and the meetings of other working groups; on the political level through the meetings of the EU Commission Foreign Affairs Council in a special format for trade.

As a complementary tool aimed at accomplishing the development objectives in compliance with the DDA targets, the **Aid for Trade** initiative was established. It is the initiative officially launched by the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in 2005. To support the assistance in trading for the developing countries, the WTO established the **Doha Development Global Trust Fund**, whereas the EU, together with its member states, is the greatest provider of development assistance in the world in the long term. Development assistance in the field of trade is included in the total official development assistance in the EU.

One of the priorities of the EU common commercial policy, in addition to the completion of the negotiations on the DDA, is currently also the field of developing the cooperation with the developing and the least developed countries through bilateral or regional agreements on free trade and agreements on economic partnership and cooperation. Examples of such agreements are **Economic Partnership Agreements** (EPAs) between the EU and countries in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific area (ACP countries). The main objective of EPAs is to ensure the long-term development, economic growth, and poverty reduction in the ACP countries as well as the integration of ACP countries in the global economy.

EPAs should not have a form of a conventional symmetrical free trade agreements, but they should maximise the development potential of the ACP economies. Therefore, in this context, every regional group of ACP countries determined their own time schedule, scope, sequence, and area of goods when opening the markets, in compliance with individual plans of development priorities and strategies within the poverty reduction in individual countries.

Negotiations regarding EPAs began in 2002 and cover seven regional groups: West Africa, Central Africa, East and South Africa (ESA), East African Community (EAC), South African Development Community (SADC), Caribbean (Cariforum), and Pacific. The EU continues with negotiations with all the countries, excluding the Caribbean countries of “Cariforum“ with which the EU signed the framework full-value EPA already in 2008 and the agreement in being applied at present.

However, in years 2010 and 2011, the process of finalisation of full-value EPAs with the remaining ACP regions slowed down. The negotiations were relaunched and continued in 2014. The most progressive negotiations were those with the SADC and EAC countries; these negotiations were completed in 2014.

Interim EPAs concluded by the EU with the SADC and EAC countries have never been ratified by these countries. After almost 10 years of negotiations, however, comprehensive agreements on economic partnership were concluded with these countries, replacing the interim EPAs. These agreements are currently in the process of translation and preparation for signing and subsequent ratification proceedings which are expected to run during the Slovakia’s chairmanship.

To accelerate the protracted process of finalisation of full-value EPAs with the remaining ACP regions, the EU proposed to supplement the Market Access Regulation related to certain developing countries that were negotiating on economic partnership agreements and to remove benefits from the countries where EPAs have not yet been ratified.

An important tool of supporting developing countries is also the **Generalised System of Preferences (GSP)** used by the EU in the process of granting certain countries the unilateral trade preferences. The GSP, within the meaning of the Regulation (EU) No 978/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council, focuses more on poorer countries, strengthens and amends a special stimulus measure for sustainable development and good governance known as “GSP+“ which was created for low-income countries that ratified and implemented important international conventions on human and labour rights, environment, and good governance. The most important change is the exclusion of high-income and middle-income countries since 1st January 2015, whereas the volume of preferential imports from these countries represented more than 30 % of the total volume of imports from the countries included in the GSP. At the same time, in 2014, such exclusion from the system was also conducted with regard to countries that concluded agreements on preferential trade regimens and free trade zones with the EU, as well as overseas countries and territories of EU member states that were applying alternative trade agreements on access to the EU market. In 2015, the decision on granting the preferences within the GSP+ to the Kyrgyz Republic was made. The related legislation process is expected to be completed in 2016.

In 2015, compared to 2014, the total export of **goods increased in 4.9% to EUR 67,883.9 million and the total import in 7.5 % to EUR 64,527.4 million. External balance** was active in the volume of EUR 3,356.5 million (in EUR 1,345.9 million lower than in 2014).

Percentage of products of industrial production in the total export

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Percentage of products of industrial production in the total export (%)	90.1	89.4	89.4	90.5	91.0

Source: MoEc SR

CHAPTER 3

COMBATING POVERTY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MLSAF SR

In connection to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, the SR has defined its objective in the field of poverty eradication as “*Extricate at least 170 thousand people from the risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020*“. In 2015, the main measures to reduce poverty or social exclusion were defined in the **National Reform Programme 2015 (NRP SR 2015)** and in more details in the **NRP SR 2015 Action Plan**. The effort of the Slovak Republic is aimed at reducing the risk of poverty and social exclusion by strengthening and supporting social inclusion measures. They mainly cover increasing the efficiency of existing tools and implementation of new tools of assistance in material deprivation as well as other measures focused on adequate income, improvement of quality of social services, measures of the social and legal protection of children, support for families, particularly within the harmonisation of their family and occupational life, etc. The target group consists of people living in the risk of poverty or social exclusion, i.e. persons with low income and/or those who cannot afford some of the needs essential for their lives and/or who live in families with none working family member or those who work only occasionally (very low employment intensity).

Number of people who live in the risk of poverty or social exclusion in the SR represented 960,242, i.e. 18.4% of the population. Compared to the previous survey, this number decreased in 1.4 pp, which regards approximately 109,745 people.

Social indicators of the sustainable development

Indicator/Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Unemployment (%)*	13.6	14.0	14.2	13.2	
Population in material deprivation (%)**	6.8	6.6	6.7	6.0	4.9

Risk of poverty rate (%)	13.0	13.1	12.8	12.6	
Risk of poverty or social exclusion rate (%)	20.6	20.5	19.8	18.4	

* unemployment rate, applying the ILO method

** average number of persons receiving allowance in material deprivation with jointly assessed persons, out of the total population

Source: MLSAF SR

In 2015, a drop in the number of persons in material deprivation out of the total population was observed, compared to the previous year. Such development was influenced by the implemented change in the system of aid in material deprivation concentrated on increasing the motivation among the long-term unemployed and long-term inactive persons to actively participate in the labour market, particularly by implementing parallel payments of a special allowance, the aid in material deprivation, and wages. For the assessment of Chapter 3, an important indicator is the “risk of poverty rate” which expresses the percentage of population living under the poverty line after social transfers. The poverty line is defined as 60% of the median of the equivalised disposable income. In 2014, there was a slight annual decrease in the risk of poverty rate (in 0.2 pp). Reducing the risk of poverty is significantly facilitated by the provision of social security benefits (social transfers), as specified in the applicable legislation regarding social inclusion. In virtue of a new definition covering a broader spectrum of persons living in the risk of poverty or social exclusion, it is also necessary to monitor the rate of risk of poverty or social exclusion. This situation significantly improved in 2014, particularly by the drop in the rate of risk of poverty or social exclusion which considerably contributed to the fulfilment of the national objective within the Europe 2020 strategy concentrated on the reduction of poverty or social exclusion.

Approaches to the reduction of risk of poverty are of the multidimensional nature. In general, the policies are focused on the reduction of the risk of poverty and social exclusion carried out through a wide range of measures, including the provision of direct financial transfers to increase the income and reduce expenses as well as direct measures for active inclusion facilitating access to employment, education, and active participation in the social life.

In the new programme period for years 2014 – 2020, the emphasis is put on the measures of active inclusion which are aimed, together with active labour market measures, to bring employment and occupational mobility and prevent deepening of the poverty trap.

Persons who found themselves in need and with insufficient or absent income, for whatever reason, are covered by the social protection provided by the state. The social protection system is carried out primarily through the **tools of assistance in material need**. At the end of 2014, **the act on assistance in material need** was approved, effective since 1 January 2015. This amendment strengthened the measure focused on the long-term unemployed or long-term inactive persons in the system of assistance in material need to facilitate their employment. It means that a citizen who receives the assistance in material need and finds a job with the income ranging between the half of the minimum wage and the double the amount of the minimum wage is entitled to receive, during the period of twelve months, a special allowance together with their wages (for 6 months in the amount of EUR 126.14 and 6 months in the amount of EUR 63.07). The law does not exclude the entitlement to receive such allowance in the situation when a person or all household members remain in the system of the assistance in material need.

Another supporting tool concentrated on the elimination of social exclusion is the **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived for the period 2014-2020**. For the purpose of implementation of this Fund, the SR prepared the **Operational Programme for Food and Basic Material Assistance** approved by the European Commission on 11 December 2014. The total allocated sum for the SR represents the amount of EUR 64,838,286, including the co-financing. The objective of this programme is to help persons in difficult and burdening social situation to reduce their financial burden and the rate of their material deprivation due to lack of food. In practice, the programme will be implemented by the performance of four measures, particularly the provision of food and hygiene packages to the selected groups of recipients of assistance in material deprivation, by the provision of

warm meals to homeless people and also in form of the support of the distribution of donated food with the aim to prevent significant waste of food.

Since 2009, social services have been provided in the SR in compliance with the **Act No 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services** and on amendments and supplementations of Act No 455/1991 Coll. On Trade Licensing (Trade Licensing Act), as amended, (Act on Social Services), as amended. The Act on Social Services stipulates the legal relationships and requirements regarding the provision of social services, financing of social services, and the supervision of the provision of social services.

In November 2015, in the programme period 2007 – 2013, the **implementation of the National Project of Community Centres (NPCC)** through the Employment and Social Inclusion Operational Programme (ESI OP) was completed. The ESI OP was carried out in the period between 1 January 2014 and 31 November 2015 in all self-governing regions, excluding the Bratislava region. The total allocated sum was EUR 17,173,522.80.

Within the NPCC, the standards and methodologies regarding the community work were drawn up. The NPCC intended target group consisted primarily for the group of citizens under the social exclusion or in danger of social exclusion with the emphasis being put on the marginalised Roma communities which are characteristic of inability to participate in the social, economic, political, and cultural life, as a result of effects of factors such as low income, poor health, insufficient education, poor contact with the majority population, and discrimination. The objective of the NPCC was to support social inclusion and positive changes in communities, with the emphasis on marginalised Roma communities through the development of community work in community centres. 168 community centres participated in the NPCC.

In the programme period 2014 - 2020, the implementation of the project called Support for Selected Social Services of Crisis Intervention on the Community Level (SSSCICL NP) is planned. This will enhance the support of the execution of the provided social services of the crisis intervention on the community level with the support for low-threshold day centres (LTDCs) and low-threshold social services for children and families (LTSSCF). As a result, the target group receiving the services of crisis intervention on the community level will be extended, as well as the extent of provided professional operations and activities carried out in the field of supporting the persons who are in danger of poverty and social exclusion in the regions of the SR.

The Social Field Work in Villages (SFW) National Project began in the SR in form of pilot projects at the end of the 1990s. In the period of 2012 – 2015, the SFW was financed from the ESI OP resources, through the Social Field Work in Villages National Project (SFW NP). The SFW NP was carried out at 294 locations. Number of fieldwork social workers and assistants of fieldwork social workers, as of 20 November 2015, was 893 persons and number of clients who received the SFW services exceeded 92 thousand. The SFW NP is focused on assisting the persons who live in danger of poverty, social exclusion, or who are excluded from the society. The same target groups and objectives are specified in the **Human Resources Operational Programme for the Period 2014 – 2020**. The SFW is also currently supported through 70 demand-oriented projects.

The implementation of the **SSSCICL NP** began on 20 March 2013 and created conditions for the pilot verification of the model of service transition from the institutional to the community level. Within this pilot verification of the deinstitutionalisation (DI) and transformation process in seven social service facilities participating in the project, the verification was concentrated on the innovative and specific methods and approaches that will serve as the base for the system deinstitutionalisation in the SR. In the participating social service homes (SSH) the readiness for the DI process was assessed, the supervision and activities of local consultants began. The introductory Information Seminar was organised for SSH key managers and founders. At present, the project is in the final stage of execution. Within all educational activities, 392 participants have been trained. The remaining four courses are currently being performed in the field of individual work with social service recipients and the quality of social service provision.

In January 2014, the **Support for Nursing Care Service** National Project (SNCS NP) was commenced with the objective to support the social inclusion by extending the nursing care service availability. Implementation of the SNCS NP will increase the number of clients who have never received the nursing care service before in 3,842 persons, and, on the other hand, new nurse jobs were created in the quantity of 3,620, while the municipalities and non-governmental providers receive the reimbursement of their costs in the amount of EUR 644 per month per one created job.

With regard to the issues related to combating poverty, it is important to address the **field of social and legal protection and social custody** defined by the Act No 305/2005 Coll. on Social and Legal Protection of Children and Social Custody. The process of deinstitutionalisation and transformation of alternative care for children and replacing the conventional institutional care with low-capacity residential forms (family houses, apartments) continued in years 2014 and 2015 by performing the tasks of the **Concept of Enforcement of Execution of Court Decisions in Orphanages for Years 2012 – 2015 with the Prospective for 2020 - The Plan of Transformation and Deinstitutionalization of Alternative Care**. The objective to prevent removal of children from their natural biological families was also supported by targeted activities promoting professional work with a child's family within the **Support for Deinstitutionalization of Alternative Care National Project**. Social work carried out in the natural family environment of children and their families was significantly supported also by the **“Pilot Support of Increasing the Efficiency of Provision of Allowances and Execution of Measures in the Field of Social and Legal Protection of Children and Social Custody in the Family Environment” National Project**. In 2015, the Act No 175/2015 was adopted, amending and supplementing the Act No 36/2005 Coll. on Family, amending and supplementing, inter alia, also the act on social and legal protection of children and social custody. This amendment was primarily concentrated on the support of protection of children's rights, it implemented several important legislative measures, including, inter alia, prevention of institutional care which should only be used as a court measure in exceptional cases.

In the field of protection of persons with disabilities, the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 25/2014 approved the document titled “National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for Years 2014 - 2020“. The objective thereof is to ensure, through the defined tasks and measures, achieving the progress in the field of protection of rights of persons with disabilities acknowledged by the UN Convention on rights of persons with disabilities.

Promotion of employment of applicants with the emphasis on disadvantaged groups on the labour market plays the irreplaceable role in combating poverty, together with the related promotion of creation of new jobs as the most efficient means to ensure the growth of the population's income.

The scope of assistance and support tools is defined in the Act No 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended. Amendments of the Act adopted in 2015 implemented the measures regarding the improvement of conditions for the entry or re-entry to the labour market for the selected disadvantaged groups of job applicants, the tool of support and assistance for the labour market participants to promote the success of young people when first entering the labour market, and the definition of socio-economic entity was introduced.

In the field of pension scheme, for the purpose to increase the living standard of pensioners, the retirement benefits were increased in 2014 in the range between EUR 8.80 and EUR 1.50, depending on the type and aliquot portion of the paid retirement benefit. The percentage of increase in the accident allowance in 2014 was 2.3 %. In 2014, the MLSAF SR introduced the Directive No 295/2014 Coll. determining the fixed sum in which the retirement benefit was to be increased and the percentage of accident allowance in 2015. In compliance with the above specified measure, retirement benefits in 2015 increased in the range between EUR 5.20 and EUR 0.90, depending on the type and the aliquot portion of the paid retirement benefit. The percentage of increase in the accident allowance in 2015 was 1.32 %.

The Act No 592/2006 Coll. on Provision of Christmas Benefits to Some Pensioners and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended, was also amended in 2015 (by the Act No 242/2015 Coll.). It was stipulated that the sum of Christmas benefit provided for 2015 will be subject to a single increase in EUR 12.74 for those pensioners whose total of retirement allowance sums does not exceed the double amount of the subsistence minimum for a single adult natural person.

The National Council of the SR approved the Act No 140/2015 Coll., by which a new legal concept of **minimum pension** was implemented, with the effect since 1 July 2015, in the Act No 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance, as amended. The purpose of the minimum pension is to ensure that the insured persons who were engaged in the gainful employment for majority of their working life and who meet the legal requirements receive the retirement income on the level which guarantees they will not be, as individuals, dependent on the assistance in material deprivation. Another new legal concept introduced by the above mentioned amendment is the **compensatory payment**. The purpose thereof is the partial elimination of differences in connection with granting pensions from the Czech Republic for the employment period before Czechoslovakia was divided and the pensions from the SR.

In November 2015, the National Council of the SR adopted the amendment of the Act on Social Insurance with the aim to eliminate the differences in the requirements regarding the entitlement to the survivor's pension for widows and widowers who widowed before 1 January 2004, compared to widows and widowers who widowed after such date. This amendment is also addressing the support for parents who were engaged in gainful employment and had taken up health insurance before they commenced their maternity leave, particularly by increasing the maternity allowance from 65 % to 70 % of the day basis for calculation or a probable day basis for calculation.

With regard to the intention to provide support in order to ensure the development of the least developed regions, the so-called deduction relief for social insurance was introduced, or extended, applicable also to natural persons who were registered in the registry of job applicants for at least six consecutive months before they became employed or became employed in a state institution, who have permanent residence in the least developed region, and the reason of deleting them from the registry of job applicants was the commencement of such employment or employment in a state institution.

Individual tasks of the **Active Ageing National Program for Years 2014 – 2020** are being continuously performed in compliance with the determined deadlines. The programme is concentrated on the support of human rights of older people by means of public supportive policies, including not only policies of employment of older people, but also policies concerning the support of their lifelong learning, civil and social activities out of the official labour market, support of their independence, dignity, economic and social security, including the protection against improper treatment in all social spheres and relationships.

On the basis of adoption of the so-called annuity amendment (the Act No 183/2014 Coll. amending and supplementing the Act No 43/2004 Coll. on Retirement Pension Saving and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts and which amends and supplements certain acts), conditions were created for the provision of retirements pensions from the old-age retirement saving (2nd Pillar). Old-age pensions paid from the 1st Pillar are proportionally decreased for the insured persons - savers for the period of their participation in the 2nd Pillar; therefore, the retirement pensions and early retirement pensions from the 2nd Pillar are paid preferentially in form of lifelong pension. Survivor's pensions are paid for the period of one or two years, depending on whether the saver decided, for a case of death, to secure their survivors. Old-age pensions and early retirement pensions are also paid in form of temporary pension paid by insurance companies or in form of programme choice which is paid by the pension asset management company, but only in certain situations defined by law.

The tools for combating poverty also include the **minimum wage concept defined** by the Act No 663/2007 Coll. on Minimum Wage, as amended. The Government of the SR determined, for the

period of year 2014, the amount of the minimum wage by means of the Government Decree No 321/2013 Coll., in the amount of EUR 352 per month, or EUR 2.023 per hour, which represents the 4.2 % increase, as compared to year 2013. For the period of 2015, the sum of minimum wage was determined by the Government Decree No 297/2014 Coll., in the amount of EUR 380 per month, or EUR 2.184 per hour. Compared to 2014, the increase represented almost 8 %.

Development of the ratio between the sum of monthly minimum wage and the sum of average nominal monthly wage in gross and net amounts

Indicator / Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Minimum monthly wage (MW) (EUR)	317.00	327.20	337.70	352.00
Average monthly wage (AW) (EUR)	786.00	805.00	824.00	858.00
- "gross" MW and AW ratio (%)	40.33	40.65	40.98	41.03
Net minimum monthly wage (NMW) (EUR)	274.53	283.38	292.48	304.84
Net average monthly wage (NAW) (EUR)	607.71	622.39	637.17	662.08
- NMW/NAW ratio (Kaitz index) v %:	45.17	45.53	45.90	46.04

Source: SO SR

Ratio of average wages of women and men

Indicator/Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Average gross monthly wage (EUR)				
Total	855	888	912	964
Men	966	1,003	1,021	1,085
Women	732	761	791	834
Ratio of average wages of women and men (%)	75.4	75.8	75.9	77.5

Source: SO SR

CHAPTER 4

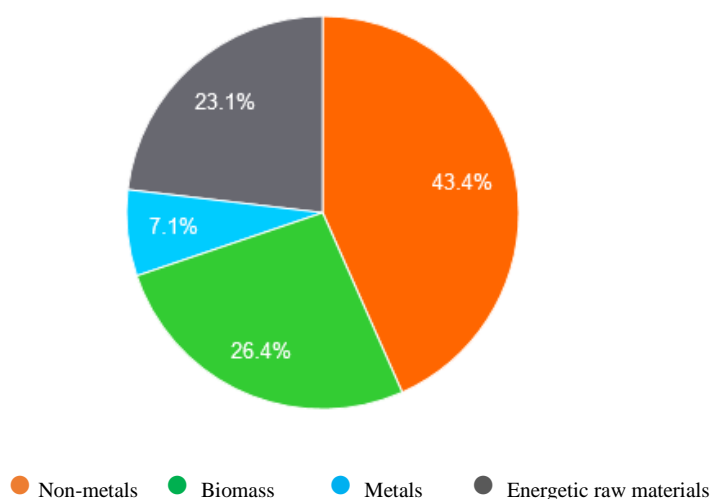
CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEc SR

Resource efficiency in the SR economy, measured as the **Domestic Material Consumption (DMC)** to the gross domestic product in fixed prices as of 2010 (GDP in fixed price 10) in 2013 represented EUR 1.16/kg. Compared to 2000, when the value thereof was EUR 0.77/kg, it increased in 49.7 %. Despite this growth, the SR is significantly behind the average efficiency of resources in EU countries which in 2013 achieved the value of EUR 1.9/kg. In 2013, DMC in the SR represented 11.4 tons per capita (13.2 tons per capita in the EU).

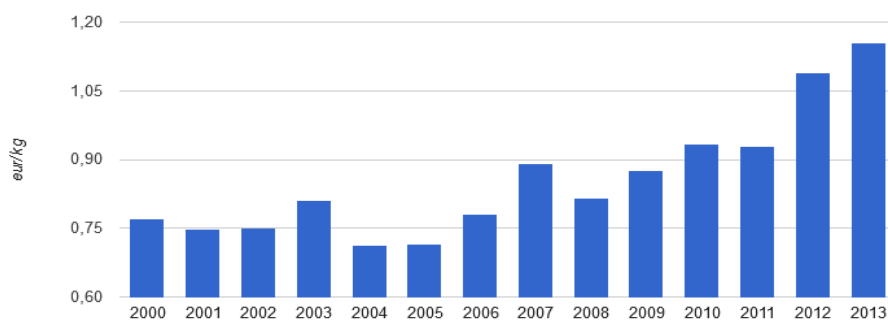
In 2013, the DMC in the SR mostly (43.4 %) consisted of non-metallic minerals, followed by biomass with 26.4 %, energetic materials (23.1 %), and metallic minerals (7.1 %).

Domestic material consumption by main categories, year 2013, %



Source: Eurostat

Resource efficiency development in the SR



Source: Eurostat

Durability of proved energy resources

Coal

Efficient exploitation of recoverable coal reserves facilitates, by 2015 with the prospective to 2030, achieving the following exploitation capacity in Slovak mines:

Exploitation capacity in coal mines in Slovakia

		2008	2010	2011	2012	2015	2020	2030
HBP, a.s.	kt	2,184	2,059	2,080	2,043	1,885	1,350	1,300
Baňa Dolina, a.s.	kt	152	148	173	114	22	-	-
Baňa Čáry, a.s.	kt	87	170	123	136	100	450	500
SR spolu	kt	2,423	2,377	2,376	2,293	2,007	1,800	1,800

Source: MoEc SR

Oil

Domestic oil extraction is almost negligible, compared to the consumption. The tendency of gradual reduction thereof is expected, until the reserves are fully extracted, approximately in 2020. Oil originating from Slovak deposits, extracted by the Nafta, a.s. Company in Gbely, covers only about 1.0 –1.5 % of the current total demand for oil in Slovakia for the processing purposes and this situation is very unlikely to change significantly in future.

Oil extraction development in the SR

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Extraction (tons)	14,644	13,083	15,431	11,448	9,984	8,972	9,586

Source: MoEc SR

Natural gas

In 2015, consumption of natural gas in Slovakia amounted to 4.3 milliard m³. Domestic extraction represents approximately 2% of the natural gas consumption; the remaining quantity is imported. In 2014, domestic extraction amounted to 87 million m³, whereas in the following years the falling tendency is expected.

Percentage of renewable resources consumption

	2001	2006	2010	2011	2014
Percentage of RESs in PESs (%)	3.9	4.4	7.9	7.9	8.9

Source: MoEc SR

Biofuels

In 2013, 85.937 PJ of motor fuels were released for consumption; biocomponents represented 4.6 % thereof.

In 2014, 91.486 PJ of motor fuels were released for consumption; biocomponents represented 5.73 % thereof.

In 2014, **gross domestic consumption of energy** (GDC) reached the lowest value in the entire period of 2001 - 2014 (666 PJ), representing almost a 5.5 % decrease, compared to 2013. In the monitored period of 2001 - 2014, the gross domestic consumption of energy generally decreased in approximately 18.3 %.

There is a long-term trend of negative high percentage of waste **dumping** in the total waste disposal (41 % for waste other than communal waste, and 66 % for communal waste). In 2014, 4.09 kg of waste from electrical and electronic equipments per capita were collected; the SR met the limits for the recovery rate and the recycling rate for individual electric waste categories. The SR also met the limit for the percentage of reuse, recycling, and recovery of parts of old vehicles. 617 tons of used portable batteries and accumulators were collected, representing 66 % of the total collected quantity. Out of the total quantity of waste from packaging produced in 2013, more than 66% were reused after recycling; the percentage of recovered waste, including material recovery, was almost 69 % of the total amount of waste from packaging.

Since 1997, **249 products** have been assessed and awarded with the national mark of Environment-Friendly Product (EFP) in Slovakia. In 2014, 105 products were allowed to use the eco mark.

Changing **consumption patterns** is addressed by several strategic, conceptual, and programme documents. They include, inter alia, the Energy Policy, Energy Efficiency Concept of the SR, the National Renewable Energy Action Plan, the Waste Management Plan of the SR for Years 2011 - 2015, the Waste Management Plan of the SR for Years 2016 - 2020, the Waste Prevention Plan of the SR for Years 2014 - 2018, the National Programme of Environmental Evaluation and Product Marking.

CHAPTER 5

DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS AND SUSTAINABILITY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: SO SR

At the end of 2014, the population of the SR was 5,421,349, including 2,642,328 men and 2,779,021 women. The annual population growth was 5,400 people (3,268 men and 2,132 women).

In terms of the development, the Slovak population level has a growing tendency.

Population level in the SR, 2005 – 2014

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Population	5,389,180	5,393,637	5,400,998	5,412,254	5,424,925	5,435,273	5,404,322	5,410,836	5,415,949	5,421,349
Growth rate (%)	0.08	0.08	0.14	0.21	0.23	0.19	-0.57	0.12	0.09	0.10

Source: SO SR

With regard to low total growth, the average population density is relatively stable, 110 persons per 1 km². Territorial grids (1km x 1km) clearly indicate that less than one third of the territory is actually inhabited (approximately 16 thousand grids with the area of 1 km²) and the average density in inhabited grids amounts to 340 people per 1 km².

The population level is directly affected by the birth rate, mortality, and migration.

In 2014, 55,033 children were born alive. The live-birth rate has annually slightly increased to 10.2 ‰ (in 0.1 point). In 2014, the total fertility (the average number of children born alive per 1 woman during her total reproductive period) amounted to 1.37 children. The values of total fertility document insufficient reproduction rate of the Slovak population (i.e. below 2.1 children per 1 woman, being the simple reproduction limit) since early 1990s.

In 2014, 51,000 persons died; the gross mortality rate decreased to 9.5 ‰ (in 0.1 point), it is maintained below the value of 10 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants since early 1990s. The life expectancy at birth is continuously increasing; in 2014 it reached, for the first time, the value of 73 years in men and 80 years in women. The life expectancy in other age levels is increasing as well.

Since 1993, the SR is the country with the migration gain. In 2014, number of immigrants coming to the SR amounted to 5.4 thousand. 3.6 thousand people moved out, representing 40 % of the international migration. In 2014, the Slovak Republic thus gained 1.7 thousand people through international migration. In 2014, the international migration balance was four times lower than the peak year (2008).

Birth rate development

	Year									
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Born children in total	54,625	54,122	54,631	57,586	61,445	60,599	61,003	55,715	54,986	55,199
out of them:										
alive	54,430	53,904	54,424	57,360	61,217	60,410	60,813	55,535	54,823	55,033
dead	195	218	207	226	228	189	190	180	163	166
Born alive per	10.1	10.0	10.1	10.6	11.3	11.1	11.3	10.3	10.1	10.2

1,000 people										
Gross reproduction rate	0.61	0.60	0.61	0.64	0.68	0.69	0.71	0.65	0.65	0.67
Net reproduction rate	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.64	0.68	0.68	0.70	0.64	0.65	0.66
Total fertility	1.25	1.24	1.25	1.32	1.41	1.40	1.45	1.34	1.34	1.37

Source: SO SR

International migration development

	Year									
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Migrants	7,149	7,324	10,455	10,470	8,325	7,161	6,692	7,422	7,919	9,001
Immigrants	5,276	5,589	8,624	8,765	6,346	5,272	4,829	5,419	5,149	5,357
Emigrants	1,873	1,735	1,831	1,705	1,979	1,889	1,863	2,003	2,770	3,644
Migration balance	3,403	3,854	6,793	7,060	4,367	3,383	2,966	3,416	2,379	1,713

Source: SO SR

CHAPTER 6

PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HUMAN HEALTH

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MH SR/PHA SR

On 1 September 2007, the Act No 355/2007 Coll. on Protection, Support and Development of Public Health and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts came into effect. It specifies the organisation and execution of public health, execution of prevention of diseases and other health disorders, requirements for the healthy environment and working conditions, measures of the governmental authorities in the field of public health in cases of danger for public health, obligations of natural persons and legal entities within the support and development of public health, as well as execution of the state health supervision.

The tasks resulting from the adopted national programmes focused on the protection and support of public health are carried out in cooperation with the national economy sectors, non-governmental organisations, and other associations. Activities focused on the monitoring of selected health determinants and monitoring of public health and health awareness in Slovakia are being performed. In addition, preventive activities for health promotion, including consulting activities, are carried out.

In 1999, the **National Health Support Programme** (NHSP) was adopted. The **update** thereof was approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 634/2014. The main objective of the NHSP remains to be the long-term improvement of public health in Slovakia by eliminating the occurrence of health disorders that reduce the quality of life and represent a threat of early death. The NHSP positively contributes to the enforcement and implementation of healthy lifestyle principles, enforcement and monitoring of prevention measures aimed at reduction of occurrence of severe and most frequently occurring diseases among the population, as well as the joint creation of favourable living and working environment. These tasks are performed by the **Health Support and Protection Consulting Centres** established with regional public health authorities in the SR.

The report on the implementation of the **Obesity Prevention National Programme for Years 2010 – 2013** was drawn up and approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 294/2014. The Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 488/2015 approved the **National Action Plan for Obesity Prevention for Years 2015 – 2025**. Its purpose is to create a socially beneficial system that would lead to the reduction of incidence and prevalence of overweight and obesity among the

population, eliminate epidemic occurrence of overweight and obesity and related diseases. Regional public health authorities in the SR were organising, within the **Year 1 of the European Week of Sport**, the Sport Days and various health promotion and educational activities for general public. Their main objective was to increase the health awareness and behaviour of the entire population in the field of physical activities with the subsequent positive effect on their health. Health Support and Protection Consulting Centres organised the “Open Day” and activities of mobile health consulting rooms and individual and group exercises were carried out in the **Physical Activity Optimisation Consulting Centres**.

With regard to the promotion of proper diet habits of children and youth, mainly the following projects were carried out:

- **School-Time Fruit Scheme**
- **School-Time Milk**

In 2014, the tasks resulted from the updated **Programme of Healthy Diet Promotion among the Population in the SR** were continuously carried out. Monitoring of the intake of nutritional risk factors was carried out within the project titled **Monitoring of Nutrition in Selected Age Groups of Adult Population**. It was focused on the monitoring of the nutrition of selected age groups of the adult population with the aim to obtain and evaluate the information on the overall development and on changes in diet habits and thus also provide the basis for the regional and national performance of nutrition guidance of the Slovak population.

In 2015, the 6th year of the campaign titled **Challenge Your Heart to Move** - the national and internationally coordinated campaign aimed at increasing the physical activity of the adult population. At the occasion of the World Diabetes Day, leaflets promoting physical activities were distributed within the diabetes prevention.

The National programme for Care of Children and Adolescents in the Slovak Republic for Years 2008 – 2015 is focused on the execution of nationally most important prevention programmes in the field of support of health of children and youth. Within the implementation thereof, interactive group interventions were carried out, such as lectures, discussions, panels, etc., which were addressing healthy lifestyle, promotion of physical activities, promotion of mental health, coping with stress, prevention of addictions, etc.

The National Programme for Protection and Support of Older People is concentrated on the improvement of lifestyle and health awareness among older people and elimination of social isolation which negatively affects mortality and morbidity of older people. Several educational and awareness-increasing activities were carried out. A leaflet titled **Osteoporosis – a Silent Thief of Bones** was published within the educational activities carried out at the occasion of the World Day of Osteoporosis 2015. In October 2015 – **Month of Respect for Older People**, public health authorities in the SR organised 139 lectures covering three main topics: Vaccination of Seniors against Flu and Pneumococci, Osteoporosis and Risks of Osteoporotic Fractures, Protect Your Health and Attend Preventive Check-ups. The courses were attended by 3,445 seniors. Within the activity titled **Days of Health for Seniors**, more than 1,366 seniors were examined, including 1,037 women and 329 men, with the majority being in the age group of 65 – 69 years.

The main objective of each action plan within the health priority of the **Strategy for Integration of Roma People by 2020** is to ensure health education of inhabitants of Roma settlements concentrated on the prevention of diseases and promotion of healthy lifestyle with the emphasis on the provision of education regarding the importance of preventive vaccination. Since 2013, the **Healthy Communities** project has been implemented in the entire Slovakia, providing for the active and targeted fieldwork of health education assistants in Roma settlements.

In 2014, the tasks of the **National Action Plan for Alcohol Problems for Years 2013 – 2020** were continuously carried out. The PHA SR initiated round-table meetings of experts to facilitate broader discussions regarding the control of alcohol use in the SR that contributed to:

- sharing opinions of individual sectors and experts in the field of further regulation of alcohol products marking and advertising
- creation of the platform for the cooperation with the Slovak Advertising Standards Council within the preparation of more stringent requirements in the ethical code defining the requirements for the use of alcohol product advertisements
- initiating the preparation of the execution of surveys focused on the evaluation of efficiency of the implementation of warning labels and the regulation of alcohol product advertisements.

Within the prevention of drug addictions, 675 health-education activities were carried out within the implementation of the **National Anti-Drug Strategy for the Period 2013 – 2020, the National Tobacco Control Programme 2012 – 2014, and the National Action Plan for Problems with Alcohol for Years 2013 – 2020.**

Pursuant to the **National Immunisation Programme in the SR**, the children population undergoes mandatory vaccination against ten infectious diseases: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, B-type viral hepatitis, invasive haemophilic infections, pneumococcal invasive diseases, measles, mumps, and rosacea. Results of vaccination rate to 31 August 2015 carried out within the regular mandatory vaccination of children aged 2 years and younger exceeded 95 %, excluding the primary vaccination against measles, mumps, and rubella (year of birth 2013), where the national immunisation rate reached 93.9 %. Regular mandatory vaccination is paid from the public health insurance.

In December 2015, the National Report on the Implementation of the **National Environmental Health Action Plan in the SR (NEHAP IV)** was drawn up. The NEHAP IV is an important tool for strengthening the processes in order to improve the environmental health, while engaging the largest possible amount of partners from various segments.

Within the **information on the environment and health based on environmental and health indicators**, the PHA SR, in cooperation with relevant sectors, prepares the set of available indicators, while applying the ENHIS method, i.e. in a structured form that clearly explains the relations, describes the trends, and provides a comprehensive evaluation of the situation.

In the field of monitoring the quality of indoor air and health, in 2013 the PHA SR commenced the implementation of the pilot project titled **Monitoring of the Impact of Harmful Substances in the Indoor Air on Children’s Health in Various Regions of Slovakia**. The project is focused on the monitoring of indoor air quality in Slovak schools in order to improve the quality of such environment by applying the environmental and health indicators and improving the prevention of acute and chronic respiratory diseases and allergies in children.

Within the supporting activities focused on injury rate in children, the workshop was organised, with the main topics being the cyberbullying and unintentional injuries of children.

In the field of human biomonitoring, in 2014 the European Human Biomonitoring Initiative (EHBMI) was established. In the SR, activities were carried out with the purpose to create the basic centre for human biomonitoring, the so-called national hub. National priorities for the focus of human biomonitoring were drawn up.

Evaluation of relevant indicators

Percentage of people who have flushing toilets in their homes (%)

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 - 2011	2012	2013	2014
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89.0	89.0	89.2	87.5	87.9	-	89.8	87.1	87.1
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Note: As the above mentioned indicator is not separately monitored by the MH SR, the data come from the SO SR obtained within the census of population, houses and apartments carried out in 2011 officially published in 2013.

Source: SO SR

Percentage of people connected to public water supply systems (%)

1998	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
80.8	83.1	86.6	86.9	87.0	87.4	87.7

Source: SO SR

Median life expectancy at birth (in years)*

	1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Men	66.6	68.9	71.62	72.17	72.47	72.90	73.19
Women	75.4	76.7	78.8	79.36	79.45	79.61	80.00

*Median life expectancy is a model indicator calculated on the basis of specific mortalities and provides the average number of years of assumed age of death of persons of certain gender and age, provided that specific mortalities will not change.

Source: SO SR

Number of children born with the weight below 2,500 g in the SR

	1994	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
born	4,434	3,814	5,541	5,034	4,493	4,258	4,404
alive	4,275	3,689	5,422	4,927	4,395	4,172	4,304
dead	159	125	119	107	98	86	100

Source: SO SR

Ratio of mortalities per thousand children born alive*

1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
12.0	8.6	5.7	4.9	5.8	5.5	5.78

*Number of children who died before 1 year of age per 1,000 children born alive

Source: SO SR

Mother mortality - ratio of mortalities of women per thousand children born alive *

1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
0.06	0.02	-**	0.10	0.04	0.02	0.04

*Number of women who died in connection with pregnancy, labour, and postnatal condition per 1,000 children born alive

** Data for year 2010 are not available

Source: SO SR

Percentage of immunisation rate of the children population in the SR against selected infectious diseases (%)

disease	Immunisation rate						
	2003	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
polio	98.7	99.1	99.0	98.7	97.9	96.8	96.0
diphtheria	99.3	99.1	99.0	98.7	97.9	96.8	96.0
tetanus	99.3	99.1	99.0	98.7	97.9	96.8	96.0
pertussis	98.6	99.1	99.0	98.7	97.9	96.8	96.0
measles	99.3	99.4	99.1	98.9	98.2	96.6	95.2
rubella	99.3	99.4	99.1	98.9	98.2	96.6	95.2
parotitis	99.3	99.4	99.1	98.9	98.2	96.6	95.2
B-type viral hepatitis	99.3	99.1	99.0	98.7	97.9	96.8	96.0
pneumococcal invasive diseases	-	-	98.8	98.6	97.7	96.5	95.7

Source: PHA SR

Women using contraception (%)*

	1994	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
intrauterine	9.6	5.1	3.9	4.0	3.7	3.5	3.5

hormonal	5.6	16.7	20.5	20.7	18.1	16.2	16.1
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*% of women in reproductive age (15 – 49 years) using contraception

Source: NCZI

Percentage of potentially dangerous chemicals monitored in food

Monitoring of potentially dangerous chemicals, especially residues of pesticides and dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in the food chain is carried out by the authorities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the SR. Public health authorities, within the competences of the MH SR, perform the targeted official control and monitoring of certain potentially dangerous chemicals, particularly in food for nurslings and young children. The limits for selected contaminants are stipulated by the Decree of the MA SR and the MH SR No 18558/2006-SL, as amended by the Decree of the MA SR and the MH SR No 14300/2007-OL, stipulating the chapter of the **Food Code of the SR (FC SR)** specifying the contaminant levels in foodstuffs. It stipulates the highest allowable amounts for certain contaminants in selected foodstuffs (it is a national regulation – the requirements are beyond the EU legislation). The highest allowable amounts of dioxins and PCBs applicable on the whole territory of the EU are specified by the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 which determines the maximum levels for contents of certain contaminants in foodstuffs, as amended. The maximum limits for residues of plant protection products are specified in the Decree of the MA SR and the MH SR No 26682/2007-OL, stipulating the chapter of the FC SR specifying the residues of plant protection products, as amended, and in the Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on foodstuffs and feeds of plant and animal origin and on amendment and supplementation of the Council Directive 91/414/EEC, as amended.

Within the official control of foodstuffs, the health sector of the SR performs the official control of certain groups of foodstuffs, as specified in Section 23 paragraph 2 of the Act of the National Council of the SR No 152/1995 Coll. on Foodstuffs, as amended. Control of the contents of heavy metals performed in 2014 consisted of the testing of primarily specimens of finished meals, food for children and nurslings, food supplements, spring waters and packed drinking waters. The control of lead content consisted of the testing of 1,129 food specimens with the result of no case of exceeded lead content in any of the examined specimens. The control of cadmium content consisted of the resting of 1,085 food specimens with the result of no case of exceeded cadmium content in any of the examined specimens. The control of mercury content consisted of the testing of 1,009 food specimens with the result of no case of exceeded mercury content in any of the examined specimens. Presence of nitrates and nitrites was examined in 941 food specimens. Out of these, 452 food specimens were tested for nitrite contents and 489 food specimens for nitrate contents. As for the contents of nitrates, the result of 1 vegetable specimen was not acceptable; as for the contents of nitrites, results of all tested food specimens were acceptable. To detect the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls, 21 specimens were collected and examined in a laboratory; out of them, 18 were specimens of milk-based food for nurslings and young children. None of the tested specimens was proved to contain contaminants. Residues of pesticides were examined in 40 specimens of initial food for nurslings, subsequent food for nurslings, as well as food supplements for nurslings and young children based on milk, cereals, or vegetables. Presence of the monitored residues of pesticides that must not be used for the treatment of plants intended for the production of food for nurslings and young children was not proved in any of the tested food specimens. In case of residues of pesticides for which the legislation determines specific maximum limits and in case of other active substances and plant protection products (alpha-HCH, beta-HCH, gamma-HCH, 2,4'-DDT, 4,4'-DDT, 4,4'-DDE, 4,4'-DDD, methoxychlor), the presence thereof was not confirmed either. Residues of antibiotics were examined in 132 specimens; out of these, 31 specimens of raw meat and eggs and 101 specimens of milk, long-life cream, yogurts, cheese, cottage cheese, and curd cheese were examined. All the tested specimens were without any contents of antibiotic residues. To determine the contents of benzo(a)pyrene, 24 specimens of food for nurslings and young children were tested and no deficiencies were observed.

21 specimens of food for nurslings and young children were tested for the presence of melamine. All the examined food specimens meet the requirements of health safety, in terms of maximum values of contents of ochratoxin A, dioxin-unlike PCBs, and melamine contaminants in foodstuffs.

According to the preliminary facts for 2015, the percentage of total funds for the health sector represents approximately 5.7% of the GDP.

CHAPTER 7

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MLSAF SR, MoEn SR, MC SR, MoEc SR, MTCRD SR, MARD SR, MJ SR

In terms of **urbanisation degree**, the percentage of urban population in Slovakia has gradually dropped down from 56.8 % in 1991 to 56.2 % in 2000, with the level of 53.9 % in 2014.

Human settlement development and care of these settlements falls within the scope of regional policies. The Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 222/2014 approved the **Update of the Regional Development National Strategy** as the basic strategic document for the support of regional development on the national level, with the aim to determine the comprehensive strategic approach of the government to the support of regional development by 2030.

The SR has also prepared the **Slovak Spatial Development Perspective (SSDP) 2001**, as amended by the SSDP 2011. It addresses spatial arrangement and functional use of the SR and establishes the framework for social, economic, environmental, and cultural requirements of the government for the territorial development, environmental care, and creation of the SR country and regions. In connection with the SSDP, spatial plans are elaborated for individual large territorial units and municipalities.

Individual self-governing regions have elaborated their own **Economy and Social Development Programmes**. In the course of 2015, activities were carried out with regard to the preparation of **Regional Integrated Spatial Strategies (RISSs)** that will serve as the main planning and implementation tools for the application of the integrated approach within the implementation of the **Integrated Regional Operational Programme (IROP)** in the period 2014 - 2020. Through the RISSs, all three basic methods of implementation of the integrated approach will be applied, pursuant to the EU legislation for the new programme period 2014 – 2020:

- integrated territorial investment,
- sustainable development of municipalities,
- community-driven local development.

In total, 8 RISSs will be elaborated, covering the entire territory of the SR.

The State Housing Policy Concept by 2020 was elaborated and adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 13/2015. Being the framework governmental document for the field of housing, it expresses the comprehensive objectives of the government regarding the field of housing policy, defines the tools how to achieve them, and formulates the responsibilities of citizens, state, municipalities, higher territorial units, and the private sector within the provision for housing.

The global objective of the state housing policy is the gradual increase of the overall housing standard so that it is affordable for the citizens and that each household is able to arrange adequate residential conditions. The existing system of tools for the support of housing is carried out in form of **direct and indirect support**.

Direct governmental support is provided through granted subsidies and soft loans.

Indirect governmental support is carried out through the provision of bank guarantees for the loans aimed at reactivation of the house construction and creation of conditions for the housing renovation, mortgage credit financing in which the governmental support is only provided to natural persons in form of governmental subsidies to mortgage credits and the governmental subsidies for young people to mortgage credits, the system of building savings with the governmental support in form of governmental benefit paid to the building savings.

In 2015, the **state housing support** growth was record-high. Allowance for housing was granted to more than 42 thousand apartments. Compared to the previous year, it is a 57% increase. The housing was supported with the sum of more than EUR 261 million. The highest amount of funds (EUR 198 million) was allocated to the restoration of apartment blocks, representing almost an 80 % increase. Moreover, the allowance for the procurement of rented apartment was granted to 111 applicants in the total amount of EUR 59 million EUR. Compared to the previous year, it is a 4% increase. These allowances provided support for 1,973 rented apartments.

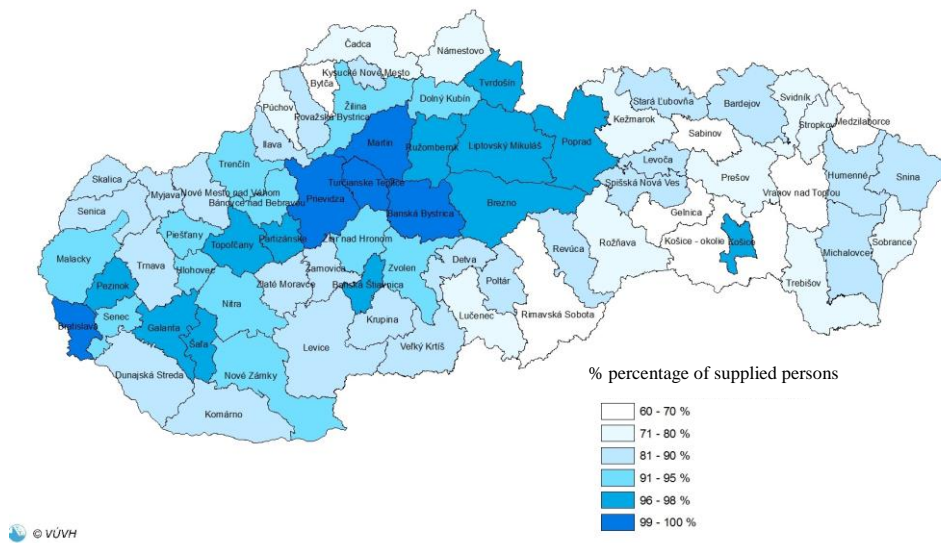
In addition to a permanent residence, there are also **various degrees of other forms of accommodation** in the SR that fall within the competence of the sponsor of the social policy of the SR, the MLSAF SR. Through the system of social services, as specified in the Act No 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services and on amendments and supplementations of the Act No 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (Trade Licensing Act), as amended, it is possible to provide social services to target groups in unfavourable social situation, including, in addition to the entire range of activities, the provision of accommodation in form of week-lasting or all-year stay, or for a certain period of time, or for a single night. They include mainly social services provided in facilities for persons who lack the necessary conditions for satisfying the basic necessities of life (**rest house, refuge, halfway house, emergency shelter facility and social service for children and families**) and for people who depend on another person's assistance or have reached the retirement age (**supported living facility, facility for seniors, day care facility, rehabilitation centre, social services facility, specialized facility, day care centre**).

The development of social services available to persons who stay in a segregated locality with the presence of concentrated and generationally reproduced poverty is also one of the **National Priorities of Social Services Development for Years 2014-2020**.

Since 1992, the targeted renovation of apartment stock older than 20 years is carried out in the SR, particularly by external insulation and removal of system deficiencies. According to the data from the Housing Stock and Non-Residential Building Renovation Strategy, more than half of apartment blocks and a third of family houses were renewed (at least partially) in Slovakia by the end of 2014.

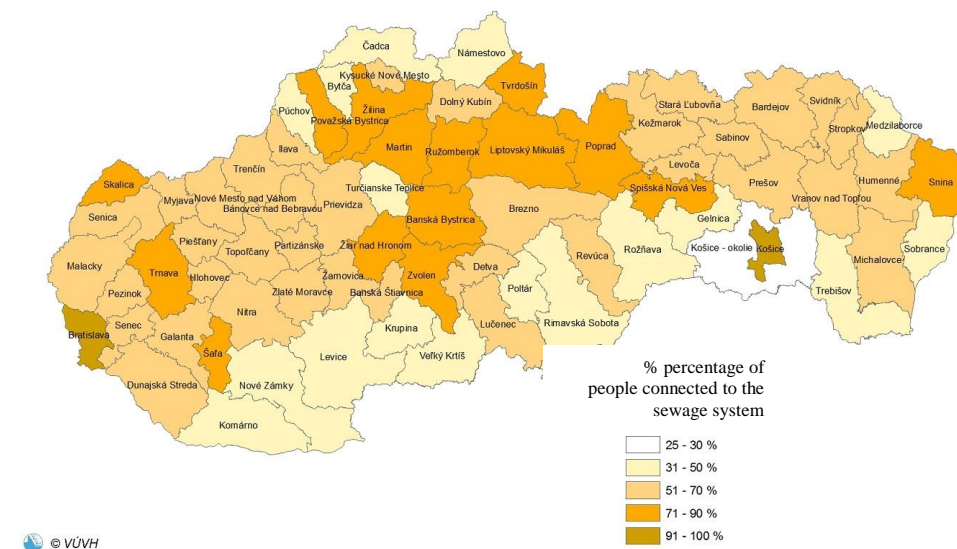
An important source of financing of the complex infrastructure in the environment – construction of water supply systems, sewage systems, waste water treatment plants, waste management facilities, and environmental facilities is the **Environment Operational Programme**. Its purpose is to support the activities related to the implementation of conceptual and programme-related documents adopted in these fields in the SR. The percentage of citizens supplied from the public water supply systems is annually growing and in 2014 it reached the value of 87.7 %. Households connected to the sewage system represented 64.7 % in 2014.

Percentage of people supplied from public water supply systems in 2014



Source: VÚVH

Percentage of people connected to the public sewage system in 2014



Source: VÚVH

Improvement of the care of settlement locations and support of planning the care of the country will be significantly supported by the **Rural Development Programme 2014-2020** which defines several areas and measures supporting the regional development, improvement of care of settlement locations, renewal of villages in rural areas etc.

One of the most important tools for the care of the country and the sustainable use thereof is the Act No 24/2006 on Environmental Impact Assessment and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended. **The purpose of this Act** is primarily the timely and efficient **provision for the high standard of environmental protection** and to contribute to the integration of environmental aspects in the preparation and approval of strategic documents, with the emphasis being put on the support of sustainable development, and to determine the measures to **prevent** environmental pollution, **mitigate** environmental pollution, or **prevent** environment damage.

In order to support the **public transport** development, in 2014 the SR Government adopted the **document titled Public Passenger and Non-Motorized Transport Development Strategy in the SR by 2020**. The strategy addresses the overview of the public passenger transport from the local and regional points of view with the aim to ensure the sustainable municipal and regional migration.

Globally, the road transport is growing much faster than the GDP in majority of indicators - fuel or energy consumption, quantity of cars, transportation performances. This is also closely connected to the increasing environmental damage and damage to public health. The evaluation of the development of fuel consumption in the road transport is very challenging, as it is affected by several factors with antagonistic tendencies. On one hand, there are restraining effects on the fuel consumption, sale of cars, and acceleration of decommission of physically and morally worn out vehicles, resulting from the implemented and expected increase in living costs of the population; however, on the other hand, gradual enhancement of economic activities and unemployment reduction activate the development of transportation accompanied with the growth of fuel consumption.

In the period of 2000 – 2012, the balanced tendency of fuel consumption growth was affected by fluctuations in oil prices on global markets in individual years. In 2009, the petrol consumption decreased in 4.3 % which is attributable to higher petrol prices. The petrol consumption in 2012 slightly increased in 2.92 %. Year 2013 brought the decrease in the car petrol consumption in 5.7 %. **In 2014, car petrol consumption amounted to 545,585 tons, representing the 0.7 % decrease.**

The development of liquid fuels consumption (LPG) in motor vehicles stagnated after the previous significant decrease observed in the period of 2003 – 2004. In 2008, after the years of decrease, the consumption increased in 32 %, compared to 2007. In years 2012 and 2013, the growing consumption tendency continued. **In 2014, the consumption of LPG amounted to 30,335 tons, representing the 9 % decrease, compared to 2013.**

Consumption of fossil fuels in road transport per capita in the SR (kg)

	2006	2010	2013	2014
Consumption of fossil fuels in road transport per capita	332.10	393.29	346.49	323.03

Source: MTCRD SR

CHAPTER 8

INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MF SR, MoEn SR

The SR Government declared in its **Policy Statement** for years 2012-2016 that the main tool to achieve a balanced and sustainable development of the national economy in the SR will be the financial and economy policy addressing the aspects in the field of finances and real economics that are decisive for the nature of further development. These policies will be formulated with the aim to ensure further strengthening the main values of the Slovak constitution, i.e. sustainable social, market-related, and ecological development of the economy and reinforcement of life certainties of the country's citizens.

The government committed to support the investments that use the best available technologies with the minimum environmental impact. Within the **economy policy**, the government will prepare independent programmes, aimed, for example, at creation of green jobs, in the field of water and waste management, building industry, energies, research, development and innovations, and technologies.

The government regards as necessary to create a comprehensive system for the support of **Green growth**, so that it becomes the transforming driving force of the manufacturing processes and the consumer behaviour, as the precondition for the development of a modern society. In 2014, the **Regional Development National Strategy of the SR was updated**; it provides a comprehensive specification of the government's approach to the support of regional development in the long term, while respecting the sustainable development principles. The objective of the strategy is to define a comprehensive strategic approach of the government to the support of regional development in Slovakia by 2030.

Prior to approval, the adopted policies, strategies, concepts, programmes, and plans must pass the evaluation process aimed at the assessment of the environmental impact thereof and for the purpose of identification, description, and evaluation of direct and indirect effects of the proposed document on the environment, explanation and comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of the draft strategic document and the proposed activities, including the alternatives thereof, including the comparison to a zero alternative, defining the measures preventing the environmental pollution, mitigating the environmental pollution, or preventing the environmental damage, and obtaining professional grounds for the approval of a strategic document and for releasing the decision on the permit for the activity, as specified in the special regulations. (The Act No 24/2006 Coll. on Environmental Impact Assessment and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended).

Number of completed evaluations of strategic documents

	Number
2006	16
2007	81
2008	160
2009	99
2010	149
2011	136
2012	263
2013	290
2014	306
Total	1,500

Source: MoEn SR

The MoEn SR performed, through the Slovak Environmental Agency, the systematic evaluation of the **environmental impacts of individual economic activities**. For this purpose, the system of indicators is evaluated and evaluation reports on environmental impacts of individual sectors (industrial manufacture, agriculture, energetic, forest management, transportation and recreation, and tourism) are prepared in regular time intervals. The indicators and reports are available at www.enviroportal.sk. The environmental impact assessment is also a part of regular, the so-called green reports on agriculture and food industry and on forest management.

In the SR, the **Sustainable Development National Strategy** applies, adopted in 2001.

The SR is subject to the Regulation (EU) No 691/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on **European Environmental Economic Accounts**. Within the meaning of this regulation, the environmental economic accounts are compiled also while applying the environmentally related tax module, depending on economic activity, defined in the Annex II to the regulation. Member states prepare, in compliance with the above mentioned regulation, the statistics of the environmentally related taxes, according to the following characteristics:

- energy taxes,
- transport taxes,
- pollution taxes
- resource taxes.

SECTION II. CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 9

PROTECTION OF THE ATMOSPHERE

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEn SR, MoEc SR, MTCDR SR, MARD SR

Emissions of basic pollutants (solid pollutants, SO₂, NO_x, CO) in the long-term (1993 - 2013) decreased; however, the decrease rate has significantly slowed down after 2000. In years 2003-2005, a temporary increase in emissions was observed; after 2005 the falling trend was maintained until 2009. In 2013, compared to 2012, there was a decrease in emissions of SO₂ and NO_x and CO and, on the contrary, a slight increase in emissions of solid pollutants as well as PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Development of the total amount of NH₃ emissions is stable. **Emissions of non-methane volatile organic compounds** (NMVOCs) were constantly decreasing in the long term (1993 - 2000). After 2000, there was a slight increase in emissions; subsequently the volume thereof is maintained approximately on the same level, with mild variations in individual years. In 2012, emissions of NMVOCs significantly decreased again and in 2013 only a slight increase was observed. **Emissions of heavy metals** have a falling trend, except for year 2008. The SR fulfils its commitments resulting from the **international documents** regarding air protection without any deficiencies.

Emissions of basic pollutants in the SR in years 2009 - 2013 (thousand tons)

			2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Solid Pollutants	Stationary sources - NEIS	Major sources ¹	4.966	4.936	5.139	5.283	5.417
		Medium-sized sources ¹	1.554	1.474	1.404	1.348	1.306
		Small-scale sources ²	27.083	26.214	28.507	28.745	29.298
	Mobile sources	Road transport	2.470	2.741	2.632	2.734	2.665
		Other transport	0.295	0.384	0.329	0.320	0.123
	Total		36.368	35.749	38.011	35.696	38.809
SO₂	Stationary sources - NEIS	Major sources ¹	59.739	64.798	64.321	54.235	49.013
		Medium-sized sources ¹	0.991	0.906	0.839	0.894	0.945
		Small-scale sources ²	3.116	3.424	3.102	3.169	2.802
	Mobile sources	Road transport	0.194	0.211	0.041	0.042	0.040
		Other transport	0.041	0.058	0.031	0.014	0.013
	Total		64.081	69.397	68.334	58.354	52.813
NO_x	Stationary sources - NEIS	Major sources ¹	31.333	31.466	31.199	27.465	25.818
		Medium-sized sources ¹	3.389	3.485	3.716	3.978	4.259
		Small-scale sources ²	7.990	8.076	8.215	8.241	8.334
	Mobile sources	Road transport	37.638	40.510	37.773	37.087	37.076
		Other transport	6.439	7.407	6.821	4.907	4.774
	Total		86.789	90.944	87.724	81.678	80.261
CO	Stationary sources - NEIS	Major sources ¹	106.635	125.475	136.615	133.264	130.608
		Medium-sized sources ¹	4.104	4.446	4.680	4.913	5.098
		Small-scale sources ²	36.181	35.953	37.710	38.172	38.113
	Mobile sources	Road transport	59.568	53.489	46.880	45.079	42.930
		Other transport	1.541	1.736	1.448	1.424	1.323

	Total		208.029	221.099	227.333	222.852	218.072
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¹ pursuant to the Regulation of the MoEn SR No 410/2012 Coll.

² pursuant to the Regulation of the MoEn SR No 144/2000 Coll. (2001– 2003), pursuant to the Regulation of the MoEn SR No 53/2004 Coll. (2004–2009), pursuant to the Regulation of the MAERD SR No 362/2010 Coll.(since 2010)

Emissions from road transport and other transport determined to 30/04/2015, emissions from other sectors determined to 04/12/2014

Source: SHMI

Despite the persistent trend of decreasing emissions of pollutants, in 2014 the **limit values** of selected pollutants in the air (NO_x, PM₁₀), determined to ensure public health protection, **were exceeded** again in several monitoring stations. Limit values of pollutants in the air, determined for the protection of vegetation (SO₂, NO_x), were not exceeded. The exceeded limit was observed in ground-level ozone.

Massive reduction in national emissions of ozone precursors for the last years did not result in the reduction of ground-level ozone concentrations in the SR. Some characteristics of the ground-level ozone concentrations in 2014 remained on a relatively high level from previous years.

Total atmospheric ozone was below the long-term average, with the variance of 2.4 % below this average; the total sum of daily erythema doses of ultraviolet radiation decreased. The SR fulfils its commitments resulting from the **international documents** regarding the ozone layer protection.

The SR does not produce any substances harmful for the ozone layer of the Earth. The total consumption quantity of these substances is imported. These imported substances are mainly used in coolants and in detection gases, solvents, and detergents.

Development of consumption of substances harmful for the ozone layer (t)

Group of substances	1986/1989 [#]	2002	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
AI - freons	1,710.5	0.996	0.49	0.19	0.067	0.0016	0.044
AII - halons	8.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
BI* - freons	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
BII* - CCl ₄	91	0.01	0.119	0.039	0.072	-	-
BIII* - 1,1,1 trichloroethane	200.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
CI*	49.7	71.5	0.578	-	0.496	0.057	-
CII - HBFC22B1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
E** - CH ₃ Br	10.0	0.48	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2,019.5	72.986	1.187	1.229	0.635	0.0586	0.044

[#]baseline consumption

* Baseline year 1989 ** baseline year 1991

Note: Consumption of substances in the CI group in 2010 and in years 2012 and 2013 represents the import of regenerated R22. Since 1 January 2010, pursuant to the Regulation (EC) No 1005/2009, only recycled or regenerated substances for the maintenance and servicing of equipments may be marketed; import, marketing, and use of pure substances in the CI group is forbidden.

Source: MoEn SR

Total anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases for 2013 represented 43,679,160 tons of CO₂ equivalents (without counting in the LULUCF sector). Compared to 1990, total emissions **decreased** in 42.17 %; the annual decrease was 0.1 % (compared to 2012). After the decrease in 2009, as a result of economic crisis, the trend of total anthropogenic emissions for years 2010 and 2011 is relatively stable and another decrease was observed in 2012 and 2013.

Aggregate anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases in CO₂ equivalents (mil. t)

Year	1990	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013
Net CO₂	52.63	41.10	38.34	37.91	35.84	35.77
CO₂*	61.74	32.04	32.88	32.08	28.50	27.85
CH₄*	7.08	5.42	4.68	4.76	4.38	4.53
CH₄	7.07	5.43	4.69	4.78	4.39	4.54
N₂O*	6.47	3.61	3.35	2.94	2.91	2.81

N₂O		6.40	3.65	3.37	2.95	2.92	2.82
HFCs	F-gases	NA, NO	0.08	0.53	0.52	0.53	0.54
PFCs		0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.01
SF₆		0.00	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Total plus net CO₂		66.50	50.24	46.95	46.17	43.71	43.68
Total*		75.53	41.22	41.51	40.38	36.39	35.78

Emissions determined to 06/11/2015

The table contains calculations for years 1990-2012

* Emissions without counting in the captures in the LULUCF (Land use-Land Use Change and Forestry) sector

NA = not applicable, NO = no occurrence

Source: SHMI

After significant decrease in emissions after 1990 caused by the decrease in economic performance, the SR managed to maintain the trend of decreasing carbon intensity also after 1997, i.e. in the period of economic growth recovery. So far, the country managed to maintain the so-called decoupling, i.e. a slower growth of emissions, as compared to the GDP growth dynamics.

Through the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 148/2014, the **Climatic Change Impact Adaptation Strategy of the Slovak Republic** was adopted with the aim to provide the largest possible quantity of information on current adaptation processes in the SR and on the basis of the analysis thereof to propose the framework coordination mechanism that is expected to facilitate efficiency increase and also enhance overall awareness on these issues.

A strategic document defining the main objectives and priorities of the energy sector for the period until 2035, with the long-term prospective to 2050, is the new **Energy Policy** approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 548/2014. The purpose thereof is to contribute to sustainable growth of the national economy and competitiveness by ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Slovak energy sector.

To fulfil the priorities of the Energy Policy, additional documents were approved and implemented:

The Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 732/2008 approved the Energy Safety Strategy of the SR by 2030. The objective of this strategy is to achieve competitive energy industry, providing for safe, reliable, and efficient supply of all forms of energy for acceptable prices, while considering the consumer protection, environmental protection, sustainable development, safety of supplies, and technical safety. The following legal regulations were adopted:

The Act No 251/2012 Coll. on Energy, as amended. It specifies the requirements regarding conducting business in the energy industry, access to market, rights and obligations of energy market participants, measures aimed at providing for safe supplies of electricity and gas and the operation of the domestic market in electricity and the domestic market in gas, rights and obligations of persons whose rights and obligations may be affected by the energy market participants, execution of state administration in the energy industry, and the execution of state supervision and control over business activities in the energy industry.

The Act No 100/2014 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No 657/2004 Coll. on Heat Energy, as amended.

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 269/2012 Coll., laying down the details on the principles for converting volume units into energy units and the conditions under which the gas volume and the volume of combustion heat are determined

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 270/2012 Coll. on Professional Qualification for Conducting Business in the Energy Sector

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 271/2012 Coll., laying down the details on the scope of technical conditions of access and connection to the grid and network and the rules of operation of the grid and network

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 416/2012 Coll., laying down the details concerning the procedure of restrictive measure implementation during the state of emergency and the measures aimed at elimination of the state of emergency in the electricity industry and the details concerning the procedure of the crisis situation declaration and the degree thereof, declaration of the restrictive measures in the gas sector for respective categories of gas customers, the measures aimed at elimination of crisis situation and on the determination of restrictive measures in the gas sector and of measures aimed at elimination of crisis situation.

Energy efficiency:

The Energy Efficiency Concept of the SR (Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 576/2007) represents the strategic energy efficiency framework of the SR for the period until 2016. The concept implementation tools represent three energy efficiency action plans, each for the period of three years. **The Third Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Years 2014 – 2016 with the prospective to 2020** (Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 350/2014) defines the strategic objectives and priorities, defines the energy-saving measures, defines gradual steps to achieve the objective, and the need to perform the monitoring.

The Concept of Energy Efficiency of Buildings by 2010 with the prospective to 2020 (the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 384/2008) with the main purpose to create the conditions for the enhancement of energy efficiency of buildings in the SR through the determination of objectives, priorities, and systematic steps and the fulfilment thereof by the determination of cost-saving and motivating measures, programmes, and tasks which are expected to contribute to achieving significant utilisation of the existing potential for energy savings.

Updated Concept of Energy Efficiency of Buildings by 2010 with the prospective to 2020 (the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 336/2012). The concept is focused on the adoption of all new tasks in the field of energy efficiency of buildings (requirements of the Directive No 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on Energy Efficiency of Buildings).

Related legal regulations:

The Act No 529/2010 Coll. on Environmental Design and Use of Products (Ecodesign Act).

The Act No 182/2011 Coll. on Labelling of Energy-Related Products

The Act No 314/2012 Coll. of 18 October 2012 on Regular Inspection of Heating Systems and Air-Conditioning Systems and on amendment of the Act 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (Trade Licensing Act), as amended

The Act No 321/2014 Coll. on Energy Efficiency and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts.

The Act No 300/2012 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No 555/2005 Coll. on Energy Efficiency of Buildings and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended, which amends and supplements the Act No 50/1976 Coll. on Spatial Planning and Building Order (Building Act), as amended

The Act No 321/2014 on Energy Efficiency and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts.

The Act No 277/2015 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No 443/2010 Coll. on subsidies to develop housing and on social housing, as amended by the Act No 134/2013 Coll., and amending and supplementing the Act No 555/2005 Coll. on Energy Efficiency of Buildings and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended,

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 282/2012 Coll., laying down the technical requirements for thermal insulation of heating and hot water distribution systems

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 337/2012 Coll., specifying the energy efficiency of energy conversion during operation, reconstruction and construction of facilities for electricity production and facilities for heat production.

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 358/2013 Coll., specifying the procedure and conditions in the field of implementation and operation of smart measuring systems in the electricity industry.

The Decree of the Ministry of Environment of the SR No 465/2013 Coll., on Technical Requirements for Electric and Electronic Equipments

The Decree of the Ministry of Environment of the SR No 196/2014 Coll., amending the Decree of the Ministry of Environment of the SR No 465/2013 Coll. on Technical Requirements for Electric and Electronic Equipments

The Decree of the Ministry of Environment of the SR No 346/2014 Coll., supplementing the Decree of the Ministry of Environment of the SR No 465/2013 Coll. on Technical Requirements for Electric and Electronic Equipments, as amended by the Decree No 196/2014 Coll.

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 88/2015 Coll., specifying the scope of evaluation, method of calculation, and values of energy efficiency of energy sources and distribution systems

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 99/2015 Coll., laying down the details within the provision of supportive energetic service and guaranteed energetic service

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 168/2015 Coll., amending the Decree of the MoEc SR No 358/2013 Coll., specifying the procedure and requirements in the field of implementation and operation of intelligent measuring systems in electricity industry

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 327/2015 Coll. on calculations and fulfilment of energy efficiency objectives

Renewable energy sources

The Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 383/2007 approved the Higher Use of Renewable Energy Sources Strategy of the SR (RES). On the basis thereof, the MoEc SR performs the measures defined in the RES strategy:

The Act No 309/2009 Coll. on Promotion of Renewable Energy Sources and High-Efficiency Cogeneration and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended.

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 373/2011 Coll., implementing certain provisions of the Act No 309/2009 Coll. on Promotion of Renewable Energy Sources and High-efficiency Cogeneration.

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 372/2011 Coll., specifying the method of calculation of annual heat production in the electricity production by burning of biogas gained by anaerobic fermentation.

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No 373/2011 Coll., implementing certain provisions of the Act No 309/2009 Coll. on Promotion of Renewable Energy Sources and High-Efficiency Cogeneration.

The MoEc SR prepared the **National Renewable Energy Action Plan** approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 677/2010. The plan has determined national objectives regarding the percentage of energy from renewable sources consumed in sectors of transportation, power production, and heat and cool production in 2020, curves of expected growth of the use of RESs in individual sectors in years 2010 – 2020, measures to achieve the objectives, support systems, as well as overall expected contribution of the measures in individual RES energy production technologies and in the field of energy efficiency and cost-saving in order to achieve the binding objectives.

The Concept of Energy Production from Small-Scale Renewable Energy Sources in the SR (Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 347/2013) contains the comprehensive approach to the legislative and potential financial support of the development of small-scale energy sources intended mainly to cover the consumption of households without the negative impact on the stability of distribution systems and with the effect of financial savings for the operators of small-scale sources and also for the distribution companies. Support mechanisms are applicable to all types of renewable sources with the installed capacity of up to 10 kW suitable for households, i.e. photovoltaic panels and small wind turbines, photothermal collectors, thermal pumps, and boilers for heating using biomass.

The Concept of Use of Hydropower Potential of Water Courses in the SR by 2030 (the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 178/2011) with the objective to map the current situation in the use of hydropower potential of water courses, identify potential environmentally allowable options of its further use and create a basic document for the further development thereof.

The Government of the SR approved, by the Resolution No 223/2013, the **National Strategy for the Development of Cycling Transportation and Cycling Tourism in the SR** (Cycling Strategy). It contains 30 measures focused on the development of cycling transportation and cycling tourism in the SR, including the measures to support sustainable mobility in settlements. Provision of funds for the

implementation of the measures represents the subject of the Permanent Financial Mechanism for the Implementation of Cycling Strategy, approved by the Slovak Government in 2014.

The **Strategy for the Development of Public Passenger and Non-Motorised Transport in the SR by 2020** was elaborated, containing 56 measures for the promotion of the listed transportation modes. Sustainability of regional and municipal mobility is one of the basic objectives of the strategy approved by the Resolution of the Government of the SR No 311/2014.

In September 2015, the **Strategy for the Development of Electro Mobility in the SR and the Impact Thereof on the National Economy of the SR** was approved. Electro mobility brings significant improvement of ecological parameters of driving. With the growing percentage of renewable energy sources in the power industry mix of the SR, the savings in emissions will be even more intensive due to the use of electro mobility.

In August 2012, the MoEc SR approved the document titled **Evaluation of Potential Direction and Conditions of Industrial Production Development in the SR after 2013**, being the basic document for the provision of the regional development support, for increasing the awareness on the essential industry needs; it facilitates the stimulation of the direction of the future Slovak industry development.

The MESRS SR, in cooperation with the MoEc SR, elaborated the **Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic (RIS3)**, approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 665/2013. It is a key document focused on the sustainable economic growth and on increasing the employment in the SR through the targeted support of the research and innovations, while considering regional specific features. The MoEc SR prepares, in cooperation with the MESRS SR, the first RIS3 Implementation Action Plan which is aimed at determination of tasks, key priorities, and measures required for the successful implementation of RIS3.

In 2014, the Government approved the **Action Plan for the Competitiveness and Sustainable Steel Industry in Slovakia**. The document analyses the support-related options for the competitive steel industry, maintaining of the competitiveness and sustainability of the steel sector, and determines real and achievable objectives in this sector, as it represents one of the key pillars of the industrial production in the SR.

In the context of the measures approved in the RIS3, as well as the measures of the Research and Innovations OP (and its synergies with the Integrated Regional OP), the MoEc SR elaborated, in cooperation with the MC SR, the **Strategy for the Development of Creative Industry in the SR** which provides the framework overview of cultural and creative sectors as well as related fields, in terms of their economic potential, and proposes priorities and measures addressing main deficiencies resulting from insufficient targeted support facilitating the development of cultural and creative sectors. The document was approved by the Government by the Resolution No 32/2015.

CHAPTER 10

INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEn SR, MARD SR, MoEc SR

Since 2006, several strategic and conceptual documents, acts, and amendments thereof have been adopted. The key ones adopted in the monitored period include the following: the acts on energy, regulation, national nuclear fund, energy efficiency, support of renewable energy sources and high-efficiency cogeneration.

The key documents include the **Energy Policy of the SR as well as other strategic and conceptual documents listed in the previous chapter.**

The MoEc SR prepares the new **Raw Material Policy of the SR.** It will determine basic objectives in the field of raw material resources, potential of domestic raw material resources, structure of import and export of raw materials and percentage of secondary raw materials in the total consumption. It will also define legislative, economic tools for the provision for raw material independence of the country. At present, the **Updated Raw Material Policy of the SR** applies in the SR for the field of raw materials, approved by the Government of the SR Resolution No 722/2004.

Updated analysis of the provision of state support for the mining industry was discussed in the Government of the SR on 5 September 2012. The document specifies the measures for increasing the efficiency of the mining industry support in connection with the new system of trade with CO₂ emissions since 2013 and with the extension of service life of the power plant in Nováky after 2015, with regard to the new environmental legislation on industrial emissions.

In 2015, the MoEc SR provided the subsidies to the Baňa Dolina, a.s. mining company for the copayment of costs of social impacts of the mining activities reduction and liquidation of the coal mine, as the organisation completed the liquidation of main mine workings, buildings and boreholes in the extraction area of Modrý Kameň and terminated their mining activities as of 30 June 2015.

The sector of agriculture provides the protection of agricultural lands and forest ecosystems by enforcing the provisions of the Act No 220/2004 Coll. on Protection and Use of Agricultural Land and on amendment of the Act No 245/2003 Coll. on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended, particularly within the protection of top-quality agricultural lands against unjustified confiscation for construction purposes and against the impacts of degradation of land profile (erosion, compaction,..).

The Agriculture Development Action Plan of the SR for years 2014 – 2020, related to the Agriculture Development Concept for years 2013 – 2020, was approved by the Resolution of the SR Government No 33/2014. It specifies the efficient set of tools and measures to stop the loss of agricultural lands.

Several **strategic documents** for the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems were approved. The most important one is the **Updated National Biodiversity Protection Strategy by 2020** (the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 12/2014) and the **Action Plan** for the implementation of the measures thereof (the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 442/2014).

The SR acceded to international documents adopted for the purpose of landscape management – The European Convention on Landscape and to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and the protocols thereof.

The Resolution of the Government of the SR No 222/2014 approved the **Updated Regional Development Strategy of the SR.** It is the basic strategic document for the support of regional development on the national level with the aim to determine the comprehensive strategic approach of the state to the promotion of regional development in Slovakia by 2030. It formulates the objectives, tasks, priorities and development activities in connection with the Europe 2020 strategy which will have to be implemented in order to execute the sustainable regional development policy of the SR, based particularly on economic efficiency and social coherence.

CHAPTER 11

COMBATING DEFORESTATION

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MARD SR, MD SR

The Concept of Agriculture Development for years 2013 – 2020 is primarily based on the Common Agricultural Policy and the SR government policy statement for years 2012 – 2016. In the field of forest management, the concept contains the strategic objective: to ensure sustainable management of forests based on adequate use of their economic, ecological, and social functions for the development of society, particularly rural areas, and for the efficient use of wood as the ecological and renewable material. With regard to the aforesaid, the concept defines primary tasks of the forest management to ensure sustainable management of forests.

In 2014, the highest percentage of **forest area** in the SR was represented by the category of commercial forests, followed by the protection forests and subsequently by the special purpose forests. The total forest land area was 2,014,259 ha; the total forest stand area was 1,941,992 ha, and the forest land area without forest stand area was 72,267 ha.

Percentage of forests in the SR in 2014 in individual categories

Forest category	Function	Forest stand area	
		ha	%*
Commercial	Production	1,389,504	71.55
	Total	1,389,504	71.55
Protection	Anti-erosion	257,365	13.25
	Water management	71,962	3.71
	Anti-avalanche	1,454	0.07
	Bank protection	452	0.02
	Anti-deflation	2,176	0.11
	Total	333,409	17.16
	Special purpose	Water protection	12,501
Recreational		24,970	1.29
Spa and therapeutic		2,244	0.12
Nature conservation		35,643	1.84
Anti-pollutant		43,245	2.23
Hunting		22,280	1.15
Education-research		31,862	1.64
Protection of gen. sources		10,810	0.56
Protection of state		35,524	1.82
Total		219,079	11.29

* percentage of function types calculated from the total forest area

Source: NFC

Development of total growing stock and growing stock per hectare

Stock *		year								
		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total (mil. m ³)	total	443.8	445.9	452.1	456.4	461.9	466.1	466.1	475.5	476.6
	conifers	209.8	209.2	211.2	211.5	212.2	211.9	211.9	204.2	203.1
	broadleaves	234.0	236.7	240.9	244.9	249.8	254.1	254.1	271.3	273.5
Per 1 ha (m ³)	average	231	232	235	237	239	241	241	246	246
	conifers	268	269	272	274	276	278	278	274	275
	broadleaves	206	207	210	212	215	217	221	229	229

* In years 2006 – 2014, the growing stock figures are stated as the sum of applicable Forest Management Plans, depending on the status at the beginning of the applicability thereof;

Data from years 2013 and 2014 are supplemented with normal growth and executed felling.

Source: NFC

Forest regeneration was carried out in 2014 on the area of 15,934 ha. Compared to 2013, it was reduced in 7.4 %. As for the percentage of natural regeneration, out of the total forest regeneration which reached 32.5 %, it decreased in 20.59 % in 2014, as compared to 2013. Artificial regeneration, out of the total forest regeneration, represented 67.5%. Cleaning was carried out in 2013/2014 in 114.4% of the planned extent. Tending felling was carried out in 2013 in 46.21% of the planned area.

Development of forest stand regeneration

Indicator	Status in								
	2004	2006	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total forest regeneration (ha)	13,960	15,561	15,402	15,700	13,980	18,055	19,011	17,205	15,934
Out of this, artificial regeneration, (ha)	8,866	9,256	9,985	9,143	8,520	10,923	11,964	10,678	10,751
Natural regeneration (%)	36.4	40.5	35.2	41.8	39.06	39.50	37.07	37.94	32.50

Source: NFC

Basic data on forests managed by state FM organisations

Indicator	State FM organization					Total
	LESY SR	ŠL TANAPu	LPM Ulič	VLM SR	SOŠ, SOLŠ, TU	
Forest stand area (ha)	902,056	38,861	24,647	63,427	11,929	1,040,921
Growing stock (thousand m³)	222,554	6,086	6,148	14,123	3,493	252,404
Mature stand area (ha)	177,701	3,572	4,391	13,240	2,633	201,537
Mature stand stock (thousand m³)	73,123	1,317	1,813	4,395	1,388	82,036
Total current increment (TCI) (thousand m³)	5,709	122	183	424	90	6 528
TCI/ha(m³/ha)	6.37	4.04	7.41	6.76	7.59	6.37

Source: NFC

In the period between 2005 and 2014, 4,457 ha of the affected area were regenerated on the forest lands managed by the ŠL TANAPu; 2,200 ha by artificial regeneration and 2,257 ha by natural regeneration. The highest percentage within the artificial regeneration is represented by larch-trees (32 %) and spruce (26 %); within the natural regeneration it is spruce (35 %), rowan-trees (24 %), and birch trees (22 %).

On 14th and 15th May 2014, there was intensive rainfall on the entire territory of Slovakia, for example, in Tatranska Javorina the record-high daily precipitation was observed, in the amount of 141.3 mm, and cold and rainy weather prevailed also during previous two weeks. Due to high differences in air pressure in Europe, there was an extraordinary situation when the wind gusts reached as much as 100 km/h. Factors, such as soil and tree-tops saturated with rain water, together with an extraordinary wind force, caused damage to trees and uproots of stands on a large territory. The volume of wood damaged by the wind throw disaster was 3,137,780 thousand m³ of wood mass; out of these, 2,260,280 m³ were state-owned and 877,500 m³ were owned by other entities. Approximately 56 % represent coniferous calamity mass and 44 % broadleaves calamity mass. The ratio of broken and uprooted trees is approximately 30:70; as for the ratio of concentrated and dispersed calamity mass, it is 47:53. It is the second largest disaster for last 20 years.

According to the register of the Fire Technical and Expertise Institute of the Ministry of Interior of the SR, in 2014 there were **153 forest fires registered**, with the total burnt area of 192 ha. The caused damages were calculated to EUR 142,445. One person was injured and one person died during these

forest fires. From the long-term point of view, the dominant cause of forest fires was the public category (87.58 %). These fires were caused mainly by negligence, tourists, and children younger than 15 years, as a result of starting fires in nature. The second most frequent cause was unintentional ignition by unknown persons, representing as much as 26 fires (17%).

The most important source of gains and revenues in the forest management remains to be the **sale of wood**, achieving the value of EUR 430.18 million in 2014, representing 81.70 % of the total gains and revenues within the forest management. This fact is significantly demonstrated among non-state entities in which the sale of wood represented 88.64 % of gains in 2014. Wood is the basic material in the wood-processing industry and ensures thus employment, gains, and revenues also in this sector.

Review of the development of felling, divided into planned felling, real felling, percentage of incidental felling out of the total felling, and the percentage of exceeded limits for prescribed felling

Indicator	2005	2010	2014
Planned annual felling (thousand m ³)	6,821	8,219	9,349
Real felling (thousand m ³)	10,190	9,860	9,417
Incidental felling (thousand m ³)	6,533	6,159	6,142
Percentage of incidental felling in the total felling, %	64.11	62.46	65.22
Percentage of exceeded prescribed felling, %	49.39	19.97	0.73

The planned felling figure is stated as the sum of felling in the applicable FMP, depending on the baseline status; the data are not supplemented with the felling actually carried out and the balanced prescribed yield.

Source: NFC

In 2014, the entities managing forests in Slovakia supplied 8,736 thousand m³ of wood to the domestic market (including domestic consumption). Compared to 2013, wood supplies to the domestic market were higher in 1,125.4 thousand m³. The supplies of deciduous wood to the domestic market were higher in 28.7 thousand m³, whereas the supplies of coniferous wood increased in 1,096.7 thousand m³. Increase in the wood supplies is also caused by more intensive logging, particularly of coniferous wood. An important factor of previous years, however, was a deteriorated situation in the wood processing industry.

In 2014, the total quantity of 3,408 thousand m³ of raw wood was exported from the territory of the SR. Wood export was focused on EU countries. 1,020 thousand m³ of raw wood was imported to Slovakia. The negatives of importing wood in general include an undesirable situation when a larger quantity of lower-quality wood is imported and higher-quality domestic wood is intended for export (mainly conifers of quality class I. to III.).

In 2014, the forest management figures showed, in annual comparison, the decrease in average income from conifers in EUR 2.17/m³ and in broadleaves it was a decrease in EUR 0.73/m³. On the basis of comparison with year 2013, we can state that the situation in the development of average prices of wood on the market is generally stable, with the exception of increase in average income from the top-quality assortment of wood.

In Slovakia, **wood biomass** from forest and non-forest lands and the remainders after mechanical and chemical wood processing, together with water energy, are the most important renewable energy sources (RESs) in the SR. Forest management is currently the largest supplier of wood used for the production of energies for the Slovak market. In recent years, fast growth of demand for fuel wood biomass continues, primarily in form of fuel wood chips and fuel wood.

Review of the development of dendromass quantity for energy purposes

Year	Forest chips		Fuel wood and others		Total	
	thousand tons	HJ	thousand tons	HJ	thousand tons	HJ

1990	2	19	368	3,496	370	3,515
2000	5	48	471	4,475	476	4,523
2005	120	1,140	640	6,080	760	7,220
2010	250	2,375	695	6,602	945	8,977
2014	620	5,890	830	7,885	1,450	13,775

Source: NFC

The forest management is continuously implementing new projects focused on addressing current problems in the forest practice, as well as on the optimisation of selected activities in the forest management. The content, structure, and topics of these projects are designed so that relatively individual subsystems of the Forest Management Information System are created, with mutual internal and external information relations in the national and international settings. The execution outputs represent the source of new, or modified information on forests in the SR that significantly increase the information potential of the information bank of the Forest Management Information System.

Evaluation of indicators related to combating deforestation

Indicator	Measure unit	Year		
		2005	2010	2014
Felling intensity	%	88.0	82.5	77.9
Changes in areas of forest lands (forests)	ha	1,931,646	1,938,904	1,941,992
	ha	2,006,172	2,010,817	2,014,259
Percentage of managed forest lands	%	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: MARD SR

* Note: The value stated is 100%, as pursuant to the national law, each forest managing entity is obliged to manage forests according to the Forest Management Plan. In forest sections included in the grade 5 nature conservation, no actual management is carried out due to specific requirements of the nature conservation.

CHAPTER 12

MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS: COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MARD SR, MoEn SR

The SR acceded the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification** (Convention) on 7th January 2002. The national point of contact for Slovakia with regard to the Convention is the National Agricultural and Food Centre (NAFC) – The Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute (SSCRI). The SR declared the existing status of being a developed and the same time affected country. Activities in the SR carried out in 2015 were focused on the discussions on and commenting of expert documents, mainly within the Working Party on International Environment Issues (WPIEI) – Desertification regarding the Convention topics. They addressed key issues related to the Convention administration, particularly the field of agenda and budget, global mechanism, evaluation of the Convention implementation, issues related to science and technology.

The Convention obliges the parties thereto to elaborate and adopt the National Plan of Action (NPA) representing a set of legal, institutional, and economic tools, including scientific and technological cooperation, building of required capacities, education and promotion for the purpose of Convention implementation. The purpose of national action plans is to identify the factors that contribute to desertification and degradation of soil and lands as well as practical measures that are essential for the mitigation of negative impacts. In 2005, the SSCRI prepared the **Plan of Action for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification**. A new version thereof is currently in the preparation process. The NPA SR will cover the period until 2018, while respecting new requirements and indicators of evaluation of land desertification and degradation.

These issues were addressed in years 2014 and 2015 by the departmental projects of research and development, particularly the “*Innovations of Floricultural Systems in Sustainable Plant Production in Changing Environmental Conditions*“, the “*Genetic Improvement of Farm Traits of Important Crops*“ and the “*Biological Diversity of Wheat, Improvement for Adaptability under Global Change and Use in Ecological Agriculture*“ that addressed, inter alia, the aspects related to the desertification of land in Slovakia, or the research of resistance of field crops to abiotic stresses, including drought and creation of new genetic sources and new biological materials of selected field crops, more resistant to drought (creation of new biological materials of common wheat, winter triticale, common oat, and poppy, more resistant to drought). Another project was the research and development project titled “*Sustainable and Efficient Systems of Management of Grass Stands*“ focused on the efficient management of agricultural land with the emphasis on maintaining its quality parameters. Long-term monitoring indicates that coordinated and efficient systems of pastures are the precondition of land sustainability, preservation of grass stands in good condition, and soil erosion reduction. Improper management of grass stand areas causes the spread of invasive and expansive species, such as *Deschampsia caespitosa*, *Calamagrostis epigeios*, *Brachypodium pinnatum*, *Cirsium eriophorum* which suppress high-quality species of grass, clover plants, and medicinal herbs. Biodiversity is in decline and the land’s sensitivity to variable, and, above all extreme meteorological effects increases, together with adaptability to the changing climate conditions. Monitoring of the water deficit impact on hydrophysical and chemical properties of soil and on the quality of feeds from habitats of grass stands is included in the project titled “*Grassland Management Handbook – Ungulate Game and Favourable Welfare Conditions for Black Grouse in Alpine Areas*“.

The **forest land area** in the SR in 2014 was 2,014,259 ha, including 1,941,922 ha of forest stand area. The forest coverage reached 41.1 %. From the long-term point of view, the forest land area and the forest stand area are slightly growing.

Forest land area and forest stand areas

	2007	2010	2013	2014
FL	2,006,601	2,010,817	2,013,419	2,014,259
FS	1,921,7	1,937.6	1,940.3	1,941.9
LwS	73,659	71,913	71,898	72,267

FL – forest land

FS – forests stand

LwS – forest lands without forest stands

Source: NFC

CHAPTER 13

MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS: SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MARD SR, MoEn SR

The need to recognise the **mountain areas**, considering their nature of specific territories of the SR, and promote their sustainable development was declared by the ministry of environment in the **Position Paper on the Promotion of Sustainable Development of Mountain Areas in the SR**. It was drawn up on the basis of the papers drawn up by the interdepartmental working group for the sustainable development and efficient use of sources in mountain areas of Slovakia and on the conclusions of the workshop titled **Mountain Areas of Slovakia – Potential to Promote their Sustainable Development**.

Submontane and mountain regions of Slovakia are characteristic with high percentage of permanent grass stands. In addition to the production function, they also serve number of non-production

functions that are lately becoming more and more important. Significance of all types of grass stands thus increases also in terms of landscape management in submontane and mountain areas.

Issues related to the comprehensive management of various types of grass stands are addressed by the project titled **Sustainable and Efficient Systems of Grass Stand Management** that solves intensifying and efficient technologies of managing agricultural land in submontane and mountain areas. The subject of the project covers the systems of creation and management of sown grass stands and the use of arable land of low quality for growing unconventional crops, grassland management technologies, intended for agricultural and non-agricultural use and leading to permanent sustainability of grass ecosystems and rural land.

From the social point of view, it is required to maintain **adequate and proper use of permanent grass stands (PGSs)** in submontane and mountain areas. Appropriate method and intensity of the management thereof are required to ensure their ecological stability. The process of desertification and successive overgrowing endangers mainly mountain and submontane meadows and pastures that represent 81% of the total PGSs in Slovakia. From the ecological, as well as economic point of view, agricultural production in these areas is heading towards production of forage, which is conditioned mainly by adequate management of meadows and pastures.

The issues related to **abandoned grass stands** (with the area estimated to approximately 40% of PGSs) require higher attention and, therefore, the discontinued exploitation in some areas and regions of Slovakia will have to be restored back to the original productive status, using various procedures and techniques, and thus ensure, while applying adequate intensity, their positive environmental impact.

Wind and bark beetles represent in the long-term the most significant agents damaging the **forest health**. Quantity of bark beetles culminated in 2009 (3.2 million m³); since 2009, decrease was observed every year, down to 869 thousand m³ observed in 2014. Key measures for the protection against bark beetles included early processing of affected bark. Control and protection of stands against bark beetles was carried out in 2014 using, inter alia, 46 thousand pheromone traps and 16 thousand conventional traps. Wood mass affected by bark beetles was treated by debarking or chemically, using insecticides. Within the integrated forest protection, biological preparations based on entomopathogenic fungi *Beauveria bassiana* were applied as well. On calamity areas, mainly in Low Tatras, protection of young plants against large pine weevil is carried out, using modern technology, mechanical protection of trunks using wax, which may be used also in higher levels of nature conservation. This method was used to treat approximately 400 thousand pieces of young plants.

In terms of ecological balance, serious problems of forest protection include also damage to ash-trees caused by fungi *Chalara fraxinea*. Out of 30 thousand ha of area, as much as 20 thousand ha are estimated to be affected. The protection consists of leaving trees without signs of damage in the stands as the method of species improvement.

Monitoring of the development of insect pests in protective zones (PZs) of individual small protected areas (SPAs) was carried out using pheromone traps, in the period between 1 April and the end of September 2014. 1,042 pieces of pheromone traps were installed in individual PZs of 47 SPAs. Within the technical execution of the measures, sanitation felling was carried out with regard to affected trees which were first marked by the bark inspector and then transported to the collection site, in the quantity of 7,210 m³ of wood mass, while 955 m³ of wood mass were left at the stem. Within the protection measures, conventional traps of series I, II. and in some cases also III. were installed with the volume of 529.19 m³ of wood mass.

Since 2011, the forest protection service observes increased occurrence of damage caused by pests affecting roots and trunks of young spruce trees within 5 years of planting. The damage is caused by large pine weevil *Hylobius abietis* and bark beetle *Hylastes cunicularius*.

CHAPTER 14

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MARD SR, MoEc SR

The Concept of Agricultural Development for years 2013 – 2020 was approved by the Resolution of the Government of the SR No 357/2013. It is primarily based on the EU Common Agriculture Policy and the Policy Statement of the SR Government for years 2012 – 2016. The purpose of this concept is to promote efficiency of using the sources to achieve intelligent, sustainable, and inclusive growth of agriculture and rural areas. In relation thereto, the Agricultural Development Action Plan of the SR for years 2014 – 2020 was approved by the Resolution of the SR Government No 33/2014. It specified the efficient set of tools and measures to support the Slovak agriculture, food industry, and forest management.

A new **Rural Development Programme of the SR** for years 2014-2020 (RDP 2014-2020) was approved, with the priorities being the promotion of transfer of knowledge and innovations in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas, increasing the viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture, promotion of innovative agricultural technologies and sustainable forest management. The RDP SR is focused on the promotion of source efficiency and switch to low-carbon and climate-resistant agriculture, forestry and food industry.

The total sum allocated for the RDP 2014-2020 amounts to EUR 2,078,982,018.25 of public funds for the period of 7 years; out of this amount, the EU funds consist of EUR 1,545,272,844 as the contribution of the EAFRD, and EUR 533,709,174.25 as the state budget contribution.

Sustainable development of agriculture is supported also by non-project measures within the RDP 2014-2020.

Measure No 10 - Agri-Environmental and Climatic Measure

This measure primarily solves, through the involved operations, the following identified needs:

- Preservation of biodiversity and increase of environmental efficiency of support provided to protect biodiversity
- Provision for the protection of soils against degradation
- Elimination of impact and adaptation of agriculture to climate changes.

Measure No 11 – Ecological Agriculture

This measure primarily solves, through the involved operations, the following identified needs:

- Preservation of biodiversity and increase of environmental efficiency of support provided to protect biodiversity
- Provision for the protection of soils against degradation

They are carried out primarily in form of following payments:

- Payment for switching to ecological agriculture procedures and methods
- Payment for ecological agriculture preservation.

Measure No 12 – Payments within the Natura 2000 System and According to the Framework Guideline on Water

The measure solves the compensation of costs and income loss caused by disadvantages in relevant areas related to the territories within the announced network Natura 2000.

Measure No 13 – Payments for the Areas with Natural or Other Special Limitations

Since 2015, the SR performs the new, or modified, determination of **areas with natural and other special limitations** with the total area of 1,240,610 ha, particularly the following:

- Mountain areas (501,796 ha)
- Areas facing significant natural limitations (573,622 ha)
- Areas affected by specific limitations (165,192 ha)

The measure is aimed at supporting agricultural activities, execution of which is hindered by the limitations related to the nature of the given areas.

Measure No 14 – Good Animal Welfare

The purpose of the support is to compensate farmers for their costs and lost income related to the implementation of breeding procedures beyond the relevant obligatory standards and good breeding practice, leading to improvement of animal welfare. The proposed support coverage includes breeding of dairy cows, poultry, and swine, with the dominant requirement being the enlargement of breeding space for animals.

Measure No 15 – Forest-Environmental and Climate Services and Forest Preservation

The objective of this measure is to provide support to public or private forest managers or other private entities and public entities and their associations in return for the performance of forest-environmental and climate commitments. This support is carried out mainly in form of following payments:

- Payments for forest-environmental obligations in special bird protection areas.
- Payments for forest-environmental obligations in areas of European significance.

On 15 July 2015, the EC approved the **Fisheries Operational Programme** 2014 – 2020 (FOP). The FOP is co-financed from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EFMF) and from the state budget of the SR.

The approved amount of expenses represents the amount of EUR 20,837,779; the sum of EUR 15,785,000 is provided from the EFMF and EUR 5,047,779 from the state budget.

Support of the FOP will be carried out by implementing five measures resulting from the three priorities of the European Union. Within the Agenda 21, the FOP contributes to the fulfilment of its objectives related to *Support of Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas*, by means of the measure titled *Productive Investments into Aquacultures*.

The main supported activities within this measure include:

- construction of new production facilities for fish farming,
- modernization of existing production facilities,
- pond desludging,
- provision of environmental services related to aquaculture, educational activities regarding aquaculture,
- improvement of animal health and welfare,
- reducing the negative or increasing the positive environmental impact.

In years 2014 and 2015, several projects continued with the aim to improve the economy and employment rate in the agriculture sector by innovations and by increasing the degree of product processing and direct sale to end users, ensure and increase safety and quality of products sold as described, and increase awareness on applicable regulations.

These **projects include, for example:**

- the education project in the form of Beekeeper Expert course provided in various education modules
- Innovations in growing systems within the sustainable vegetable production in changing environmental conditions
- Development and installation of lysimetric devices for efficient cultivation on land in the sustainable vegetable production

- Climate Park HUSK 1101/2.2.1/0158
- Legislation and rules regarding production of foodstuffs and their direct sale in the Slovak-Hungarian border area
- Direct sale of agricultural products and foodstuffs
- Comprehensive processing of grapes and direct sale of products
- Wine grape and wine, efficiently and progressively - principles, legislation, protection, analyses.

The SR covers the area of 49,036 km². In 2014, the population of the SR was 5,421,349 inhabitants. The population of permanent residents in the SR is increasing, but in a slower rate. Population in rural areas represented 46.1 % and in urban areas it was 53.9 % of inhabitants.

CHAPTER 15

CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Responsible authority: MoEn SR, MARD SR

In 2014, there was a **change in the legislation regarding nature and landscape conservation**. Amendments of the Act No 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Conservation, as amended, extended the economic tools (compensations for management limitations for owners of protection areas), financial compensation was supplemented with an option to exchange lands, purchase, rent, and the contractual protection, the regulation of non-original and invasive species of plants and animals was amended, the process of declaring areas as protected was amended, including the transfer of the competence to declare an area as protected from nature conservation authorities to the Government of the SR, certain deficiencies of the existing national legal regulation were eliminated in terms of enforcement of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and the Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild bird, and the tree conservation issues were updated.

The amendment of the **Decree** of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003 Coll., implementing the Act on Nature and Landscape Conservation, reflected the changes in the documentation regarding nature conservation and the List of Invasive Animals Species and the Methods of Elimination thereof was supplemented in the Annex No 2.

Several **strategic documents were approved** as well. The most important one is the **Updated National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy by 2020** (Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 12/2014) and the **Action Plan** for the implementation of the related measures (Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 442/2014). The strategy reflects international obligations of the SR resulting especially from the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the obligations adopted by the EU in relation to the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (Nagoja, Japan, October 2010). It contains 9 objectives and it is extended with the issues of green infrastructure, ecosystem services, or invasive species, it reflects the policies on biodiversity conservation on the EU level, and discusses, in a higher extent, the issues of including the biodiversity, conservation, and management of protected areas in the priorities within the planning of tools for the financing from the European funds. The Action Plan contains 167 tasks aimed at accomplishment of six objectives, or 33 measures, of the aforesaid national strategy.

Within the **CITES** issues, in December 2013, the Government of the SR approved the National Action Plan SR 2014 – 2019 for the enforcement of the implementation of the Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating the trade therein. In 2014, the MoEn SR **granted 175 permits for import/export/re-export** (mainly for leather products and hunting trophies), **927 exemptions from the prohibitions of commercial activities** (especially for turtles, parrots, predators, and owls), and **1 certificate** on legal acquisition. The MoEn SR, in cooperation with the Customs Authority and the ZOO Bojnice, prepared the international event of **burning the horns of square-lipped rhinoceros** (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) detained by the

Slovak customs authorities in illegal import in the EU. The objective of this event was to alert the public of the critical situation regarding illegal killing and subsequent trade in rhinoceros horns.

Supervision over the production of forest reproductive material and its launching on the market

In 2014, the state expert control authority (National Forest Centre) performed the **supervision over the production** of forest reproductive material (FRM) and over launching it on the market in 126 entities performing activities with the FRM and in 5 forest managing entities. Seed quality testing was carried out in the specialized seed laboratory – determination of germinative activity 51 sections, purity determination 90 sections, life-time determination 57 sections, and humidity determination 9 sections.

The most widespread **source of FRM** in Slovakia is represented by the recognized forest stands. Their area varies slightly each year and reflects the needs of resource managers. Compared to 2013, a slight reduction of the area of recognised stands of Norway spruce, white fir, English oak, and a slight increase in area of European beech were observed. In case of other trees, the areas of recognised stands are stabilised.

In order to **conserve the genetic resources** of forest tree species, 130 genetic bases with the total area of 23,762 ha are established in Slovakia as of 31 December 2014.

The current legislation regarding the FRM issues creates appropriate conditions for the provision for sufficient number of recognized FRM sources for all major tree species in Slovakia.

Forest seed management – in the harvest season 2013/2014, the harvest rate was low for all our major commercial tree species. There is a continuing lack of seeds of European beech in the 6th forest vegetation zone, oaks in the 1st forest vegetation zone a Norway spruce in the 6th and 7th forest vegetation zones. Forest trees seeds are processed and stored mainly in the Semenoles branch company in Liptovský Hrádok.

The area of forest tree nurseries, as well as the area of productive land is stabilized. The total production of planting stock showed a slight decrease, mainly in the non-state sector.

In years 2014-2015, the National Agricultural and Food Centre - Research Institute for Animal Production (**NAFC-RIAP**) actively contributed to the fulfilment of goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the related Community Strategy for Biodiversity which includes a program of measures for the conservation of biodiversity and the protection of genetic resources in agriculture, activities related to the protection of **animal genetic resources (AGRs) of livestock** in Slovakia, FAO and OECD.

The research and development project **RDP 3 “Research Methods for Biodiversity Conservation“** continued, addressing alternative biotechnological processes for the AGR preservation and the promotion of agrarian country biodiversity. The related supporting documentation was drawn up and provided to the MARD SR for the purpose of the implementation of the Greening programme.

Great significance for the SR may be attributed mainly to the objectives in the field of preservation and strengthening of ecosystems and the services thereof and in the field of biodiversity conservation within the state policy for agriculture, forestry and fishery. Within the updated document of the *National Programme for Protection of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture for years 2015-2019* (NPPGRFA), in years 2014 a 2015, the National Agricultural and Food Centre - the Research Institute for Plant Production (**NAFC-RIPP**) was dealing with the task of professional assistance for the MARD SR “*Operation of Gene Bank of the Slovak Republic*“. This bank contains more than 22,111 plant genetic resources (PGRs). The programme pillars of the NPPGRFA are monitoring, collecting, evaluation, documentation and inventory of PGRs, storage, regeneration, characterisation, distribution of PGRs, and the provision of information, national and international cooperation and intensive use of PGRs as the sources of biological and genetic variability.

National Agricultural and Food Centre - the Food Research Institute (**NAFC-FRI**) performs the sector-wide collection of food microorganisms, being the only one in this sector; they originate from the cooperation with the production segments and from the cooperation with research institutions. In 2015, the collection contained 48 strains of *Listeria monocytogenes* collected from food producing plants and 24 strains of yeasts. 3 strains of *Lactobacillus*, 3 strains of *Streptococcus*, 2 strains of *Enterococcus*, and two strains of *Lactococcus* were taken from the collection of CCM Brno and included in this collection.

In 2013, the State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic (SNC SR) began to **implement a comprehensive field monitoring** of species and habitats of European significance (ES) focused on the monitoring of 146 animal species, 49 plant species, and 66 habitat types of ES, which continued also in years 2014 and 2015, and the comprehensive information and monitoring system of habitats and species was elaborated.

The percentage of endangered lower plants in the SR currently represents 11.4 % (including fungi); the percentage of endangered **higher plants** represents 14.6 %. The percentage of endangered **invertebrates** in the SR currently represents about 6.6 %, and as for **vertebrates**, 24.2 % of them are endangered.

The quantity of **plant** taxa protected by the state represents 1,419 taxa; out of these, 823 taxa occur in Slovakia (vascular plants – 713, bryophytes – 23, higher fungi – 70, lichens – 17). The quantity of **animal** taxa protected by the state currently represents 1,042 taxa; out of these, 746 occur in Slovakia.

In 2014, no **plant salvage programmes** were prepared and submitted, and none were currently applicable. As for animals, the salvation programme was prepared for *Colias myrmidone butterfly*; however, no salvage programmes were carried out.

In terms of salvage of plants and animals **in situ**, in 2014, the **transfer of 1 species** (*Eryngium planum*) was organised, with the quantity of 120 individuals, and transfers to adequate habitats in the wild nature for mussels (*Unio crassus*) - 1,350 individuals, European beaver (*Castor fiber*) - 1 individual, amphibians - 80,257 individuals, and bats from panel blocks of flats (no figures available).

In 2014, **932** injured or otherwise disabled animals were rehabilitated in **rehabilitation centres**. **555 individuals** in total were released back to the wild.

In 2014, **surveillance of 143 nests** of 6 predator species was carried out, and **125 young individuals** were successfully assisted to leave their nests, within the organizational units of SNC SR.

Within the practical care of protected animals, the **installation of foil barriers** and subsequent transfer of amphibians, mainly frogs, across problematic sections of roads is carried out during the spring migration of amphibians. In total, **80,257 amphibians were transported** and 19,930 m of barriers were installed in 2014.

In 2014, 71 localities of **invasive plant species** were **mapped** in the protected areas or in their protective zones across the area of 2,648 ha, and 69 localities in the territory with the 1st degree protection across the area of 2,167 ha. **Removal** of non-original invasive plant species and plant species with invasive behaviour was carried out on 70 localities in protected areas across the area of 16.5 ha (the activity was related to the measures carried out also in previous years), and out of the protected area, on 46 localities with the area of 1,150.5 ha. Two species were non-original and invasive plant species (*Heracleum mantegazzianum* and *Fallopia japonica*).

In 2014, in order to improve the **favourable status of habitats** and plants, the **management measures** were implemented in 107 localities in protected areas across the total area of 1,043.2 ha; out of the protected areas on 37 localities (gene pool areas) across the area of 35.5 ha.

In 2013, the **second report of the status of habitats and species of European significance** was drawn up, pursuant to article 17 of the Habitat Directive (for years 2007 – 2012). The report evaluates the status in the SR with regard to 195 species and 66 types of habitats of the European importance. On the basis of the comparison of statuses of species and habitats and the evaluation made in 2007, we can state that the knowledge extent has increased, i.e. less evaluations show the **unknown** status. The total percentage of species and habitats with **positive** status evaluation has increased, which is caused especially by the above mentioned knowledge extent increase. The percentage of species that are in a **bad condition** remained more-less the same, which indicates that the necessary measures for the regeneration of habitats or species populations, or for the revitalization of localities where they live, are still being applied insufficiently.

In 2013, the **Report on the Status of Individual Birds Species** was drafted as well, pursuant to Article 12 of the Directive on Birds. In total, 243 bird species were evaluated. For majority of species in the SR, the estimated **population** is less than 10,000 couples. The conclusion derived therefrom is high vulnerability of individual bird species, especially in populations of less than 2,000 couples, which is the size of approximately half of the species nesting in Slovakia. **The trend of the bird population** in the SR is stable or rising in 55 % of species; by contrast, one third of bird species in our country is declining. 76 % of species cover a stable or extending **area**, which is quite positive result.

Evaluation of ecosystem services has been so far carried out in Slovakia in the Slovak Paradise National Park (2009), the Veľká Fatra NP (2011) and the Tatra National Park (2012). Partial evaluations have been developed for some forest ecosystems. In 2012, the evaluation in the NP Muránska planina was commenced. For the purpose of evaluation of ecosystem services, the **working group was formed**, consisting of representatives of many relevant organizations, participating in the preparation of the basic evaluation of ecosystem services in the SR. Moreover, the preparation of a detailed **map of ecosystems** has begun. It should serve as the basic material for the evaluation of individual ecosystem services in the SR.

In connection with the performance of the tasks under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU Strategy for Biodiversity by 2020, cooperation was arranged in order to **prepare the methodology for the evaluation** of ecosystem services in the protected areas of the SR.

Within the formation of **protected areas** as the basic tool of conservation and preservation of ecosystems in 2013, the **Decree of the MoEn SR** on designation of the latest protected bird area (PBA) in Levočské vrchy Mts. came into effect, and in 2014 the Decree of the MoEn SR No 466/2013 Coll., amending and supplementing the Decree of the MoEn SR No 440/2008 Coll. which declares the Protected Bird Area in Dunajské luhy came into effect. In 2014, also the amendment of the Act No 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection, as amended, came into effect, **cancelling 2** protected areas.

The total area of the **national network of protected areas** was not modified in 2014 and it amounted to 1,142,143 ha, representing 23.3 % of the Slovak territory. In addition to the aforesaid, within the formation of the **European network of protected areas** NATURA 2000, there are other 41 declared protected bird areas in the SR with the total area of 1,282,811 ha (26.16 % of the SR area) and 473 areas of the European importance with the area of 584,353 ha (11.9 %).

As for the **international protected areas**, there are 2 areas in the SR which were awarded the **European Diploma**, 4 areas which were included in the network of biosphere protected areas (within the UNEC SO Man and the Biosphere Programme), 2 international projects registered in the UNESCO **World Heritage List**, and 14 wetland sites registered in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (**Ramsar Sites**), within the *Convention on Wetlands of the International Importance, especially as waterfowl habitats*.

In 2014, 3 **programmes** for protected areas management were approved. Implementation of 2 projects within the Environment Operational Programme commenced, with the aim to develop 131 programmes for the management of selected protected areas within Natura 2000 network and pilot programmes for the management of 3 protected areas (PL, NP). A project focused on the development of 34 programmes for the management of protected bird areas is currently in progress.

In the field of practical care of specially protected sections of nature and landscape, specialized professional nature conservation organizations carried out **regulatory interventions** (mainly mowing, mulching, and removal of volunteer woody plants).

Nature protection organizations developed in total 9,061 **expert opinions** for the proceedings of public administration authorities.

CHAPTER 16

ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MARD SR, MoEn SR, MH SR

Genetically modified (GM) food and feed are approved on the community level in compliance with the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EC) No 1829/2003. The SR participates in the authorisation proceeding within the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health - the Section for Genetically Modified Food and Feed and Environmental Risk. In 2014, 12 products were subjected to the authorisation procedures and they were approved in 2015.

In the field of plant production in the SR, the attention was paid especially to the use of biotechnology within the production of new promising biological materials (varieties), including biological materials possessing genetically modified signs of economic importance and for growing genetically modified crops (GMCs), in compliance with the applicable legislation.

In years 2014 and 2015, no GM varieties were temporarily tested, only the GM corn hybrid MON 810 of the Monsanto company, within the project of the Slovak Agricultural University in Nitra.

In years 2014 and 2015, several scientific and research projects were carried out, focused on the development and application of biotechnological methods and solutions. These projects included for example the following:

- Effect of physical condition and certain immunologic factors (CD molecules) on fertilization process in bovine animals
- Application of biotechnology methods to preserve animal genetic resources
- Vegetable substances as natural regulators of ovarian functions of farm animals
- Multiplex molecular-genetic analyses within the identification of unknown samples of wild animals
- Nuclear (nDNA), mitochondrial (mtDNA), and physiological biomarkers as selection criteria for experimental and productive application of model animals
- Genotypization using the SSR markers and the preparation of pharmaceutically active profiles of wine grape varieties
- Technologies for obtaining natural substances suitable for the production of health supporting food and biofood.

The SR is actively engaged in the cooperation with various **food safety** committees. Within the OECD, the country cooperates with the OECD Working Group for New Foodstuffs Derived from Biotechnology. It is also engaged in the activities within the global standardization of the food chain carried out in the UN system by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

In terms of scientific risk assessment, pursuant to the Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council, activities are carried out on the European level by the European Food

Safety Authority (EFSA). The MARD SR operates as the National Point of Contact for the scientific and technical cooperation with the EFSA, with the task not only to provide for the transfer of information from the EFSA to the national level, but also to provide the documents required for the execution of scientific risk assessment, coordinate this segment, coordinate the expert activities of the Slovak scientific community, coordinate activities regarding the scientific risk assessment on the national level, and coordinate educational activities within the DG SANTE programmes.

The **healthcare sector** uses medicinal products, diagnostics, sera, and vaccines produced with the application of several types of biotechnology or biotechnological processes. The production of medicinal products, diagnostics, sera, and vaccines as such is subject to the authorisation granted by the MH SR for the production of medicinal products and to the fulfilment of requirements of the good manufacture practice, in compliance with the requirements of the Act No 362/2011 Coll. on Medicinal Products and Medical Devices and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts.

Pursuant to the Act No 362/2011 Coll. on Medicinal Products and Medical Devices and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, in case the pharmaceutical testing, toxicological and pharmacological testing, and clinical testing is carried out with medicinal products, excipients, and medicinal products being genetically modified organisms or containing such organisms, the authorisation of the MoEn SR is required as well, in accordance with the Act No 151/2002 Coll. on use of Genetic Technologies and Genetically Modified Organisms, as amended.

Within the meaning of the Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on advanced therapy medicinal products, amending and supplementing the Directive 2001/83/EC and the Regulation (EC) No 726/2004, it is allowed in the SR to produce medicinal products using new technologies, such as tissue engineering, and produce new types of medicinal products intended for somatic cell therapy and for gene therapy. In hospital setting, pursuant to the Act No 489/2008 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No 140/1998 Coll. on Medicinal Products and Medical Aids, individual preparation of medicinal products for advanced therapy is allowed. The SR government issued the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 120/2009 Coll., laying down analytical norms, toxicological-pharmaceutical norms, clinical norms and protocols related to the documentation on results of pharmaceutical tests, toxicological pharmaceutical tests performed for the purpose of medicine registration, amended by the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 68/2010 Coll., and the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 346/2009 Coll., specifying chemical, pharmaceutical and analytical procedures, tests of safety and residues related to file documentation on results of pharmaceutical testing, toxicological and pharmacological testing and clinical testing performed for purposes of registration of veterinary medicaments.

CHAPTER 17

PROTECTION OF THE OCEANS, ALL KINDS OF SEAS, INCLUDING ENCLOSED AND SEMI-ENCLOSED SEAS, AND COASTAL AREAS AND THE PROTECTION, RATIONAL USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR LIVING RESOURCES (ATYPICAL FOR THE SR WITH POTENTIAL APPLICATION ONLY TO WATERWAY TRANSPORT)

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MTCDR SR

In the SR, the Act No 435/2000 Coll. on Maritime Navigation, as amended, applies. The Act specifies the rights and obligations of legal entities and natural persons related to the operation of sea ships and marine pleasure boats, as well as the competence of state administration authorities in the field of marine transport. Relevant implementing regulations have been adopted with regard for this act. The most important international conventions on the protection of the seas and oceans, which the SR acceded to, include particularly:

- The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973), followed by the 1978 Protocol (the Protocol signed in London on 17 February 1978),
- The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (1974), followed by the 1978 Protocol (the Protocol signed in London on 17 February 1978),
- The UN Convention on the High Seas (Geneva, 1958), published in the Collection of Laws under No. 92/1964. Coll.
- The UN Convention on Coastal Waters and Adjacent Zone (Geneva, 1958), published in the Collection of Laws under No. 101/1965 Coll.
- The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Montego Bay, 1982), published in the Collection of Laws under No. 242/1996 Coll., ratified on 22 April 1996 and applicable to the SR since 7 June 1996.

As of 31 December 2013, 8 vessels flying the flag of the Slovak Republic were registered at the Maritime Authority of the Slovak Republic. In the case of marine pleasure boats, the number of registered vessels is 981 vessels.

CHAPTER 18

PROTECTION OF QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF FRESHWATER RESOURCES: APPLICATION OF INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND USE OF WATER RESOURCES

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEn SR, MARD SR; MH SR

Integrated water resources development and water resources management in Slovakia is governed by the **management plan of river basin districts** (The Water Plan of the Slovak Republic) which was elaborated in details for 10 subbasins of SR. The first **Water Plan of the Slovak Republic** was approved by the Resolution of the SR Government No 109/ 2010. The obligatory section of the Water Plan of the Slovak Republic consists of the **plan of measures** declared by the Regulation of the Slovak Government No 279/2011 Coll. In 2015, the updated version of the Water Plan of the Slovak Republic was elaborated for years 2016 – 2021. It was approved by the Government of the SR in January 2016.

To support the implementation of the Water Plan of the Slovak Republic and the relevant EU legal regulations, following documents were adopted in the SR:

- several amendments to the Act No **364/2004 Coll.** on Water and on amendments and supplementations of the Act of the Slovak National Council No 372/1990 Coll. on Offences, as amended (Water Act) (last amendment in the wording of the Act No **262/2015 Coll.**),
- The SR Government Regulation No **269/2010 Coll.**, laying down the requirements for the achievement of good water status, as amended by SR Government Regulation No. 398/2012 Coll.,
- The SR Government Regulation No **282/2010 Coll.**, laying down the threshold values and the list of groundwater bodies,
- The MAERD SR Decree No **418/2010 Coll.** on Implementation of Certain Provisions of the Water Act,
- The Decree No **2/2010** of 16 September 2010, establishing the details on the definition of the river basin districts, environmental objectives, economic analysis and water planning (notice no. 396/2010 Coll.),
- The SR Government Regulation No **201/2011 Coll.**, establishing the technical specifications for chemical analysis and monitoring of water status,
- The SR Government Regulation No **279/2011 Coll.**, declaring a binding part of the Slovakia's Water Plan, containing a plan of measures to achieve environmental objectives,
- The SR Government Regulation No **416/2011 Coll.** on evaluation of chemical status of groundwater bodies,
- The Decree of the MoEn SR No **73/2011 Coll.**, laying down the details of the determination of significant and sustained upward trends of pollutant concentrations of groundwater and the

- procedures for the reversal thereof,
- The Decree of the MoEn SR No **220/2012 Coll.**, establishing the details of the water supply for a period of crisis situation,
 - The SR Government Regulation No **167/2015 Coll.** on Environmental Quality Standards in the Field of Water Policy.

The assessment of water resources is carried out annually by means of the water-management calculation of surface water and groundwater quantities. In 2014, the ratio of total abstractions to the annual runoff from the territory of the Slovak Republic was 4.88 % (in 2013 – 4.50 %) and the use of groundwater expressed by the ratio of abstraction amounts to the usable quantities of groundwater reached the value of 12.69 % in 2014 (in 2013 - 13.23 %).

The annual surface water abstractions, as a percentage of available water resources of surface water

Year	2001	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
annual runoff from the territory of the SR (mil. m³)	11,812.00	12,401.00	22,939.00	9,362.00	7,597.00	14,214.00	11,469.00
abstraction (mil. m³)	1138.40	907.04	602.27	593.01	675.39	639.08	559.35
utilisation as % of available surf.wat. resources	9.64	7.31	2.63	6.33	8.89	4.50	4.88

Source: SHMI

The annual groundwater abstractions, as a percentage of available water resources of groundwater

Year	2001	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
usable quantities (l.s⁻¹)	76,087.90	76,799.24	78,671.70	78,801.06	78,938.93	78,886.74	80,326.77
Abstractions (l.s⁻¹)	13,397.90	11,867.46	10,819.52	10,601.79	10,719.35	10,438.84	10,187.32
utilisation as % of available groundwater resources	17.61	15.45	13.75	13.45	13.58	13.23	12.68

Source: SHMI

Density of hydrological networks (surface water hydrometric stations)

Year	2002	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
km² per 1 monitoring object	122.9	122.6	117.0	117.0	117.3	117.3	117.3

Source: SHMI

Protection of water sources

Protection of water resources in the SR is divided into three categories:

- restricted areas of water sources with the area representing 17.57 % of the SR area,
- river basins of water flows that are used or usable as water sources for drinking water abstraction. The list of water flows is contained in the MoEn SR Decree No 211/2005 Coll., laying down the list of water flows which are important from the water management point of view and water flows within the water management.

- protected water management areas covering 14.16 % of the SR area and accumulate 39.96 m³.s⁻¹ of usable quantities of water resources.

Quality of waters

In 2014, the surveillance monitoring and operational monitoring of surface water were carried out at 254 monitoring sites. In the group of inorganic indicators, most frequent cases of exceeded limit values were observed for the nitrite-nitrogen (74.1%) indicator. In the group of synthetic substances, water quality limits were exceeded for, for example, arsenic, cadmium, mercury; in the group of non-synthetic substances it was hexachlorobenzene, 4-methyl-2,6-di-tert butylphenol, cyanides; and in the group of hydrological and microbiological indicators for example saprobic index of bioestone, chlorophyll-a, coliform bacteria. In 2014, for the coliform bacteria indicator and for the biochemical oxygen demand indicator (without suppressing nitrification), 38,1 % and 88,9%, of monitored sites, respectively, were compliant with the requirements of the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 269/2010 Coll.

In 2014, the quality of groundwater was monitored in 171 objects of surveillance monitoring (i.e. in objects not affected by point pollution sources) and in 222 objects of operational monitoring (i.e. in objects likely to capture possible penetration of pollutants into groundwater from potential pollution sources). As for the objects of groundwater surveillance monitoring, the issues of adverse oxidation-reduction conditions emerge, as indicated by the most frequent exceeding of permissible concentrations of total Fe (53 cases), divalent Fe (42 cases), Mn (58 cases), and NH₄⁺ (7 cases). The recommended percentage of saturation of water with oxygen detected in the field was observed in the surveillance monitoring objects in 77.03% of specimens.

The MH SR is the authority responsible for the performance of the internationally binding document Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes of 1992, which was ratified in Slovakia in 2001. In the first half of 2014, the third version of new national objectives was drawn up with regard to the international document titled Protocol on Water and Health. The reason for the updated version was to ensure the fulfilment thereof, in other words, the extension of deadlines for the objective accomplishment. Determination of new national objectives was preceded by several interdisciplinary working meetings with 19 institutions operating in various sectors.

The national report titled The Notice on the Fulfilment of National Objectives of the SR III to the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes of 1992 was acknowledged by the SR Government on 16 December 2015.

The water-related measures represent the most important ones within the strategy for public health protection. They are in particular focused on:

- the monitoring the quality of drinking water at a consumer's place supplied from the public water supply systems, quality of bathing water during the bathing season,
- the implementation of the state health surveillance of drinking water and water for bathing,
- mandating measures to ensure and increase health safety of drinking water supplied from public water supply systems,
- the prohibition or restriction of the use of drinking water which is not safe for health,
- a ban on swimming in recreational waters that are unsuitable from the health point of view,
- updates of national laws and regulations in accordance with the criteria and recommendations of the WHO and the EU,
- making the information on drinking water and bathing water quality available,
- participation in international activities relating to drinking water and water for bathing, preparation of the European legislation and reporting the data on drinking water and bathing water quality,
- interdepartmental cooperation and collaboration and communication with organizations, institutions and responsible persons in the field of water management,

- training and educational activities aimed at informing about the importance of water, health risks resulting from the use of drinking water that does not meet the requirements of health safety and the use of unsatisfactory bathing water.

Drinking water supply

In 2014, 87.7 % of the Slovak population were served from the public water supply system. In the long-term perspective, the highest percentage of the served population is in Bratislava region (97 %) and the lowest percentage (about 80 %) in Košice and Prešov regions. In Bratislava, Trnava, and Nitra regions, drinking water is only supplied from underground water sources; in other regions of Slovakia a combination of surface and ground water is applied, whereas the surface water sources are most intensively used in the Eastern Slovakia. In many regions of Slovakia, due to the pricing policy, inhabitants are not interested in being connected to the new public water supply systems, they prefer using their individual water sources which often do not meet the required quality parameters.

Drinking water quality

Issues related to drinking water in terms of hygiene are governed by the Act No 355/2007 Coll. on Protection, Promotion and Development of Public Health and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended. Water quality is assessed in compliance with the Regulation of the SR Government No 354/2006 Coll., laying down requirements for water intended for human consumption and for the quality control of water intended for human consumption, as amended by the Regulation of the SR Government No 496/2010 Coll.

In 2014, the percentage of analyses with the results compliant to the drinking water quality limits reached 99.69 %. Drinking water is of very high quality in the SR

Waste water drainage

In 2014, the percentage of people living in houses connected to the public sewage system reached 64.7 % of the total population. In 2014, 692 wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) were managed by water companies, municipalities, and other entities, whereas the highest percentage represented mechanical and biological waste water treatment plants.

Issues related to waste water drainage are governed in the SR by the Act No 364/2004 Coll. on Waters, as amended, and the Act No 442/2002 Coll. on Public Water Supply Systems and Public Sewerage, as amended.

In 2003, the entire territory of Slovakia was declared a sensitive area by the SR Government Regulation No. **249/2003 Coll.**, laying down the sensitive areas and vulnerable areas, which was replaced by the SR Government Regulation No. **617/2004 Coll.**, establishing the sensitive areas and vulnerable areas. This fact resulted in the necessity to perform more thorough cleaning of waste water produced in agglomerations of over 10,000 EP, such as secondary treatment, including the removal not only of organic contamination but also intensified removal of nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) compounds.

In recent years, the Slovak Republic achieved significant progress in the field of waste water drainage and municipal waste water treatment. At present, the attention is mainly paid to the construction of new WWTPs and sewage systems, or also to renovation of WWTPs, and in the necessary extent also renovation of sewage systems. Projects for the construction or renovation of sewage systems and/or construction or renovation of municipal WWTPs will be performed also within the Environmental Quality Operational Programme 2016 – 2021.

Adaptation to climate change

The Slovak Republic prepares regularly, in four-year intervals, **National Reports of the SR on Climate Change**. Priorities of the **Strategy for the SR Adaptation to Adverse Effects of Climate Change** include the dissemination of information and knowledge on adaptation issues at all levels of

management, as well as for the general public, strengthening of institutional framework for adaptation processes in the SR, elaborating and developing comprehensive risk assessment methodologies in connection with the climate change from the national to the local level, development and application of methodologies for the economic assessment of adaptation measures (macroeconomic impacts) and the development and implementation of a tool for the selection of investment priorities based on the assessment of cross-sectoral aspects of adaptation measures.

Floods

For the purpose of protection against floods, the Act No 7/2010 Coll. on Flood Protection was adopted in 2010 (as amended by the Act No 180/2013 Coll. and the Act No 71/2015 Coll.), followed by 7 implementing rules:

- the Decree of the MoEn SR No **204/2010 Coll.**, laying down details on the implementation of flood forecasting service,
- the Decree of the MoEn SR No **252/2010 Coll.**, laying down details on the submission of interim reports on the flood situation and summary reports during the floods, consequences thereof, and the measures taken,
- the Decree of the MoEn SR No **261/2010 Coll.**, laying down details on the contents of flood plans and procedures of the approval thereof,
- the Decree of the MoEn SR No **313/2010 Coll.** laying down the details of preliminary flood risk assessment and the reviews and updates thereof,
- the Decree of the MAERD SR No **419/2010 Coll.**, laying down details on the production of flood hazard and flood risk maps, on the reimbursement of expenses for the preparation, reviews, and updates thereof and on designing and the displaying the inundation area range on maps,
- the Decree of the MoEn SR No **112/2011 Coll.**, laying down the details of the content, reviews and updates of the flood risk management plans,
- the Decree of the MoEn SR No **159/2014 Coll.**, laying down details on the evaluation of expenditures on flood securing and rescue activities and flood damage.

In 2011, **preliminary flood risk assessment** was carried out with the aim to identify the areas of potentially important flood risks or where such occurrence may be expected. Subsequently, in 2013, **flood hazard maps** were developed, showing the flood extent with different return periods and **flood risk maps**, showing the likely consequences of these floods on the population, economic activities, cultural heritage and the environment. In 2015, final versions of the Flood Risk Management Plan were prepared for Danube and Visla rivers, specifying the measures to reduce the adverse effects of floods, by the degree of their urgency.

CHAPTER 19

ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF TOXIC CHEMICALS, INCLUDING PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN TOXIC AND DANGEROUS PRODUCTS

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEc SR, MH SR

The significant contribution of the EU to minimizing harmful effects of chemicals on human health and the environment within the management of chemicals and within the fulfilment of Agenda 21 is the **Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EC) No. 1907/2006 on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), and on Establishment of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)**. The REACH regulates in particular the free movement of substances as such, substances contained in mixtures and products, obligations of manufacturers, importers, downstream users in their marketing and handling, responsibilities and obligations of Member States in promoting it. It lays down the system of substance registration and their data reporting, evaluation of substances, authorization and restriction of substances at the Community level, while promoting the development of alternative methods for assessment of hazardous substances, innovation

and competitiveness of the European industry. For the group of "substances of very high concern", including selected carcinogenic, mutagenic substances and substances toxic to the reproduction of category 1 and 2, persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT) and vPvB (very persistent and very bioaccumulative) substances, the regulation introduces the authorization as time-limited authorization for a specified use of substance conditioned by the provision for proper control of substance and its gradual replacement with technically and economically feasible alternative substances or technologies. The REACH regulation also addresses the system of providing information up and down the supply chain, and informing the general public about the risks arising from these substances and about the safe use thereof.

By the adoption of the **EU Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures** and on amendment, supplementation and cancellation of the Directives No 67/548/EEC and 1999/45/EC and on amendments and supplementations of the Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (CLP), EU fully contributes to the global harmonization of criteria for the classification and labelling of chemicals hazard.

With regard to the REACH and CLP regulation, several additional related rules were adopted.

The Act No 67/2010 Coll. on Terms and Conditions for Launching Chemical Substances and Chemical Mixtures on the Market and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts applies in the SR. It specifies the scope of responsibilities of competent public administration bodies, it lays down the system of remedies and amount of sanctions for the effective enforcement of the entrepreneurs' obligations determined by the EU legislation, while determining a transitional period for the current use of the so-called old and new classification of substances until 1 December 2010 and for mixtures until 1 June 2015. Substances and mixtures placed on the market before the above mentioned dates do not have to be reclassified and repacked in accordance with the new requirements for the period of next two years, i.e. until 1 December 2012 for substances and until 1 June 2017 in the case of mixtures.

The MoEc SR is the competent authority for the REACH and CLP regulations, responsible for the management of public administration of production, import, export and marketing of substances, substances contained in mixtures and products, for launching detergents and biocidal products on the market, for the cooperation with the EC and ECHA. Through the **Centre for Chemical Substances and Preparations** (Centre), it provides access to the information on chemicals from the REACH-IT system operated by the ECHA. The Centre cooperates with the EC, ECHA, EU Member States, OECD bodies, and concerned SR public administration bodies when assessing the risks of substances, and it also operates as the national helpdesk centre in order to provide advice to entrepreneurs on their respective responsibilities and obligations resulting from the REACH.

The MoEc SR issued the following orders to the Act on Chemicals:

- The Order of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 2 of 15 April 2010, establishing the List of No-Longer Polymers, which have been assigned the European Community number
- The Order of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 3 of 15 April 2010, laying down the details on general requirements for classification, labelling and packaging of hazardous substances and mixtures.
- The Order of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 4 of 28 October 2013, amending and supplementing the Order of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 3/2010 of 15 April 2010, laying down the details on general requirements for the classification, labelling and packaging of hazardous substances and mixtures.

In 2013, in the field of **biocidal products**, the MoEc SR transposed the Biocidal Product Regulation (BPR) in the new Act No 319/2013 Coll.

In compliance with the Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2012 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products (BPR), the SR

participates in the evaluation of active substances of biocidal products by the Centre, which provides assessment of active chlorine for five types of biocidal products and of terbuthryn for three types of biocidal products for the SR as rapporteur Member State

With regard to legal acts of the European Communities, in the field of manipulation with hazardous chemicals and chemical preparations, the SR adopted 3 approximation regulations of the SR Government in the SR legal order. All these government regulations oblige employers to protect health of their employees who are exposed to chemical, carcinogenic, mutagenic factors and to asbestos.

The Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 471/2011 Coll. amending and supplementing the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 355/2006 Coll. on Protection of Employees from Risks Related to Exposure to Chemical Factors at Work, in the wording of the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 300/2007 Coll., adopted the Commission Directive 2009/161/EU establishing the third list of indicative occupational exposure limit values.

As of 1 May 2015, the amendment of the **Regulation of the SR Government No 355/2006 Coll. came into effect**: the **Regulation of the SR Government No 82/2015 Coll.**, amending and supplementing the Regulation of the SR Government No 355/2006 Coll. on Protection of Employees from Risks Related to Exposure to Chemical Factors at Work, as amended.

By the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic SR No 82/2015 Coll., the Directive 2014/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014, amending the Council Directives 92/58/EEC, 92/85/EEC, 94/33/EC, 98/24/EC, and the Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council were transposed into the laws of the Slovak Republic in order to align them to the Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures.

In order to reduce the risk of exposure to hazardous chemical factors to the lowest possible level, the Government of the Slovak Republic Resolution No 82/2015 Coll. supplements the obligations of employers with the obligation to perform an additional preventive measure, being the professional competency for work with very toxic substances and compounds and with toxic substances and compounds assigned to individual hazard classes.

As of 1 May 2015, the amendment of the **Regulation of the SR Government No 356/2006 Coll.: the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic SR No 83/2015 Coll.**, amending and supplementing the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic SR No 356/2006 Coll. on Health Protection of Employees Against Occupational Risks Related to the Exposition to Carcinogenic and Mutagenic Factors, as amended by the Regulation of the SR Government No 301/2007 Coll., came into effect.

By the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic SR No 83/2015 Coll., the Directive 2014/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014, amending the Council Directives No 92/58/EEC, 92/85/EEC, 94/33/EC, 98/24/EC, and the Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, were transposed into laws of the Slovak Republic in order to align them to the Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures.

As of 1 August 2014, the amendment of the Act of the National Council of the SR No 355/2007 Coll. (**the Act of the National Council of the SR No 204/2014 Coll.**), amending and supplementing the Act No 355/2007 Coll. on Protection, Support and Development of Public Health and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended, and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts.

Pursuant to Section 16 of the above mentioned Act, there is a special requirement for the work with very toxic substances and compounds and with toxic substances and compounds, being the professional competency certificate which must be obtained by

- a manager responsible for professional performance of activities at workplaces, or
- a natural person – an entrepreneur or an employee performing work individually.

Work with disinfection preparations for professional use and work with preparations for the regeneration of animal pests for professional use requires professional training, depending on the performed activity, pursuant to Section 16 paragraph 13 of the amendment of the Act No 355/2007 Coll.

The database of all chemical substances and compounds produced in the SR and imported to the SR is maintained by the **National Toxicological Information Centre (NTIC)** to which suppliers of chemical substances or compounds are obliged to submit safety data sheets.

In the course of their permanent operation, the NTIC provides the information on the composition, toxicity, symptoms of intoxication with individual chemicals and recommends an appropriate therapy. Reports on intoxication with chemicals, pesticides, detergents, and animal toxins are sent to the NTIC by the providers of in-patient health care.

CHAPTER 20

ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF HAZARDOUS WASTES, INCLUDING PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN HAZARDOUS WASTES

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEn SR

Compared to 2013, the annual decrease in waste production represented approximately 4 % in 2014.

Waste production in 2014 (t)

Waste category	Quantity (t)
Hazardous waste	379,640.85
Other waste	6,843,849.40
Municipal waste	1,838,923.72
Total	9,062,413.97

Source: SEA and SO SR

Note: The municipal waste category includes both categories, organic and inorganic; such distinction is required due to specific nature of the waste and the regimen applicable to the municipal waste.

Out of the total volume of hazardous waste produced in 2014, 73,685 tons were recovered and 292,538 tons were disposed of. These amounts do not include hazardous waste, which is the part of the municipal waste.

The Slovak Government Resolution No. 729/2013 approved the **Program of Waste Prevention of SR for 2014 - 2018 (PWP)**. The PWP SR is a strategic document primarily aimed at switching from material recovery to waste production prevention.

Waste production prevention holds the top position within the waste management hierarchy defined in the Waste Act as follows:

- a) waste prevention,
- b) preparation for reuse,
- c) recycling;
- d) other recovery, e.g. energy recovery,
- e) disposal.

The waste management falls within the competence of the MoEn SR. The waste prevention must be dealt with also by other sectors, where extraction of raw materials, production, distribution and sale of goods and services are carried out.

In 2015, the **new Act No 79/2015 Coll. on Waste** and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts was adopted. The objective thereof is to reduce the quantity of waste disposed of by placing in landfills, increase the rate of waste recycling, particularly by the implementation of the extended responsibility of manufacturers. The Act also defines other measures aimed at the reduction of the quantity of produced waste and enhancing environmentally favourable methods of disposal of the produced waste.

The Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal applies in the SR. Waste transportation authorisations are granted by the MoEn SR.

In 1997, the Regional Training Centre for the implementation of the Basel Convention for Central and Eastern Europe was established in the SR, with the task to support the implementation of the principles of the Basel Convention in the Member States and promoting the acquisition of new Member States.

Development of hazardous waste in Slovakia, its import and export

	1996	2000	2005	2011	2012	2013	2014
Hazardous waste production (mil. tonnes)	2.1	1.6	0.7	0.38	0.37	0.36	0.38
Hazardous waste import (tonnes)*	1,040	-	17,890	4,701**	7,000	6,314	4,310
Hazardous waste export (tonnes)*	13,557	8,827	10,140	8,870	16,079.5	11,039.4	36,645.6

* data on quantity for which permits were issued

** data include also the waste quantity from re-import

Source: MoEn SR

CHAPTER 21

ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF SOLID WASTES AND SEWAGE-RELATED ISSUES

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEn SR

By the end of 2015, the Waste Management Programme of the Slovak Republic for the years 2011-2015 was applicable in the SR. This document was the essential planning and strategic document for the waste management of the Slovak Republic for the given period. In October 2015, the new **Waste Management Programme of the Slovak Republic for years 2016-2020** was adopted. **The Waste Prevention Programme of the SR for years 2014-2018** was adopted as well.

In 2014, compared to the previous year, the annual decrease in **waste production** was almost 4 %. The total quantity of produces waste was 9,062.4 thousand tons of waste, including approximately 37 % of waste from industrial production.

In the long term, the negative high percentage of waste landfill in the overall waste management persists (41 % for waste other than municipal and 66 % for municipal waste).

In 2014, as for waste from electrical and electronic equipments, in total 4.09 kg per capita were collected. The SR has thus met the limit determined by the EC Directive.

In 2014, the SR fulfilled the limits for the recovery and recycling rates in individual categories of the WEEE, determined by the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic SR No 206/2010 Coll..

The rate of reuse, recycling and recovery of parts of old vehicles, in terms of the EC Directive, was reached in the SR and thus the prescribed limit was fulfilled.

In 2014, 617 tons of used portable batteries and accumulators were collected, representing 66 % of the collected quantity. The SR has thus met the limit determined by the Directive 2006/66/EC.

In 2013, more 66 % of packaging waste produced were recycled and almost 69 % of the total quantity of packaging waste were recovered, including the material recovery.

In 2014, 122 landfills were operated in the SR, as well as 19 waste incineration plants, including 2 plants for municipality waste.

In 2014, 1,838,924 tons of **municipal waste** (MW) were produced in the SR, representing approximately 339 kg of MW per capita, which is, compared to 2013, an increase in 17 kg. Based on the long-term monitoring, the development of MW quantity is relatively constant.

The dominant activity of MW management was landfill. The percentage of waste placed to landfills was 66 %. Other activities of MW management include significant proportion of material recovery, representing 11 %, and energy recovery, representing 10 %.

Sewage sludge is a necessary by-product of wastewater treatment process. The production of sludge from urban waste water treatment plants in the territory of Slovakia (managed by water companies) was 56,883 tons of sludge dry matter; 52,570 tons of sludge dry matter were recovered (92.41 %). In the soil processes, 36,532 tons were used (64.22 %) - 8 tons (0,01 %) were applied directly into the farmland; for the production of compost 26,045 tons (45,79 %) were used; 10,479 tons of sludge dry matter (18.42 %) were used for other purposes in various soil processes (reclamation of landfill space, the production of growing medium, etc.). In addition, 16,038 tons (28.19 %) were biologically processed and energetically recovered. 1,073 tons (1.89 %) were placed on the landfills and 3,240 tons of sludge dry matter (5.70 %) were stored temporarily in the WWTP premises.

Sludge produced in waste water treatment plants (t)

Year	Quantity of sludge (tons of dry matter)							
	Total	Recovered				Disposed		Temporarily stored
		application into farmland	application into forest land	composting and other recovery	recovery for energy	incineration	landfill	
2007	55,305	0	0	42,315	0	0	3,590	9,400
2010	54,760	923	0	47,140	0	0	16	6,681
2013	57,433	518	0	45,261	5,008	0	1,666	4,980
2014	56,883	8	0	36,524	16,038	0	1,073	3,240

Source: WRI

The mission of the **Environment Fund** results from the Act No. 587/2004 Coll. on the Environment Fund and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts, as amended. The Environment Fund is established to provide state aid for the environment management and creation of the environment on the principles of sustainable development. The main mission of the Environment Fund is to provide funding to applicants for the support of activities aimed at achieving the objectives of the state environmental policy at the national, regional or local levels, in form of subsidies or loans, or by their combination, depending on the nature of the project. This procedure creates prerequisites for effective, comprehensive and effective implementation of environmental projects. In the field of **waste management**, subsidies or loans are focused on closure and rehabilitation of landfills, separation and recovery of biodegradable waste, launch of separated waste collection, building of collection sites and

final-separation facilities. The amount of support of waste management projects was EUR 2,638 thousand in 2014.

By the Act No. 223/2001 Coll., the **Recycling Fund** was established. It is a non-state-specific fund that collects funds of importers and commodity producers who are obliged to pay contributions under this Act. Its primary function is use the collected funds for the support provided in the form of subsidies and loans to projects establishing and developing separate collection and recycling of waste included in individual commodity categories under this Act and the Fund segmentation. Another function covers the financial support to municipalities and to their associations in return for the waste separation and its further transfer for further recovery. The gains of Recycling Fund in 2014 from the contributions paid by producers and importers of monitored products and materials amounted to EUR 10.74 mil, representing increase in EUR 0.14 million, as compared to 2013. The Recycling Fund in 2014 approved 1,861 requests for funding submitted by municipalities and business entities. The amount of approved funds for the applicants was almost EUR 3.99 mil.

The funds paid from the sectors of the Recycling Fund in 2014 (Eur)

Sector	Funds paid
Spent batteries and accumulators	325,057.17
Waste oils	490,928.39
Worn tires	23,558.00
Multilayer composites (MLCs)	40,534.30
Electrical and electronic equipment	1,747.14
Plastic	823,141.90
Paper	304,325.41
Glass	234,244.91
Vehicles	3,058,738.28
Metal packaging	47,201.56
General sector	11,451.00
Municipalities Section 64	2,140,318.00
Total	7,501,246.06

Source: RF

Waste management is one of the priority lines of the Environment Operational Programme for the withdrawal of the aid from EU funds for years 2007-2013. At the end of 2014, out of 1,532 applications for non-reimbursable grant in the total request sum of EUR 1,829,259,033, 297 applications were approved, in the amount of approved non-reimbursable grant of EUR 478,143,097.

A specific issue is the **management of waste from extractive industries** regulated by the Slovak Act No. 514/2008 Coll. To ensure the implementation of all the requirements of European Parliament and Council Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from extractive industries, amending and supplementing the Council Directive 2004/35/EC and the above mentioned act, a coordinated state supervision was carried out in 2014 at three storage facilities of extractive waste of Category A and fourteen B Category storage facilities. In 2014, there were no events recorded in SR with the potential to affect stability of the storage of waste from extractive industries, nor any adverse environmental impacts in the management of waste from extractive industries.

CHAPTER 22

SAFE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTES

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEc SR, NRA SR

Safe and environmentally sound management of **radioactive waste (RAW)** is governed by the Act No 541/2004 Coll. on the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy, as amended, and the related Decrees, particularly the NRA Decree No 30/2012 Coll., laying down the details on the requirements for management of nuclear materials, radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, and the NRA Decree No 57/2006 Coll., laying down the details on the requirements for the transportation of radioactive materials. The legislative basis also consists of the Act No 238/2006 Coll. on the National Nuclear Fund for decommissioning of nuclear installations and the management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste, the Act No 355/2007 Coll. on the Protection, Promotion and Development of Public Health and the Act No 24/2006 Coll. on the Environmental Impact Assessment, as amended. The NRA SR supervises the production, collection, sorting, dumping, processing, treatment, transportation, and storage of radioactive waste from nuclear facilities. It controls the disposal of institutional radioactive waste, provided the related activities take place in nuclear facilities. In total, the Public Health Authority of the SR monitors placing the radioactive substances in the environment, recycling of materials containing radioactive substances, and authorises exemption of nuclear facilities from the control after decommissioning thereof. The NRA SR also performs, pursuant to the Building Act No 50/1976 Coll. on Spatial Planning and Building Order, the competency of the special building authority for the constructions of nuclear facilities, including the structures intended for radioactive waste storage.

In years 2014 and 2015, the operation of **nuclear facilities** continued, particularly of Technologies for the Processing and Treatment of Radioactive Waste and the Final Processing of Liquid Radioactive Waste located in Jaslovské Bohunice and Mochovce, intended for the processing and treatment of radioactive waste into a form suitable for storage. In the facility in Mochovce, the operation of surface storage continued, reserved for low-activity radioactive waste processed as described above, as well as construction of storage for storing very low-activity radioactive waste. In the facility in Jaslovské Bohunice, construction of the Integral Storage of Radioactive Waste continued, which will serve as the storage of solid radioactive waste, waste treated applying various technologies after decommissioning of nuclear facilities, until they will be releasable into the environment or transported to the permanent storage site.

Radioactive waste disposal activities were carried in connection with the decommissioning of blocks of the nuclear power plants JE A-1, JE V-1 and nuclear facilities of the Nuclear Energy Research Institute and with the operation of other nuclear facilities and power plants.

The tasks related to the programme for the development of underground storage were carried out in compliance with the strategic document “Draft National Policy and National Programme for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and Radioactive Waste in the SR“ as the updated versions of the Strategy for the Final Section of Nuclear Energy approved by the Resolution of the SR Government No 26/2014.

All methods of radioactive waste disposal comply with the requirements of the MAAE.

Radioactive waste production (t)

Year	quantity	spent	stored	disposed
2015	6,956 * ¹	520	4,799* ¹	2,157 * ²

Source: NRA SR

*¹ Due to ongoing activities and projects of decommissioning of NPP JE-A1 (Active Water Treatment Plant, Disassembly of Gas Tanks of the Former Management, Active Pipe Ducts, Storage Site for Liquid Radioactive Waste) and also from the ongoing projects of decommissioning of the NPP JE V-1 (Disassembly of Machinery Room Equipments), increase in the produced quantity of radioactive waste was observed (production of concretes, soils, and metal materials) as well as quantity of stored radioactive waste, as compared to 2014.

*² Increase in radioactive waste stored in fibre-concrete containers in the National Storage Site of Radioactive Waste in Mochovce, as compared to 2014, is caused especially by the execution of the project of decommissioning of the NPP JE-V1 (Processing of Historical Waste - Sorbents and Sludge).

PART III. STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF MAJOR GROUPS

23. PREAMBLE

Irrelevant for the evaluation on the national level

CHAPTER 24

GLOBAL ACTION FOR WOMEN TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MLSAF SR

Gender equality is regarded as one of the key development tasks in the SR.

With regard to global engagement of **women in sustainable and balanced development**, the following conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) were incorporated in the legislation of the Slovak Republic:

- International Labour Organization Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value No. 100 of 1951;
- International Labour Organization Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation No. 111 of 1958;
- International Labour Organization Convention concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities No. 156 of 1981.

The SR participates in the fulfilment of objectives of the **Action Plan of the EU on Gender Equality and Strengthening of Position of Women in the Development Cooperation for years 2010-2015**. Strengthening of the position of women and the fulfilment of specific needs of women and girls within the development activities is the core topic defined in the **Medium-Term Strategy for the Development Cooperation of the SR for years 2014- 2018**. This strategic document of the SR contains the tasks of gender equality and strengthening women's position, presented in the context of poverty eradication, economical growth, and social development.

The MLSAF SR coordinates the policies of gender equality and equality of opportunities. The Act on Grants, falling within the competency of the MLSAF SR, established the separate grant scheme for the promotion of gender equality intended for educational, consulting, awareness raising, editorial and analytical activities and activities of civil associations and non-governmental organizations.

The Slovak Government Council for Human Rights, Ethnic Minorities and Gender Equality is the permanent professional, advisory, coordinating and consulting body of the SR government in the field of human rights. It consists of key bodies and institutions of public administration and civil society and increases the degree of participation of the civil sector in the decision-making processes. **The Committee for Gender Equality of the Slovak Government Council for Human Rights, Ethnic Minorities and Gender Equality** fulfils the tasks with the aim to increase the level of participation, protection, and adherence to the equality of rights and opportunities between genders. In 2015, the Committee consisted of the following Working Groups (WG): WG for the development of strategies in the field of gender equality, WG for economy, labour market, and harmonisation of family and occupational life, WG for elimination of violence against woman, WG for education, science, and research, WG for health, WG for gender inequalities in science, WG for parenthood and private life, WG for multiple-disadvantaged women.

In 2015, fulfilment of basic documents regarding gender equality continued, particularly of the **National Strategy for The Prevention of Violence Committed against Women and in Families, the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violence Committed against Women and in Families for years 2014 - 2019, Nation-Wide Strategy for Gender Equality and Action Plan of Gender Equality for years 2014 - 2019. General Reports on the Gender Equality Status in Slovakia** are regularly drawn up.

In the field of combating violence against women, one of the key international legal documents is the **Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (the Istanbul Convention). The SR was among the first countries to sign the Convention on the day it became open for signing. In years 2014 – 2015, intensive discussions on the ratification thereof continued on the national level; however, this process has not yet been completed, especially due to necessity of several changes in legal order and in the institutional basis for combating gender-based violence in case of Convention ratification.

Execution of national projects continued within the Employment and Social Inclusion OP, particularly the **Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women (PPEN1) and the Promotion of the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women (PPEN2)**. The main mission was to promote the existing asylum houses and start the operation of new ones (the so-called safe houses for women) and the related services of specialized social consulting. These facilities provide complex services to women who experience domestic violence and to their children. An important component of the project was the preparation and launch of the national non-stop free telephone line for women experiencing violence.

In 2015, the agenda of the prevention and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence was remarkably promoted, mainly through the support from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (NFM) within the *SK09 Gender-Based and Domestic Violence* programme. The key project supported by the NFM was the establishment of the **Coordination Methodological Centre for Gender-Based and Domestic Violence**, with the aim to develop, implement, and coordinate the comprehensive national policy for the field of prevention and elimination of gender-based and domestic violence.

The Family and Work Project was carried out with the aim to create suitable conditions for families with regard to the care of children of unemployed parents, particularly mothers, and improve the conditions for the harmonisation of family and occupational life of women who take care of children aged 6 or 10 years and less, in form of flexible job positions and the so-called corners of temporary care of children. 765 employers participated in the project, 1,406 job positions for persons with parental duties were supported, particularly for flexible kinds of work – shorter working time, divided workplace, and work from home. The support was provided by refunding the price of work up to 90% of the price of work, on average EUR 880 per month. Corners of temporary care created by employers at their premises, or by using the services of existing facilities, were supported in the quantity of 33.

An important process carried out in 2015 was the preparation of the new programme period of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014 - 2020 and the obligation to apply the so-called ex-ante requirement of gender equality and non-discrimination and the horizontal principle of support for men and women equality and non-discrimination, for which the responsible authority is the MLSAF SR, within the meaning of the SR Partnership Agreement for years 2014 -2020. Elimination of gender differences, especially in regard to labour market and education, is an integral part of the new **Human Resources Operational Programme**.

The SR is the party to the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of the United Nations and its Optional Protocol**. The MLSAF SR was the responsible authority for the preparation of the fifth and the sixth periodic reports of the SR to the Convention and a successful defense thereof before the *United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women* on 12 November 2015. In the Committee's opinion, the SR has not

been sufficiently progressive in the field of participation of women in the political and public life. On the other hand, the Committee positively evaluated legislative measures for the promotion of gender equality and adoption of several strategies for the protection of women against discrimination and violence. The Committee particularly welcomed the commitment of the SR to ratify the *Istanbul Convention*.

In the long term, the SR is behind in the field of participation of women in the decision-making positions. Percentage of women in political bodies of the SR on the national, regional, or local levels amounts to less than 30%; a similar situation is in the field of managing positions in public or private sectors.

CHAPTER 25

CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MESRS SR

The legal framework for the work with youth is covered by the Act **No 282/2008 Coll. on Support of Work with Youth and on amendment and supplementation of the Act No 131/2002 Coll. on Universities and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts, as amended**. This act is the basic document for the field of work with youth. It specifies the age category of youth between 0 and 30 years, identifies terms such as young manager, youth leader, person working with youth, work with youth, informal education in the field of work with youth, or specialised activities within the work with youth. It defines obligations of the state, higher territorial units in individual municipalities with regard to youth. It defines the system of accreditation of specialized education in the work with youth, systems of support of work with youth, and the requirements regarding youth volunteering.

In April 2014, by the Resolution of the SR Government No 192/2014, the **Strategy for Youth of the Slovak Republic for years 2014 – 2020** was approved. The strategy considers the most important challenges of the **Report on Youth 2014** and defines strategic youth policy objectives. The Strategy for youth reflects the needs of the youth, especially in the field of education, employment, creativity, and business activities of young people, their participation, health and healthy lifestyle, social inclusion and volunteering. It deals with global topics and defines strategic objectives for the field of work with youth and the proposed measures for the fulfilment of individual objectives.

The objective of the strategy is to facilitate enhancement of quality of life for young people, especially by the development of personalities of young citizens of Slovakia into distinguished persons who are ready to work in the constantly changing democratic environment and use their creative potential in practice and actively participate in the society. The strategy is the result of the dialogue between the youth and the representatives of state administration, regional and local self-governments, as well as non-governmental sector.

The MESRS SR, as the authority responsible for the coordination of activities within the development and implementation of the youth state policy, for the promotion and communication thereof towards the public, established in 2014 the **Interdepartmental Working Group for the State Policy in the Field of Youth** as a suitable platform for the projects regarding the youth that require close cooperation of several sectors and the coordination of partial activities of several entities.

In 2015, the **Concept for Development of Work with Youth for years 2016 – 2020** was prepared, specifying primary objectives of the state in the field of work with youth by 2020. It relates to the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for years 2014 – 2020 by contributing to the fulfilment of strategies objectives for the field of work with youth. It was approved by the SR Government on 13 January 2016.

The currently applicable requirement within the European Youth Policy is the work with youth based on the evidence on real needs of young people. In Slovakia, the data on youth are obtained mostly through research and surveys which then serve as the input documents for the so-called reports on youth. They are drawn up in the interval of 3 - 4 years (2010, 2014, and the planned one in 2017) and they are the key documents for the development of national strategic documents.

Programmes for Activities for Children and Youth (ACY) for years 2008 – 2013 were intended to improve, enhance and facilitate the development of work with children and youth in Slovakia and create the system of financing for the promotion of activities for children and youth.

The objective of the ACY Programme was to ensure systematic, purposeful, and efficient support of activities for children and youth (hereinafter referred to as "youth") beyond the process of formal education in the following primary areas: systematic and regular work with youth, active use of free time, participation of youth in the social life, volunteering among the youth, information and advisory activities for youth, informal education of youth, better understanding of the youth situation through surveys, education of people working with youth and young and youth-organisation leaders.

Financing of the work with children and youth was carried out through the invitations to participate in the *Programmes of Financial Support of Activities for Children and Youth for years 2008 – 2013*. In 2013, 4 invitations were published within the above mentioned programmes regarding work with children and youth, project activities focused on the development of work with children and youth, and networking of entities on the national and county levels.

The programmes were focused on financial support mainly in the following areas:

- a) civil participation of young people in the social life,
- b) volunteering of young people,
- c) information and advisory activities for children and youth,
- d) informal education of children and youth,
- e) better understanding of the situation of children and youth in the above mentioned fields, using the surveys among the youth,
- f) education of volunteers and professional workers with youth and young leaders.

The programmes were divided into three separately publishes programmes. Within this support, the grant for systematic work with children and youth was approved for 24 civil associations of children and youth in the amount of EUR 2,046,994, for the project activities focused on the development of work with children and youth for 16 applicants in the amount of EUR 109,300; for 14 information centres for young people in the total amount of EUR 123,700; and for 9 civil associations operating on the national and county levels in the total amount of EUR 251,000.

In 2014, new **Programmes for Youth of the MESRS SR for years 2014 – 2020** were commenced. The programmes are focused especially on informal education within the work with youth and on the development of youth-related policy of Slovakia. The objective thereof is to increase social engagement of young people through the supported projects.

The NGO SUPPORT programme provides the institutional support of social associations of children and youth and also creates the environment required for these entities to obtain financial support and assistance within the fulfilment of the SR Strategy for Youth for years 2014 – 2020. The SERVICES for Young People Programme finances the projects in the field of provision of information and advisory services as well as services in the field of volunteering. The VOICE of Young People programme is focused on the creation of platform for the communication between the youth and policy makers on the regional and national levels. The PRIORITIES of the Youth Policy Programme was in 2014 focused on the creation of systems of quality of work with youth. The amounts of the financial contributions were as follows:

SUPPORT Programme: 19 civil associations / EUR 1,760,462

SERVICES Programme: 10 projects / EUR 275,315

VOICE Programme: 5 projects / EUR 145,000
PRIORITIES Programme: 14 projects / EUR 148,788

In 2015, provision of grants continued within the listed programmes in the following amounts:

SUPPORT Programme: 20 civil associations / EUR 1,753,391
SERVICES Programme: 6 projects / EUR 159,755
VOICE Programme: 9 projects / EUR 209,700
PRIORITIES Programme A: 1 project / EUR 30,000
PRIORITIES Programme B: 24 projects / EUR 15,557

In 2014, the new EU programme was commenced in the field of education, professional training, youth and sport, **Erasmus+**, a seven-year programme focused on the strengthening of skills, employment, and support of modernisation of education, professional training, and systems of work with youth. Within the EU Erasmus+ programme for the field of youth for years 2014 – 2020, invitations were published within the KA3 – Dialogue between Young People and People Responsible for the Youth Policy. Within this support and through the structured dialogue mechanism, meetings of young people and the representatives of youth-related decision-making entities were held; this structured dialogue resulted in the active engagement of young people in the social life.

In years 2011 – 2015, **IUVENTA – The Slovak Youth Institute** carried out two national projects funded by the ESF that brought important innovations in the work with youth and good practice examples:

1. **KomPrax** – Competences for Practice, that was carried out in years 2011 to 2015 and offered young people aged 15 years and more the possibility to pass free education focused on obtaining competencies important for successful achievements in life and on the labour market. The project consisted of two lines: recognition of informal education in work with youth and educational activities for the participants (11 500 participants from all over Slovakia).
2. **Praktik** (2013 – 2015) was focused on further education of persons working with youth that was based on practical experience. The objective was to enable those who work with children and youth to extend their competencies and gain inspiration from innovative methods of experience-based learning they may use in their free time activities within the informal education. The impact of activities/measures supporting the youth policy development: 250 participating persons working with youth, 245 participating young leaders, 1 newly formed methodology portal, 14 professional and topical video-methodologies for persons working with youth, as well as general public, 9 newly formed accredited programmes for work with youth.

CHAPTER 26

RECOGNIZING AND STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

Irrelevant for the evaluation on the SR level.

CHAPTER 27

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: PARTNERS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: DISTRICT OFFICES IN INDIVIDUAL REGIONS

As for engagement of participants and the cooperation of the state administration and the non-profit sector, according to the **Policy Statement of the SR Government**, one of the main objectives is to

support an active dialogue with the civil society and with the representatives of non-profit sector, including the multi-source financing thereof and individual donations, as well as the development of volunteering.

In 2011, the institute of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government was established for the development of civil society and the respective reporting Office.

The Plenipotentiary and the reporting Office function especially as:

- a mediator, actively interconnecting and initiating the communication between the government and the public administration with the non-governmental non-profit organisations (NGNPOs) and other entities,
- a high-quality and comprehensive source of information on issues related to the development of civil society and the need of public's participation,
- a contact point for the communication and/or coordination of NGNPOs with contact persons at individual ministries, or relevant governmental bodies and organisations,
- an initiator of creation and modification of public policies with regard to the civil society,
- a feedback source, especially towards the government – which serves as the basis for initiating necessary measures.

The Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Non-Government Non-Profit Organisations operates in the SR as the advisory governmental body. The council is designed to contribute to the strengthening of the participative democracy in the society with the aim to ensure that the adopted governmental documents in the field of public policy were not only efficient, just, and democratic, but also accepted with a wide consensus of the governmental and non-governmental sector and also that the fulfilment thereof is controlled by the civil society.

In September 2011, the SR joined the international **Open Governance Partnership** initiative. The purpose thereof is to improve governance and management of public matters by increasing the transparency of public administration, its efficiency and responsibility, as well as creating opportunities for citizens to participate in the governance.

Within the Initiative, the Open Data Portal was established - www.data.gov.sk. The agenda of open data has thus become more visible and individual state administration departments began to publish the information in the open format.

The Concept of the Civil Society Development and the Action Plan of the Open Governance Initiative for year - 2015 is currently applicable in the SR.

The role of non-governmental organizations within the participation in the **environmental protection** is being fulfilled by the institutional means of several acts applicable to the environment management.

For the purpose of strengthening the role of public, individuals, and non-governmental organisations within the decision-making processes in the field of environmental management, several acts were adopted. Within the meaning of the Act No 24/2006 Coll. on Environmental Impact Assessment and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts, as amended, the public is entitled to appeal against decisions made in enquiry proceedings and against decisions – final statements, even in case an appellant was not a participant in the enquiry proceeding or the proceeding on final statement provision. The public that expressed their interest within the proceeding on environmental impact assessment hold a position of a participant in the subsequent approval proceeding held for example in accordance with the Building Act or the Mining Act. After the utilisation of all proper remedies against a decision made pursuant to the EIA Act, the public is entitled to file an action.

In the approval proceeding that was carried out pursuant to the Building Act or the Mining Act which was preceded by the process of environmental impact assessment, the public may become a participant in the proceeding under certain conditions even in case that they have not expressed their interest in

being a participant in the proceeding in writing within the process of assessing the environmental impact of the proposed activities.

Non-governmental organisations may also become participants in the proceeding on imposing preventive remedy measures and remedy measures specified in the Act No 359/2007 Coll. on Prevention and Remedy of Environmental Damage and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts.

The Act No 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Conservation, as amended, enables associations with legal personality, operating in the field of nature and landscape conservation, to be participants in the proceedings held by authorities responsible for nature and landscape conservation.

CHAPTER 28

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF AGENDA 21

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: DISTRICT OFFICES IN INDIVIDUAL REGIONS

Regional governance is carried out in the SR on the municipality level and on the level of higher territorial units.

The Act 369/1990 Coll. on Municipalities, as amended, specifies the issues related to the performance of regional governance on municipality level. With regard to issues regarding sustainable development, a municipality mainly:

- controls economic activities in the municipality,
- ensures construction and maintenance and performs the administration of local roads, public spaces, municipal cemetery, cultural, sport and other municipal facilities, cultural monuments, historic sites and monuments of the municipality,
- ensures the municipal waste management, maintenance of cleanliness in the municipality, management and maintenance of public green areas and public lighting, water supply, waste water disposal, disposal of waste water from septic tanks and local public transport,
- creates and protects healthy conditions and a healthy way of life and work of municipality residents, it protects the environment, and creates conditions for the provision of health care, education, culture, awareness-raising activities, interest artistic activities, physical culture and sport,
- procures and approves the urban planning documentation of residential units and zones, the concept of development of individual areas of municipality life, it procures and approves the programs of housing development and participates in the creation of adequate living conditions in the municipality,
- ensures the protection of cultural monuments under special regulations,
- performs the tasks in the section of social assistance.

Municipalities ensure the elaboration of their Programs of Economic and Social Development (PESD). **The aim of PESD is to formulate a concept of municipality development** reflecting economic and social interests of citizens and complies with adopted concepts of the state and higher territorial unit, with the strategy for the development of relevant micro-region, or with departmental strategies, environment protection interests, cultural heritage etc. It is a program of targeted measures designed to boost the social, economic and cultural development of the municipality which will be continuously updated and supplemented on the basis of the annual evaluation results.

At the municipality level, a basic urban planning document is the territorial plan of a municipality or a zone. Territorial planning creates conditions for continuous accordance of all activities in the area, with a **particular emphasis on the environmental care, achieving ecological balance, and ensuring sustainable development for the considerate use of natural resources and for the**

preservation of natural, civilization and cultural values (the Act No. 50/76 Coll. as amended). Individual intentions submitted within the preparation of **PESD must be in accordance with the existing approved urban planning documentation**, or with background papers, whereas the municipality development program determines only an extent of support for its individual intentions.

In June 2014, there were 2,891 municipalities in the SR, out of which 1,421 have their own urban planning documentation.

By the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 302/2001 Coll. on the Administration of Higher Territorial Units, the National Council approved the establishment of eight higher territorial units.

Within the execution of local government, the self-governing region takes care of the general development of its territory and its residents. It especially:

- ensures the creation and implementation of the program of social, economic and cultural development of the self-governing region's territory,
- carries out the planning activities relating to the self-governing region's territory,
- procures, discusses and approves the urban planning documents of the self-governing region and territorial plans of regions,
- participates in the environment creation and protection,
- creates preconditions for the optimal arrangement of mutual relations between residential units and other territory components,
- creates conditions for the development of education, mainly in secondary schools, and conditions for the development of further education,
- creates conditions for the formation, presentation, and development of cultural values and cultural activities, and ensures the protection of the historical monuments fund,
- coordinates the development of tourism,
- coordinates the development of physical culture and care of children and youth,
- cooperates with municipalities in the creation of programs of social and economic development of municipalities.

Currently, 8 self-governing regions exist in the SR.

The fundamental development documents on the level of self-governing regions include **programs of economic and social development and territorial plans**. These programs and plans were approved in all self-governing regions. Self-governing regions have also elaborated strategies for the development of tourism as well as strategies for the field of innovative development.

On the regional level, works were carried out in regard to the preparation of **Regional Integrated Land-Use Strategies** that will represent a planning and execution tool for the application of the integrated approach taken within the execution of the Integrated Regional Operational Programme (IROP) in the programme period 2014 - 2020. The integrated approach may be understood in two levels. The first one is the cross-sectional engagement of all relevant stakeholders in the strategic planning and management in the territory; the second level represents the planning and execution of content-related and interconnected types of development objectives and measures on particular territorial levels. The basis for the execution of the integrated approach in the SR is determined by the Partnership Agreement of the SR for years 2014-2020, describing all three basic types of execution of the integrated approach within the meaning of the EU legislation for the new programme period 2014 – 2020:

integrated territorial investments,
sustainable development of municipalities,
community-oriented local development.

Within the Rural Development Programme in the SR, the **Leader approach is applied** (interconnecting the activities supporting economic development of rural areas). The objective thereof is to improve quality of life in rural areas and economic attractiveness and social conditions of the rural population. This objective is performed by the SR through integrated strategies of territorial

development, prepared by local action groups (LAGs). LAGs consist of various entities participating in the development of a particular region, with self-governing authorities playing an important role.

CHAPTER 29

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF WORKERS AND THEIR TRADE UNIONS

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MLSAF SR

The SR is obliged by 63 conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) that are implemented in the Slovak law order.

With regard to strengthening the role of workers and their trade unions, primarily the two following ILO conventions are implemented:

- The International Labour Organization Convention concerning the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize No. 87 of the year 1948)
- The International Labour Organization Convention concerning the Application of the Principles of the Right to Organize and to Bargain Collectively No. 98 of the year 1949).

A tripartite mechanism for discussing the basic issues of economic and social development and the employment development on the national level is the tripartite **Economic and Social Council of the Slovak Republic** established by the Act No 103/2007 Coll. on Tripartite Consultations at the National Level and on amendments and supplementation of certain acts (Tripartite Act). The Tripartite Act guarantees the social partnership on the basis of a trilateral dialogue between the government and social partners involved in the formulation of economic and social policy, which means the application of democracy and recognition of social partners.

In the participatory relations, a **trade union association** acts as the representative of employees towards which certain specific rights and obligations of employers were specified. A trade union association thus guarantees participation of employees - in a specified range - in the company's management.

The freedom of association right results from the Article 29 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and pursuant to Article 37 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic everyone has the right to associate freely with other persons for the purpose of protection of their economic and social interests. A trade union association is an association of employees organised in trade unions. More details on the conditions applying to the activities and rights of these associations are specified in the Act No 83/1990 on Association of Citizens, as amended.

A Labour law reform resulted in the adoption of the new Labour Code (Act No. 311/2001 Coll.). Labour law relations in public service and civil service was also dissociated and defined by the adoption of the Act on Civil Service and Act on Public Service, which were replaced in 2003 by the Act on the Performance of Work in the Public Interest.

The Labour Code is the basic legal regulation in the field of labour law, based on the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and specifying individual labour legal relationships related to the performance of dependent work of natural persons for legal entities or natural persons and collective labour legal relationships. Within the scope of its competence, the Labour Code guarantees basic rights of employees, especially in regard to the right for reward for the work performed, for ensuring occupational health and safety, for the rest after work, for the professional education of employees and enhancing the education degree, for the provision of information, including the information related to the employer's management, for equal treatment in terms of access to employment, rewarding and operating procedures, professional education, and working conditions, etc..

The Labour Code, in the section on collective labour law relations, specifies the participation of employees in the creation of just and satisfactory working conditions at employers' workplaces within the execution of labour law relationships, including the right to collective bargaining, rights of employees to strike and employers' right to closure. It facilitates the protection of interests of employees with regard to employers, particularly through the employee representatives, i.e. trade union organisations, employee councils, and employee delegates, in case of employers with a small number of employees.

It also imposes an obligation on employers to enable a trade union organisation, employee council, or an employee delegate to perform relevant activities at workplaces. Employees participate, through a relevant trade union organisation, employee council, or an employee delegate, in the creation of just and satisfactory working conditions by joint decision-making, discussions, right for the information, and controlling.

A trade union organisation concludes a **collective agreement with an employer**, specifying the working conditions, including wage conditions and employment conditions, relationships between employers and employees, relationships between employers or their organisations and one or more employee organisations with more advantages than specified by this act or a by a different labour law regulation, unless any deviations therefrom is explicitly prohibited by this act or by any other labour law regulation, or if such prohibition follows from the provisions thereof.

In 2013, the amendment to the act on collective bargaining was adopted by the Act No. 416/2013 Coll., the purpose of which was to specify the extension of binding force of a higher level collective agreement to all employers in the proposed sector, provided that none of the defined exceptions applies to these employers.

In 2014, several amendments to the Labour Code were adopted, regarding, inter alia, strengthening of the employee position and protection.

Under the **Act No. 124/2006 Coll. on Occupational Health and Safety**, employers are obliged to enables employees or employee representatives for occupational health and safety to participate in the processes addressing the occupational health and safety issues and discuss with them, in advance, the issues that may affect occupational health and safety. The basic principles and rights in the field of occupational health and safety are governed mainly by the ILO Convention on occupational health and safety and on working environment No 155 of 1981 which became effective in Slovakia on 25 February 1989.

In 2013, the **Strategy on Occupational Health and Safety of the Slovak Republic** and the relevant implementation program for years 2013-2015 with a perspective to 2020 were elaborated in the SR. The objective of this strategy is to continue in the reduction of number of occupational injuries, mainly of severe occupational injuries with fatal consequences and serious health damage, as well as elimination of causes of occupational diseases, improvement of prevention and strengthening of work culture.

In 2014, occupational health and safety legal regulations were amended elaborated, in particular:

- The Act No 204/2014 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No 355/2007 Coll. on Protection, Support and Development of Public Health and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts, as amended, and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts. The Act also amends the Act No 124/2006 Coll. governing the issues related to preventive and protective service
- The Decree of the MLSAF SR No 234/2014 Coll., amending and supplementing the Decree of the MLSAF SR No 508/2009 Coll., laying down the details of occupational safety and health with regard to work with pressure, lifting, electric and gas technical equipments and specifying technical equipments considered as classified technical equipment, as amended

- The Decree of the MLSAF SR No 46/2014 Coll., amending and supplementing the MLSAF Decree no. 147/2013 Coll., setting the details of occupational safety and health with regard to construction works and related works and the details on professional competences to perform certain professional activities.

The data on the development of **frequency of occupational injuries and diseases** in the SR indicate that the primary objective of the strategy was accomplished in 2014, as the 2014 data report 8,240 occupational injuries, i.e., compared to 2013 (8,577), the decrease in 337 occupational injuries. Compared to 2006 (13,826), the 2014 data thus represent a decrease in 5,586 occupational injuries. In 2014, there was a decrease in fatal occupational injuries; the total number of 52 cases in 2013 fell down to 39 in 2014. In 2014, the number of fatal occupational injuries was reduced in 56 cases, compared to 2006 (95 fatal occupational injuries). The frequency indicator for occupational injuries per 100 employees in the Slovak Republic reached in 2014 the value of 0.32, which represents a 47.1% decrease, compared to 2006 (0.68).

In 2014, 373 cases of newly diagnosed occupational diseases and occupational intoxications were reported. Compared to 2013, there was an increase in the number of reported occupational diseases in 72 cases (in 2005, 413 cases were reported and in 2014 there were 373 cases).

CHAPTER 30

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEc SR

The basic strategic document for the consumer policy in years 2014-2020 is the **Consumer Policy Strategy of the Slovak Republic**, ensuring the gradual increase of consumer protection in all areas, in accordance with the European Consumer Agenda – Boosting Confidence and Growth. The emphasis is being put on the promotion of consumer interests, provision for a high level of consumer protection, contribution to the protection of consumer health, safety and economic interests, as well as promotion of consumer right to information, awareness-raising, and creation of associations protecting consumer interests.

The main legal regulations include:

- The Act No 250/2007 on Consumer Protection and on amendment to the Act of the Slovak National Council No. 372/1990 Coll. on Offences, as amended, which regulates the rights of consumers and obligations of producers, sellers, importers and suppliers, the competence of public administration authorities in the field of consumer protection, position of legal entities established or formed for the purpose of consumer protection. This Act significantly strengthened consumer right to obtain products and services in good quality, right to complain, receive the damages, obtain the information on the protection of consumer health, safety and economic interests, and file actions and complaints to the supervision and control authorities.
- The Act No 102/2014 Coll. on Consumer Protection within the sale of goods or provision of services based on a distance contract or a contract concluded outside the seller's business premises and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts. This acts also amended several related provision of the Civil Code, the Act No 147/2001 Coll. on Advertising, the Act No 128/2002 Coll. on State Control of Internal Market in the Consumer Protection Issues, the Act No 250/2007 Coll. on Consumer Protection, the Act No 129/2010 Coll. on Consumer Credits and Other Credits and Loans for Consumers, the Act No 161/2011 Coll. on Consumer Protection when Providing Certain Tourism Services, and the Act No 251/2012 Coll. on Energy. The extent of pre-contractual information obligations was extended beyond the seller's business premises; requirements were defined for organising sales events and sale of goods or provision of services at sales events, for consumers a 14-day period was determined for withdrawal from the distance contracts and contracts concluded out of the seller's premises, even without stating a reason.

- The Act No 22/2004 Coll. on Electronic Commerce creates the conditions for electronic commerce, online provision of services, and exemptions from legal liability of providers of the information society services.
- The Act No 161/2011 Coll. on Protection of Customers in Provision of Certain Tourism Services implemented the Consumer Protection Directive, in terms of certain aspects of contracts regarding time-shared accommodation, long-term holiday product, resale and exchange.
- The Amendment to the Act No 147/2001 Coll. on Advertising and on amendments and supplementations of certain acts allows that advertisements may be propagated also by subjects other than entrepreneurs. The previous act was unduly restrictive and did not enable companies to propagate advertisements beyond their business activity. The amendment also prohibits the propagation of advertisements for consumer credits and loans, unless they meet the statutory requirements.
- Protection of children against dangerous toys was strengthened by the Act No. 78/2012 Coll. on Safety of Toys and on amendment and supplementation of the Act No 128/2002 Coll. on State Control of Internal Market in the Consumer Protection Issues and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts, as amended, in the wording of the Act No 140/2013 Coll. and the Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the SR No 225/2013 Coll., which implements certain provisions of the aforesaid Act.
- The Act No 391/2015 Coll. on Alternative Settlement of Consumer Disputes and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts specifies the procedure for the settlement of consumer disputes before relevant authority in charge of such alternative settlement of disputes, which significantly increases the level of consumer protection. Consumers are entitled, in case of a dispute with a seller, to turn to a relevant authority in charge of such alternative settlement of disputes, which shall carry out independent, neutral, transparent, efficient, fast, and just procedures of alternative settlement of consumer disputes.

Strengthening the role of industry

Industry is the key driving force of the Slovak economy. In 2015, it contributed to the GDP, through the gross added value, in the amount representing 25.5 % (results for three quarters), including the industrial production 21.7 % (data in 2010 fixed prices). Industrial production is thus a key economy sector which also creates, within its own development, the conditions for the growth of high – tech services, mainly in the field of use of the information technology in the comprehensive company management. Industrial production, however, needs to increase the competitiveness, with the aim to ensure growth of percentage of goods competitive on the global market due to their quality, while simultaneously reducing the percentage of goods that show structural problems. These problems result, inter alia, from the fact that the rate of investments in the industrial production shows, in the long term, the decrease in the relative residual value of fixed assets. However, it is necessary to point out that in 2015 (result for 3 quarters) there was a positive turn, as the volume of purchased tangible and intangible assets reached the value 4 % higher than the volume of depreciations. In the comparable period of 2014, this value was lower in 1.3 %. Competitiveness is also dependent mainly on evaluation of inputs, expressed as the percentage of value added to the consumption of materials and energies. This percentage has also shown a long-term decline, but in years 2014 and 2015 there were annual increases in approximately 1.4 p.p.

In 2015, the Act No 561/2007 Coll. on Investment Aid and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts was adopted, introducing the changes that simplified the process of applying for and assessing investment aid. These changes include, for example, the following:

- Shortening the process of assessing and approval of the application for the investment aid.
- Investor who was granted the investment aid may reapply for the investment aid in any form.
- Requirements for investment plans became more favourable in less developed regions.

In 2015, 16 investments plans were supported, with the total eligible costs of more than EUR 212 million. With regard to investment plans, it is planned to create almost 2.5 thousand new job positions.

The total amount of provided investment aid reached almost EUR 50 million, whereas almost 50 % represented income tax exemptions.

CHAPTER 31

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COMMUNITY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MESRS SR

Research and development belong to basic preconditions of competitiveness and sustainable development of the society and are the precondition for the long-term growth of living standard.

Communication and cooperation between scientific and technical community, as well as between decision-making sphere and the public were intensified for the purpose of ensuring the independent research in the field of sustainable development, more efficient use of scientific and technical information and knowledge, improvement of conditions for the work of scientists, increase of Slovakia's competitiveness in the field of science and technology.

One of the key documents in the field of research and innovations is the **Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic (RIS3)**, which the Government of the SR approved by the Resolution no. 665/2013. **The Updated Long-Term Intention of the State Scientific and Technical Policy until 2015 (Fénix Strategy)** was in effect as well.

The Government Council of the Slovak Republic for Science, Technology and Innovations is an expert, advisory, initiative and coordinating body of the Government of the SR in the field of science, technology and innovations. Under its statute, approved by the Slovak Government Resolution no. 114/2013, its role is to coordinate the cooperation between organizations of public and private sectors within the fulfilment of the objectives of state science, technology and innovation policy and to comprehensively assess the documents of all central governmental authorities regarding the science, technology and innovations, presented at the meetings of the Government of the SR or submitted to the EU bodies and international organizations.

The Government Council has 23 members. The Government Council is chaired by the Prime Minister of the SR; the vice-chairmen are the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR, the Minister of Economy of the SR, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance of the SR, and the president of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

The public is also allowed to express their opinions and ideas regarding better use of science and technology to their benefit through public comments on documents regarding the science and technology, or through websites focused on science, research and innovations, as well as through popularisation activities, such as the "Week of Science and Technology", discussion forums with scientists and public called "Science in the Centre" (scientific cafés), popularisation meetings of scientists with students of primary and secondary schools (scientific patisseries) etc. These activities are annually organized by the **National Centre for the Popularisation of Science and Technology in Society (NCP S&T)**, which is a department of the **Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (SCSTI)**. The NCP S&T, established under the SCSTI, creates the institutional basis to ensure that popularisation of science and technology in compliance with Strategy for the Popularisation of Science and Technology in Society, approved by the Government of the SR. Through its activities, it contributes not only to overcoming communication barriers between the scientific community and the rest of the public, but also to improving of public awareness on the importance of science and technology as one of the three pillars of knowledge society development: education – science and technology – innovations.

The NCP S&T ensures the management and operation of the **Central Information Portal for Research, Development and Innovations**. It is a basic, generally accessible source of information for all concerned parties for the area of science, research, development and innovations.

Within the interconnection and performance of cooperation between various subjects, the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAoS) created the **Office for Technology Transfer of SAoS**. Its aim is to provide professional support to intensify the cooperation between the SAoS research institutes and the commercial sector, as well as the cooperation with other organizations funded from the state budget, dealing with technology transfer issues. SAoS scientific organizations cooperate with several universities all over Slovakia. This cooperation is carried out on the basis of cooperation agreements - through joint workplaces or on an informal basis. The cooperation covers a whole range of activities. The priority is the development of scientific cooperation on the basis of implementation of domestic and foreign projects (APVV, VEGA, EU framework programs), creation of joint workplaces and cooperation in the construction of the research infrastructure (projects of EU structural funds). Another significant factor is the cooperation in the field of education, particularly in doctoral studies, but also in other pedagogical activities at all levels of university education, including the memberships in commissions for the defence of doctoral theses and doctoral dissertation theses.

The Association of Industrial, Research and Development Organizations is a volunteer non-profit interest organization associating research organizations in the SR focused on the research, development, education, certification, and directly related activities, such as designing, production, assembly, and operation of facilities.

The Association of Slovak Scientific and Technological Societies is a volunteer, civil service, non-profit, democratic and apolitical association of interest professional scientific and technical associations, committees, and territorial coordination centres. It represents more than 30-thousand members associated in 48 professional associations, members of which are practically in almost all undertakings, institutes, and technical universities in the SR. The professional mission of the Association is to provide support within increasing the level of science and technology in the SR, development of education and international cooperation in the field of science and technology, solving tasks within the state technological policy.

In 2014, the presidents of the **Association of Industrial, Research and Development Organizations and of the Association of Slovak Scientific and Technological Societies** signed a cooperation agreement aimed at enhancement of their joint activities within the performance of tasks arising from the lines of activities of both associations, especially in the area of promotion of science and technology results and promotion of educational activities.

In 2015, representatives of the **Association of Industrial, Research and Development Organizations and the CVTI SR** signed the memorandum on the information support in the field of industrial ownership. They agreed to develop their mutual contacts and relations and mediate the information support on the importance of intellectual ownership as well as possibilities how to protect and commercialise the industrial ownership, on the support of functional innovation processes in membership organizations and the common solution of forms of industrial ownership protection.

CHAPTER 32

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF FARMERS

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MARD SR

Strengthening the role of farmers within short supply chains is facilitated by the elaboration of the legal regulations regarding the so-called **sale from yard** which is specified in the Regulation of the SR Government No 359/2011 Coll. and in the Regulation of the SR Government No 360/2011 Coll. and presented to the public also through seminars and the website: www.predajzdvora.sk.

The tools of the Common Agricultural Policy, within the meaning of the Directive (EU) No 1308/2013 of the EP and of the Council enable establishment of **organisations of producers and their associations** that play an important role in the concentration of supply, in the field of enhancement of launching on the market, planning, and adjusting production to the demand, within the optimisation of production costs and stabilisation of production prices, execution of research, promotion of best practices, and within the provision of technical support, within the manipulation with by-products and within the management of risk management tools available to their members in order to contribute to the strengthening of producers' position in the food chain. These producer organisations may be granted regulated financial aid in order to accomplish the objectives for which these producer organisations were established. Intersectoral organisations may play an important role within the facilitation of a dialogue between the supply chain entities and within the promotion of best practices and market transparency.

The MARD SR prepared the **Concept for the Support of Small, Young, and Family Farmers**, approved by the Resolution of the SR Government No 598/2014, and the legislative tools were adopted for the promotion of the implementation thereof.

The **Rural Development Programme of the SR (RDP SR)** for years 2014-2020 was approved, with the priorities being the support of knowledge and innovations transfer in agriculture, forestry and rural areas, increase of viability and competitiveness of all kinds of agriculture, support of innovative agricultural technologies and sustainable forest management. The RDP SR is also focused on the support of resource efficiency and transition to low carbon and climate-resistant agriculture, forestry and food sector.

PART IV. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

CHAPTER 33

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MF SR and other ministries and other central government authorities ensuring financial resources and mechanisms for the development

Debt/Gross Domestic Product and Debt Service/Export

The Government gross debt-to-GDP ratio reached at the end of 2014 the amount of 53.5 % of GDP. In 2014, a change of national accounts was implemented, which positively affected the final value of the debt for the whole time series. Assuming the fulfilment of budgetary targets, the rate of debt increase will gradually slow down. Thanks to more favourable macroeconomic growth and lower government deficit, the debt should start to fall since 2015. Despite historically good conditions of public debt financing, the share of debt service in exports increased in 2013, together with the total debt.

Government gross debt and debt service

	m. u.	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Government gross debt (Maastricht)	% of GDP	40.8	43.3	51.9	54.6	53.5
Debt service	% of export	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1

Source: MF SR

Development cooperation and humanitarian aid

The SR continued in the implementation of territorial and sectoral priorities defined in the **Medium-Term Strategy for Development Cooperation of the Slovak Republic for 2014–2018** and actively used the tools of development cooperation (subsidy scheme, microgrants, CETIR, etc.).

In 2015, the MFEA SR disposed of the sum of EUR 6.7 mil. for the bilateral development cooperation. In total, however, **EUR 15,833,508** were allocated for the bilateral development cooperation of all SR government departments in 2015.

Territorial priorities of the official development cooperation in the SR:

- programme countries: Afghanistan, Kenya, Moldavia,
- project countries: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Ukraine,
- South Sudan as the country of extraordinary humanitarian and development needs.

During 2015, humanitarian aid provided to countries and to people affected by natural disasters, or who had become victims of war conflicts, etc., became extraordinarily important. Dominant position was held by the **humanitarian crisis related to the ongoing war conflict in Syria and the resulting refugee crisis** that affected whole Europe. More than EUR 1,164 thousand from the MFEA SR budget were used for various activities within the direct financial humanitarian aid. Within the provision of material humanitarian aid, the MI SR provided more than EUR 1,642 thousand.

As the SR became the member of the OECD Development Aid Committee (DAC) in 2013, the country committed to apply the standards and rules of the organization. The adaptation to these new requirements showed the necessity to amend the laws and, therefore, the MFEA SR in 2015 prepared the bill of **new act on the development cooperation** which was approved in 2015 by the NC SR. By the implementation of new tools of development cooperation that may ensure sustainable results more efficiently, the act reflects modern trends and development cooperation challenges.

Real spending of the SR income from the EU budget was in 2014 in the amount of EUR 1,265,091 thousand, including the gains from foreign transfers in the amount of EUR 1,257,505 thousand and the gains from foreign grants provided from the EU budget, representing the amount of EUR 7,586 thousand.

Out of the total commitment for 2007-2013, within all 14 operational programmes for the programme period of 2007-2013, the SR spent, as of 31 December 2014, the funds in the amount of EUR 7,363.30 million, which represents the spending at the level of 63.38 %. With regard to the possibility of backup financing of recipients from the state budget, the funds provided to recipients for the implementation of projects to this date represent the total amount of EUR 7,619.41 million and increase the spent amount from the total commitment to 65.58 %. The highest level of spending within the total commitment for 2007-2013 for individual programmes was reached within the Healthcare OP (82.64 %), Regional OP (76.83 %), INTERACT II OP (76.79 %), SR-CR Cross-Border Cooperation OP 2007-2013 (75.24 %), and the Employment and Social Inclusion OP (74.01 %). Spending for the commitment for 2007-2013 in the interval ranging between 50% and 70 % was reached by the Fish Management OP (65.86 %), Society Informatization OP (65.70 %), Technical Support OP (64.84 %), Transport OP (61.76 %), Research and Development OP (61.68 %), Education OP (60.57 %), Bratislava Region OP (58.99 %), Environment OP (52.54 %), and the Competitiveness and Economic Growth OP (52.48 %).

Other selected financial sources:

- **LIFE+ Programme**

In April 2014, the EC announced successful applicants within the LIFE+ 2013 call. As for Slovak projects, the support was granted to the project within the Nature and Biodiversity segment; it was focused on the conservation of rare bird species by securing electrical wiring, with the title Energy in the Country, prepared by the coordinating recipient, the Conservation of Predators in Slovakia Association, with the EC contribution in the amount of EUR 1,412,258.

- **LIFE 2014 – 2020 Programme**

Within the new programme period 2014 – 2020, in February 2014 the EC Council for the LIFE programme approved the LIFE Multiannual Work Programme for 2014 – 2017. In this document, the EC specifies total financial coverage for the determined period in the amount of EUR 1,796,242,000; out of these, EUR 1,347,074,499 for the Environment sub-programme, and EUR 449,167,501 for the Climate Action sub-programme. National allocations were determined for the Environment sub-programme, whereas the allocation for the SR represents 2.15 % of this budget, i.e. EUR 17,213,744.

- **Global Environmental Facility (GEF)**

In the period from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2010, the fourth programme period of the GEF Programme (GEF 4) was running; priority areas were limited to climate change and biodiversity. In the field of biodiversity, the SR was included in the group of 93 countries with an average allocation for a country up to the maximum amount of USD 3.5 million by 2010. In the field of climatic changes, the individual allocation was provided to the SR in the total amount of USD 5.7 million by 2010, whereas the approved projects were carried out by 2014.

- **Swiss Financial Mechanism**

Within the area of interest no. 2.1, 6 projects were carried out in 2014 in the total amount of EUR 24.6 million.

From the domestic funds, the most important one is the Environmental Fund. The **Environmental Fund** was established by the Act No 587/2004 Coll. on Environmental Fund and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts. It is focused on the implementation of state support of environment management and the creation of the environment based on the sustainable development principles, whereas the emphasis is put on supporting the applicants who have no possibility to obtain transboundary aid (e.g. villages with the population less than 2,000 inhabitants in case of sewage system construction) with the objective to complete gradually the commenced constructions within the environmental infrastructure.

Overview of provided subsidies (2014)

Area of subsidies	Number	EUR
Air and ozone layer protection	17	1,246,467.84
Protection and rational use of waters	146	15,854,579.06
Waste management development	35	2,638,757.61
Nature and landscape conservation	7	1,580,723.42
Environmental education, training and promotion	17	812,174.16
Exploration, research and development focused on identification and improvement of the state of the environment	4	994,062.60
Increasing energy efficiency of existing public buildings, including heat insulation	127	14,952,874.57
Accidents	3	23,294.68
Services in public interest	1	70,000.00
Village renewal programme	125	596,449.08
Total	482	38,769,383.02

Source: Environmental Fund

CHAPTER 34

TRANSFER OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND TECHNOLOGY, COOPERATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MoEc SR, MESRS SR

The Eco-innovation Action Plan (EcoAP), as one of the main initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy, supports the efforts in the field of eco-innovations, clearly determines the direction, and is the successor of the ETAP programme. An ambitious EU programme in the field of ecological innovations helps better respond to global ecological issues and uses the opportunities in global markets in accordance with the strategy objectives. The EkoAP provides new tools to achieve the objectives and determines the future framework for eco-innovations. According to the EcoAP definition, eco-innovation is any form of innovations aimed at significant and demonstrable progress towards achieving the sustainable development by reducing the environmental impact, strengthening the resistance to environmental pressures, or by attaining more efficient and more responsible use of natural resources.

The open platform "**Slovakia Innovation Forum**", associating experts in innovation from all over Slovakia on the basis of their written declaration of interest to participate in the platform activities, was successfully working also in 2014. The platform is coordinated by the BIC Bratislava company (coordinator of the Enterprise Europe Network representation in Slovakia), MESRS SR, MoEc SR, in cooperation with Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (SCSTI). The platform organizes regular meetings to discuss current issues in the field of support and management of innovations, technology transfer and the application thereof in innovative business, as well as in the field of responding to relevant legislative changes. Membership in the Innovation Forum is open for public sector institutions (departments and public agencies), institutions of local and regional self-government, universities, research organizations, innovation centres, technology transfer centres, associations and unions, clusters, technological parks, incubators, innovation experts, or financial organizations.

In the SR, technology transfer is supported by the SCSTI through building the National Technology Transfer Support System (NTTSS), within the implementation of the national project titled National Infrastructure for Supporting Technology Transfer in Slovakia - NITT SK. The SCSTI is a contributory organization established by MESRS SR and it is the national information centre and a specialized scientific public library of the SR focused on technical fields and selected fields of natural sciences, economic sciences, and humanities.

The part of NTTSS is also the **National Portal for Technology Transfer** - NPTT, representing a single point of access to important information about the protection and commercialization of intellectual property.

An important EU financial instrument for the support of research, development of new technologies, and development of innovations for the period of 2014-2020 is the **Horizon 2020** programme, combining research and innovations and focusing on three main areas: excellent science, industrial leadership and societal challenges. The Horizon 2020 programme implementation falls within the competence of the MESRS SR, being the national coordinator in Slovakia. The Ministry proposes, and in cooperation with its partners (SCSTI and Research and Development Agency) realizes, the measures to support the participation of Slovak universities, research organizations and businesses in the Horizon 2020. The support of increased participation of Slovak organisations is also laid down in the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic (RIS3).

In relation to Research and Innovations, the basis of the Competitiveness and Economic Growth Operational Programme (CaEG OP), the managing body of which is the MoEc SR, is the priority axis No. 1 "Innovations and Growth of Competitiveness". Within this axis, by the end of 2015, EUR 416.38 million were used from the EU funds and EUR 70.42 million for co-financing. The projects resulted in the increase of number of innovations of technologies and products in businesses and services, prototypes and tests, innovation of management systems, etc. More than 2,000 new jobs were created.

For the purpose of initiation and intensification of direct cooperation between entrepreneurs and selected scientific and research institutions, in 2014 the MoEc SR announced the invitation to apply

for a non-repayable subsidy in the form of **innovation vouchers**. The vouchers are funded from the state budget resources and they should support the development of innovative activities in enterprises. Entrepreneurs may apply for the support of activities focused on innovations of their own products, services or technologies. The MoEc SR will support research and development activities in enterprises and in industrial cluster organizations with the sum exceeding EUR 360 thousand. The aid was granted to 45 enterprises and 7 industrial cluster organizations. Successful applicants cover the projects focused on mechanical engineering and manufacturing technologies, biochemistry and food industry, building industry, ICT, as well as social innovations. Their outputs are expected to bring improvement in technical parameters, new innovative manufacturing and technological procedures, and qualitative improvement of existing products, as well as development of new products. For this well-proven form of support, the MoEc SR plans for the period of 2015–2020 to allocate financial resources in the amount exceeding EUR 2.8 million.

The further effort of the SR Government to encourage and develop innovative activities required the creation of appropriate support tools. One of them is the Award of the Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic called "**Innovative Action of the Year**". The Competition for the Award of the Minister of Economy is organized every year in three categories:

1. Product innovation,
2. Technological innovation,
3. Innovation of service (non-technological process).

In 2014, 41 innovations were participating in the competition. In the Product Innovation category, the awarded innovations were the **Wasol Water-Soluble Ecological Impregnants for the Impregnation of Cold-Wound Windings of Electrical Machines** by the VUKI, a.s., company in Bratislava. As for technological innovations, the awarded project was the **Technological Complex for the Processing of Mixed Municipality Waste** by the Electrotechnical Research and Projecting Company in Nová Dubnica. As for the Service Innovation segment, the award was granted to the Private Grammar School Železiarne Podbrezová for the **e-Learning in Secondary Schools project**. The competition continues also in 2015.

Support of science and research represents one of the priorities of the EU 2020 Strategy. The EC adopted the strategic document titled the **Strategic Energy Technology Plan** that represents a technological pillar of the EU Energy Policy. One of the industrial initiatives relates to the nuclear power industry. It covers participation of the SR in the project called Allegro (Fast Reactor Project) which is the project of cooperation of Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, and France in the field of nuclear power.

CHAPTER 35

SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MESRS SR

Year 2014 was a crucial year in terms of implementation of changes in the system of management of research and development in Slovakia, results of which will be fully manifested next year. The approved **Research and Innovations Strategy for Intelligent Specialization (RIS3)** is expected to contribute, in years 2014 – 2020, to the reform of research and development in Slovakia, particularly to increase the level of entrepreneurs' participation in the research and change the research orientation on the research with the outcomes applicable to the economic and social practice. The RIS3 has also defined the research and development priorities, as well as areas to be primarily supported in the upcoming years within the national schemes and from the EU structural funds.

A key topic of the Slovak research and development is the **financing**. In 2014, there was an increase in the Expenditures on the research and development up to 0.89 % of GDP (compared to year 2013 - 0.83 % of GDP). Within the approved RIS3 strategy, the objective was to reach, by 2020, the total Expenditures on research and development in the amount of EUR 1.2 % of GDP. As this increase

should, to a great extent, consist of entrepreneurial sources, the crucial question for the next years will be the success rate of the implementation of measures for the stimulation of business segment, such as support of start-up, spin-off companies, etc.

Expenditures on research and development by source of funding

Expenditures on research and development by source of funding (thousand EUR)	2010	2012	2013	2014
From state and public sources	206,398.96	243,301.75	237,616.21	277,113.61
From business sources	145,797.27	220,664.28	245,540.83	215,715.53
From foreign sources	61,064.17	109,144.60	109,748.79	158,567.07
From private non-profit organizations	1,165.08	2,011.54	1,205.13	3,506.24
From resources of universities	1,761.26	10,103.07	16,765.22	14,729.86

Source: SO SR

Expenditures on research and development

Indicator	2010	2012	2013	2014
Expenditures on research and development in total (thousand EUR)	416,368.75	585,225.23	610,876.18	669,632.31
Percentage of expenditures on research and development from GDP (%)	0.63	0.82	0.85	0.89

Source: SO SR

Development of number of employees in the field of research and development

Year	2006	2010	2013	2014
Number of employees in the field of research and development per million inhabitants	4,287	5,175	5,137	5,317

Source: SO SR

Development of number of researchers

Year	2006	2010	2013	2014
Number of researchers per million inhabitants	3,489	4,425	4,513	4,626

Source: SO SR

A key element in the competitive support is the **Slovak Research and Development Agency (SRDA)** which in 2014 financed projects in the amount of EUR 25 million. The MESRS SR began with the preparation of **new SRDA programmes** aimed at support of human resources, companies, and engagement of Slovak researchers in the international cooperation in the research and development. With regard to the new programmes, it is expected to achieve the increase in the SRDA budget after years of stagnation.

In 2014, there was a continuing trend of dominant percentage of financing from the **EU structural funds**. An important component within the Slovak research and development is the construction of new large university scientific parks and research centres that are expected to have a significant impact on increasing the attractiveness of science in Slovakia, attract young researchers, and prevent thus the brain drain. In 2014, 14 projects with the above mentioned focus were contractually arranged with the financial allocation in the amount of EUR 431 million.

An important area is also the SR's participation in **international research and development programmes and network**. In December 2013, a new framework EU programme was opened, focusing on the support of research and innovations in years 2014 to 2020 – Horizon 2020 which represents, with the budget of more than EUR 77 milliard, the main research and development support tool of the EC. Slovak organizations have so far participated in 75 successful financed projects within

the Horizon 2020. The total financial contribution of the EC granted to Slovak organizations amounts to EUR 11,444,050. In the previous EU framework programme, the SR was among the countries holding the lowest positions, compared to other member states. A priority for the future will thus be to implement the measures activating the Slovak research and development community to increase their engagement in the Horizon 2020 programme.

The MESRS SR is also paying great attention to other initiatives that are directly connected to the Horizon 2020 (private and public partnerships, such as EUROSTARS or ECSEL). Participation in the Danube Strategy appears to be extraordinarily prospective as well.

In 2014, as for the development **of number of people working** in the field of science and research in Slovakia, an increase in the number of researchers was observed in almost all sectors. In 2014, 28,825 people were employed in the field of science and research.

In comparison with other EU member states, in the long term, Slovakia is behind in several criteria of scientific and research system and in patent activities. Science in Slovakia is significantly closed; the rate of participation in international research is slow. Slovak Republic also reports relatively low number of granted patents per million inhabitants, which indicates low creativity or capacity of the country to use the obtained knowledge.

In the SR, granting **patents** is governed by the Act No 435/2001 Coll. on Patents, Supplementary Protection Certificates (The Patent Act). "Patents are granted to inventions in all areas of technology that are new, include inventory activities, and are usable in the industry." As of 31 December 2014, there were 15,015 valid patents in the SR; out of these, 2,358 were granted while applying the national procedure. Number of European patents intended for the SR registered as of this date is 12,657. In 2014, 234 patent applications were submitted; out of these, 211 were submitted by domestic and 23 by foreign applicants. Compared to 2013, it is a 11.4 % increase in the number of submitted applications. The increase in the number of patent applications submitted by domestic applicants is as much as 14.7 %; however, as for foreign applicants, a 11.5 % decrease was observed. The largest number of applications was submitted by Czech and Polish applicants. Total number of granted patents was 94, which is an 18.2 % decrease, compared to 2013. Significant decrease in granted patents was also observed for foreign applicants, representing 52.6 %. A 32.7 % increase in the number of granted patents, compared to 2013, was only observed for domestic applicants. In comparison with the previous years 2010 to 2013, there is a declining trend in granted patents, as in the last four years, the number of granted patents decreased in more than 250.

As of 31 December 2014, in the SR there were 1,746 valid **utility models**. During 2014, 396 new applications for utility models were submitted, representing a 7.7 % decrease, compared to 2013. Domestic applicants submitted 331 applications; as for foreign applicants, it was 65 applications. 364 utility models were registered in the registry of utility models in 2014, compared to 2013, it is a 21.1 % increase. In 2014, 3,161 applications for **trademarks were submitted**. Out of these, domestic applicants submitted 2,455 applications. Number of applications for the provision of protection of international trademark for the SR territory decreased this year in 27 % and the number of applications for international registration of trademark decreased in approximately 13 %. Number of registered trademarks decreased in 2% in 2014, compared to 2013; however, at the same time the number of domestic trademarks increased in 1%. In the last 5 years, the number of registered trademarks has a rising tendency.

Number of submitted applications for **designs** in 2014 slightly decreased; 100 applications were submitted. Domestic applicants submitted 82 applications and foreign applicants submitted 18 applications. As of 31 December 2014, there was in total 887 valid designs in the SR.

CHAPTER 36

PROMOTING EDUCATION, PUBLIC AWARENESS AND TRAINING

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MESRS SR, MC SR

Education in **nursery schools, elementary schools, secondary schools, elementary art schools, language schools, schools for children and students with special educational needs and school facilities** is carried out in compliance with the Act No 245/2008 Coll. on Education (the School Act) and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts, as amended. It is governed by the Act No 184/2009 Coll. on Vocational Education and Training and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts, as amended, by the Act No 596/2003 Coll. on State Administration in the School System and School Self-government and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts, as amended, and by the Act No 597/2003 Coll. on Financing of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Facilities, as amended.

In compliance with the Act No 131/2002 Coll. **on Universities** and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts, as amended, the roles of universities within the creation of knowledgeable society are strengthened, there are conditions for interconnecting university education and the needs of society, European dimension of university education is promoted by joint study programmes, as well as by the new legislation regarding the operation of universities from the EU member states on the territory of the Slovak Republic.

The overview of selected long-term, mid-term, and short-term instruments contributing to the implementation of sustainable development principles at the national level, applied in the field of education, awareness raising, and vocational training:

- The National Reform Programme of the SR 2015,
- The Stability Programme of the SR for 2011-2014,
- By Knowledge to Prosperity – the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic,
- The Concept for the Development of Education in the SR for the next 15–20 years (Millennium Project),
- The Strategy for Computerisation of Regional Education,
- The Plan of Education on Human Rights in the Education Sector for 2005–2014,
- The Concept of Education and Training of Children with Disabilities,
- The Concept of Education and Training of National Minorities,
- The Concept of Integrated Education of Roma Children and Youth,
- The Concept of Integrated Education of Roma Children and Students including the Development of Secondary and University Education,
- The Concept of Special Pedagogical Consulting,
- The Concept of Development of Information and Consulting Activities for Youth.

Increasing **public awareness on environmental problems** and sustainable development is supported by provisions of several acts covered by the MC SR, in particular of the Act No. 532/2010 Coll. on Radio and Television of Slovakia and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts, as amended. The RTVS is a broadcaster with the mission to provide the public with broadcasting services. The program service of RTVS consists of news, journalistic, documentary, drama, music, sport, entertainment and educational programs, programs for children and youth and other programs, which

- a) are based on the principles of democracy and humanism and contribute to legal awareness, ethical awareness and to environmental responsibility of the public,
- b) provide objective, verified, unbiased, actual, understandable, balanced and pluralistic information on various events in the SR and abroad for the purpose of free formation of opinions,

- c) enhance national awareness and cultural identity of the Slovak population, regardless of sex, race, colour, language, age, faith and religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, nationality or ethnic group, property, origin or any other status.
- d) create conditions for social agreement on public matters in order to enhance mutual understanding and tolerance and to support the cohesion of the diversified society.

Under the relevant provisions of law, a program in public interest is also a program which promotes the conservation of nature and environment.

The overview of selected long-term, mid-term, and short-term supporting instruments contributing to the implementation of sustainable development principles at the national level, applied in the MC SR sector:

- The Concept of Historical Monuments Fund Protection,
- The Development Strategy for Local and Regional Culture,
- The Strategy for the Development of Awareness Raising Activities,
- The Concept of Focus and Support of Research and Development in the MC SR sector,
- The Concept of Media Education in the Slovak Republic in the Context of Lifelong Learning,
- The Project of Systematic Renovation of Audiovisual Heritage of the Slovak Republic,
- The Sectoral Concept of Professional Education and Preparation of Students for Occupations and Professional Activities in the Culture Sector,
- The Concept of Protection of Historical Monuments Fund and Cultural Heritage in Crisis Situations.

Overview of selected findings related to education and vocational preparation of children and youth (data source: Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information (SCSTI) or the Statistical Office of the SR (SO SR))

Relative change in the school-age population (%)

Period	1998 – 2014:	- 1.41
	2000 – 2014:	- 1.31
	2010 – 2014:	- 0.31
	2011 – 2014:	- 0.08
	2012 – 2014:	- 0.02

After a 16-year steady decline in the number of school-age population (6 – 15 years) in 2015, a 0,73 % increase in this group of population is expected.

Year	Number of school-age population ¹	Annual decrease (-) / increase (+)	
		abs.	%
1998	816,835	x	x
1999	800,285	-16,550	-2.03
2000	777,694	-22,591	-2.82
2005	659,025	-23,279	-3.41
2010	551,115	-12,442	-2.21
2013	538,995	-3,895	-0.72
2014	538,991	- 4	0.00
2015	542,907	3,916	0.73

Note:

¹ Population at the age of 6–15 years (situation as of December 31 of the given year); a figure for 2015 is anticipatory (= number of inhabitants at the age of 5–14 years as of December 31, 2014). Data are calculated from final results of the Statistical Office of the SR on the final figure of the Slovak population (situation as of December 31) according to the age units for the period 1998 - 2014.

Source: SCSTI, SO SR

Gross percentage of the population enrolled in primary schools (%)

Year 1992: **101.79**
 Year 2000: **101.29**
 Year 2010: **97.91**
 Year 2013: **96.88**
 Year 2014: **96.32**
 Year 2015: **95.70**

In the SR, primary school education lasts 9 years. Children who reached the age of 6 by August 31 of the given year usually begin to attend primary schools.

Year	Population of typical age ¹	Number of students ²	Percentage of students from population at typical age (%)
1992	715,388	728,225	101.79
2000	690,166	699,092	101.29
2010	490,070	479,837	97.91
2013	482,147	467,085	96.88
2014	483,053	465,276	96.32
2015	487,878	466,908	95.70

Notes:

¹ Number of inhabitants at the age of 6–14 years (situation as of December 31 of the given year); a figure for 2015 is anticipatory (= number of inhabitants at the age of 5–13 years as of December 31, 2014). Data are calculated from definitive results of the Statistical Office of the SR on final figure of the Slovak population (situation as of December 31) according to the units of age for years 1992, 2000, 2010 – 2014.

² Students of 1st – 9th year of primary schools, including students of 1st – 9th year of special primary schools and special classes, students of 1st – 4th year of 8-year studies in grammar schools and 8-year dance conservatory, students of 1st – 2nd year of 6-year study in grammar schools and students of 1st year of 5-year study in grammar schools.

Source: SCSTI, SO SR

Net percentage of the population enrolled in primary schools (%)

Year 2010: **91.82**
 Year 2013: **90.34**
 Year 2014: **90.13**
 Year 2015: **89.49**

Since the attendance of primary school is obligatory in Slovakia, practically every child of appropriate age (age of 6–14) attends a primary school. The difference from 100 % is represented by children who reached the age of 6 in the period from September 1 to December 31 and pupils with deferred school entry.

Year	Population aged 6 – 14 years ¹	Number of students aged 6 – 14 years ²	Percentage of students in primary schools from the total population, aged 6-14 years (%)
2010	490,070	449,997	91.82
2013	482,147	435,553	90.34
2014	483,053	435,359	90.13
2015	487,878	436,613	89.49

Notes:

¹ Situation as of December 31 of the given year; a figure for 2015 is anticipatory (= number of inhabitants at the age of 5–13 years as of December 31, 2014). Data are calculated from definitive results of the Statistical Office of the SR on final figure of the Slovak population (situation as of December 31) according to the units of age for 2010 and 2014.

² Students of 1st – 9th year of primary schools, including students of 1st – 9th year of special primary schools and special classes, students of 1st – 4th year of 8-year study in grammar schools and 8-year dance conservatory, students of 1st – 2nd year of 6-year study in grammar schools and students of 1st year of 5-year study in grammar schools.

Source: SCSTI, SO SR

Gross percentage of the population enrolled in secondary schools (%)

Year 1992: **58.20**

Year 2000: **72.77**

Year 2010: **95.67**

Year 2013: **91.53**

Year 2014: **90.04**

Year 2015: **89.30**

Currently, Slovak students usually start to attend secondary schools after completing the 9th year of a primary school, i.e. at the age of 15 years. Study at a secondary school lasts 2-5 years, usually 4 years.

Year	Population of typical age ¹	Number of students ²	Percentage of students from population at typical age (%)
1992	377,646	219,792	58.20
2000	353,999	257,620	72.77
2010	272,995	261,163	95.67
2013	236,111	216,105	91.53
2014	230,999	207,983	90.04
2015	226,343	202,122	89.30

Notes:

¹ Number of inhabitants at the age of 15–18 years (situation as of December 31 of the given year); a figure for 2015 is anticipatory (= number of inhabitants at the age of 14–17 years as of December 31, 2014). Data are calculated from definitive results of the Statistical Office of the SR on final figure of the Slovak population state (situation as of December 31) according to the units of age for years 1992, 2000, 2010 – 2014.

² Full-time study only. The data include students of special secondary schools, vocational schools and practical schools. On the contrary, they do not include the students of higher vocational education and post-graduate study, students of 1st – 4th year of 8-year study in grammar schools and 8-year dance conservatory, students of 1st – 2nd year of 6-year study in grammar schools, students of 1st year of 5-year study in grammar schools and students of secondary schools of the Ministry of Interior of the SR and the Ministry of Defence of the SR.

Source: SCSTI, SO SR

Net percentage of the population enrolled in secondary schools (%)

Year 2010: **79.37**

Year 2013: **75.98**

Year 2014: **75.55**

Year 2015: **75.69**

Year	Population aged 15 – 18 years ¹	Number of secondary school students at the age of 15–18 years ²	Percentage of students in secondary schools from total population at the age of 15–18 years (%)
2010	272,995	216,674	79.37
2013	236,111	179,396	75.98
2014	230,999	174,513	75.55
2015	226,343	171,324	75.69

Notes:

¹ Situation as of December 31 of the given year; a figure for 2015 is anticipatory (= number of inhabitants at the age of 14–17 years as of December 31, 2014). Data are calculated from definitive results of the Statistical Office of the SR on the final figure of the Slovak population (situation as of December 31) according to the units of age for 2010 and 2014.

² Full-time study only. The data include students of special secondary schools, vocational schools and practical schools. On the contrary, they do not include the students of higher vocational education and post-graduate study, students of 1st – 4th year of 8-year study in grammar schools and 8-year dance conservatory, students of 1st – 2nd year of 6-year study in grammar schools, students of 1st year of 5-year study in grammar schools and students of secondary schools of the Ministry of Interior of the SR and Ministry of Defence of the SR.

Source: SCSTI, SO SR

Relative adult literacy (%)

Year 2001: **99.64**

The school education of Slovak inhabitants is monitored within the population census carried out more or less regularly, every ten years. The percentage is calculated from the results of the penultimate census which was carried out on May 26, 2001. It is not possible to calculate this figure from the published results of the last census which took place in 2011.

Population aged 15 years and more ¹	Out of these, without school education ¹	Percentage of 15-year-old and older literate population (%)
4,363,962	15,529	99.64

Note:

¹ Including inhabitants who did not state their age.

Source: SO SR

Children, who reached the 5th year of primary education

The percentage of pupils completing compulsory education sooner than in their 5th year is minimal. Almost every child passes at least 5th year of primary education and therefore receives the basic literacy.

Probable duration of school attendance

Year 2010: **16.4**

Year 2011: **16.4**

Year 2012: **16.3**

Year 2013: **16**

Source: Education at a Glance, OECD, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015

Total duration of school attendance depends on the highest achieved education level:

- a minimum of 10 years (compulsory education),
- in case of completion of secondary school with the school-leaving exam 13–14 years, without a school leaving exam 12 years
- in case of completion of university education of 1st and 2nd degree 17–19 years.

After the completion of compulsory school attendance, students can advance to a higher level of education, depending on their interests and skills and on the basis of knowledge tests.

The difference between the percentages of boys and girls enrolled in primary and secondary schools (percentage points)

Year 1992: **1.98**

Year 2000: **2.32**

Year 2010: **1.62**

Year 2013: **1.84**

Year 2014: **1.84**

Year 2015: **1.88**

Year	Total number of students of primary and secondary schools ¹	Including		Percentage (in %) out of the total number of students of primary and secondary schools		The difference between the percentages of boys and girls (percentage points)
		boys	girls	boys	girls	
1992	681,370	347,414	333,956	50.99	49.01	1.98
2000	652,053	333,614	318,439	51.16	48.84	2.32
2010	711,113	361,333	349,780	50.81	49.19	1.62
2013	655,776	333,924	321,852	50.92	49.08	1.84
2014	646,377	329,132	317,245	50.92	49.08	1.84
2015	642,512	327,311	315,201	50.94	49.06	1.88

Note:

¹ Full-time students only. The data do not include the students of special schools and classes, schools within special educational facilities, schools of the Ministry of Defence of the SR and the Ministry of Interior of the SR.

Source: SCSTI

% of GDP spent on education

Year 1992: **5.90**Year 2000: **3.75**Year 2010: **4.40**Year 2013: **4.15**Year 2014: **4.09**

Source: SCSTI

CHAPTER 37

NATIONAL MECHANISMS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MFEA SR, MoEc SR, MF SR, MoEn SR, MTCRD SR

In terms of legislation, the area of development cooperation is regulated by the **Act No. 617/2007 Coll. on Official Development Assistance and on amendment to the Act No. 575/2001 Coll. on the Organisation of the Activities of the Government and on the Organisation of the Central State Administration, as amended**. In addition to the selected departments, there are other bodies participating in the development cooperation of the SR - certain central government authorities, regional and local governments, as well as non-governmental and private sector. The above mentioned law also established the **Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation (SAIDC)**.

Development assistance of the SR was provided in 2015 in compliance with the strategic direction defined in the **Medium-Term Strategy for Development Cooperation of the Slovak Republic for 2014-2018**. One of the basic principles of organising thereof is a close interconnection with actual needs of target countries. Three SlovakAid **strategic documents for three programme countries** were elaborated and approved (Kenya, Moldavia, and Afghanistan). A close interconnection between the SR capacities and the needs of target countries is ensured since 2014 also by the activities of so-called **development diplomats**, employees of foreign embassies of the SR (Nairobi and Kishinev). Individual **sectoral priorities of the ODA SR** were defined as well (inter alia, energy sector, environment, water and sanitation, agriculture), copying the requirements of individual partner

countries. A clear precondition of the implementation of any development project financed from the ODA SR sources is efficient **cooperation with a local partner**.

In 2015, the SR provided bilateral official development assistance (ODA) in the amount of EUR 6,779,769. From among priority countries, the largest proportion of the ODA SR was provided to **Kenya and Ukraine**. A new phenomenon significantly reflected in the ODA SR financial and material expenditures was the migration crisis.

Within the **creation of potential of people and institutions**, Slovakia's attention was paid to capacity-building in governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations as one of the factors of implementation of the required changes in the relevant target countries. The criterion local capacity-building was included in all calls (in total 13) for project proposals in 2015. With regard to the aforesaid, the attention was paid to interconnecting the activities of non-governmental sector and the activities of governmental institutions. This component of development projects is particularly important in relation to projects performed in the countries of the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans. With regard to limited financial capacities of the ODA SR, also a purposeful cooperation with other partners was used, primarily with international organizations (UNDP in Moldavia and Ukraine); the SR was gradually engaging in the joint EU development cooperation programme (Kenya). Moreover, in 2015, the SR successfully engaged in the first tripartite project (in cooperation with the Czech Republic) in Moldavia.

A specific ODA SR instrument, primarily focused on strengthening the capacities of governmental structures in partner countries through sharing the transformation experience, is the **CETIR programme**. In 2015, 28 activities were carried out within this programme, for which EUR 126,313 were spent. The main group of activities (19) included study visits of employees of ministries in partner countries, in a limited extent (7) Slovak experts were sent out, and in two cases foreign partners visited the Slovak Ministry within the mobility stay. From the territorial point of view, the key partners were the counties of the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans.

Creating endogenous potential of developing countries is pursued by the SR's cooperation with strong international partners, such as EU or UNDP, with which the SR has begun performance of several projects in Ukraine (energy industry), in Moldavia (water and sanitation), or in Kenya (agriculture). In the upcoming period, it will be necessary to carry out gradual incorporation of the issues regarding technological transfers and cooperation in the ODA SR, as until now this segment has been contained in the ODA SR only marginally.

In 2015, special attention within the ODA SR activities also paid again to the **programme countries**. The SR Development Cooperation Strategy for **Afghanistan** for 2014 - 2018 defines three main areas of development cooperation of the SR in Afghanistan – education, agriculture, and reform of security sector. With regard to a deteriorated security situation, however, no new development project was carried out in 2015. The only area still in progress is the provision of government scholarships.

Developmental Cooperation with **Kenya** for 2014 - 2018 has four main objectives - to improve health of Kenya inhabitants, reduce the unemployment of young people, eradicate poverty and strengthen food safety, and contribute to the improvement of the democratic political system, legal state, and sound public administration, and implementation of reforms. To achieve these objectives, a wide spectrum of programmes, planned within the medium-term strategy, were applied, such as small-scale subsidy scheme, microgrants, volunteer programme, and government scholarships. Performance of several projects approved in the previous period continued, for example the "Operation of Healthcare Centre, Agriculture, and Farming, as a Tool of Increasing Economic and Food Self-Sufficiency of the Community Centre on the Rusinga Island". Implementation of projects focused on acquisition of practical working skills in disadvantaged communities continued as well. In 2015, the subsidies were granted to the project called "Economic Strengthening of Positions of Small Farmers in the Busia Region by Growing Sesame and Making Markets Accessible", or the project called "Support of Production and Marketing of Fair Trade Oil Made of Oil Plants: Building Economic Self-Sufficiency

of Small Farmers in Kenya".

The Development Cooperation Strategy of the SR for the **Republic of Moldavia** for 2014 – 2018 is aimed at supporting the country in the building of stable and functional democratic state and improving living conditions for its inhabitants within two areas of priorities - *Sound Public Administration and Water and Sanitation*. Within the strategy implementation, the projects of small-scale subsidy scheme were applied in 2015, as well as microgrants, CETIR, volunteer programme, instrument for the cooperation between the SR and the UNDP, and governmental scholarships.

Main activities included the projects like „Transparent, Financially Fit and Competitive Self-Governing Regions in Moldavia“, or the project focused on raising awareness on human rights in schools called “One World”. Other projects, such as “Self-Governing and Civil Society Capacity-Building in the Gagauzia Region“, relate to previous joint activities of umbrella organisations of local self-governments in Moldavia and in the SR. The “Improvement of Conditions for Sanitation and Hygiene in the Hincesti Region“ project is aimed at improvement of functionality of the system of waste water sanitation and the control of water protection in Moldavia.

In 2015, in cooperation with the Czech embassy in Kishinev, the **trilateral development project** was commenced in Moldavia. The project subject was water and sanitation in educational institutions in districts of Causeni and Leova. Similarly, activities continued within the CETIR projects and microgrants, aimed, inter alia, at capacity-building in the emergency rescue service.

In cooperation with the regional office of UNDP, implementation of several bilateral projects continued, with the focus thereof being the transfer of Slovakia’s reformation experience. These projects were concentrated on the field of financial decentralisation, support of local self-governments, environmental protection, and prevention against disasters. The projects were financed from the Trust Fund of the SR – UNDP.

Special position within the development activities of the ODA SR is held by the **cooperation with Ukraine**. Development cooperation is focused on the support of reform measures, strengthening of capacities of self-governments and non-governmental organisations, building of civil society; it was carried out in form of a small-scale subsidy scheme, through the CETIR, microgrants, volunteer programme, and government scholarships.

The aim of the project called “Really Together 2.0 - Support of the Development of Civil Society and Increasing the Quality of Ukraine Territorial Management and the Transfer of Slovakia’s Experience“ is to engage the Ukrainian rural community in the planning, preparation, and execution of development projects and strengthen the capacities of local rural development stakeholders, similar to the project titled “School of Active Citizenship, Ukraine – Slovakia“. The “Transparent, Financially Fit, and Competitive Self-Governments in Ukraine“ project is the continuation of projects commenced in the previous period, focused on the building of authentic democratic self-government, community initiatives, civil participation on the local level, protection of rights, as well as settlement of conflicts and problems within the development of regions and communities. The project called “Building Ukrainian Civil Society through Strengthening of Capacities of Ukrainian Non-Governmental Organisations in the Field of Reform of Security Sector“ will contribute to the democratisation processes in Ukraine and to the sound public administration. At the end of 2015, the contract with the UNDP on cooperation in increasing energetic efficiency in Ukraine was signed.

In order to support specific activities of international governmental and non-government organisations carried out in developing countries, or activities implemented within the international initiatives, in 2015 the MFEA SR provided several **regulated financial allowances**. They were intended, for example, for the OECD project – combating corruption in Ukraine, support of stabilization measures after the war conflict in Iraq, allowance for the activities of the European Endowment for Democracy, allowance for the OECD project focused on the evaluation of economic competition in Ukraine, and similarly the allowance for the ECFR for the evaluation of the impact of the support provided to Ukraine by the European countries. In order to protect cultural monuments endangered by the war

conflict in Syria and Iraq, allowances were allocated for special UNESCO funds. In 2015 again, the SR provided the allowance for the execution of the project “Partnership of the Slovak Republic and the UNDP for the Results in the International Development Cooperation“. The objective of the project is to use expert capacities and the network of regional UNDP offices to increase the quality and efficiency of the SlovakAid system, including the support of transfer of knowledge and experience of the SR from the transformation period to partner countries. The total amount of allowances was **EUR 604,970**.

A special area of the development activities in the SR in 2015 represented the **response to the migration crisis**. In addition to immediate humanitarian aid provided to countries affected by the migration of hundred thousand of refugees, the SR engaged in systematic measures focused on the elimination of migration causes and carried out directly in the so-called source countries of Africa, the Near East, and the Middle East. They included, for example, the decision of the SR government to provide a voluntary allowance in the total amount of **EUR 600,000** to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the causes of illegal migration and displaced people in Africa. Similarly, the allowance will be paid to another EU trust fund, the EU Regional Trust Fund, in the response to the crisis in Syria (MADAD), to which the SR will contribute with the amount of **EUR 3 million**. At the meeting of the EU Council held in December, the contribution of the SR to the newly formed Refugee Fund in Turkey was announced. The SR has preliminary committed to provide the contribution in the amount of **EUR 13 million**.

This group of activities includes also other contributions to international organizations or their funds and programmes in the total amount of **EUR 2.9 million**. Support recipients included the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), International organization for migration (IOM), UN funds for the support of prevention of conflicts and mediation. Support for activities in the field of preventive diplomacy, mediation, and small services of the UN general secretary, as well as reforms in the security sector, are the priorities of the Slovak foreign policy. In 2015, the SR provided a voluntary contribution also to the Migrant and Refugee Fund and the Council of Europe Development Bank.

CHAPTER 38

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MFEA SR

SR perceives the UN as the basic pillar of international stability, balance and international law and defines efficient multilateralism as the central component of the country’s foreign policy.

Within the **70th session of the UN General Assembly**, the SR asserted the strengthening of the UN ability to respond efficiently to global challenges and problems, on the grounds of the UN Charter, basic democratic values, principles of international law, in compliance with priorities for the 70th session of the UN GA approved by the EU Council on 22 June 2015.

The SR supported adoption of the programme document for the development of human society after 2015 – **Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and will actively proceed within the implementation thereof. The SR will pay special attention to the implementation of sustainable development objectives approved by the UN summit on the high level for the development. The SR has also supported the plan of the UN Statistical Commission to elaborate the framework of global indicators. The SR will actively address the issues of food safety and malnutrition, while considering a close interconnection between the humanitarian and development aspects. In the context of efforts to extend and deepen the activities in the field of development and humanitarian aid, the SR will put emphasis mainly on the support of safety and resistance of communities to disasters and conflicts.

The SR helps in strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a central platform for environmental issues.

On 17th - 19th October 2015, the SR was **visited by the UN general secretary, Mr. Pan Ki-mun**. Negotiations were focused on the issues lying in the centre of the interests of the UN and UN member states, particularly combating terrorism, migration, sustainable development, climate change, or peace missions.

The SR actively supported adoption of a complex and generally binding legal agreement on climate change in December 2015 in Paris, at the 21st conference of parties to the UN Framework Agreement on Climate Change.

UN Habitat (UN programme for human settlements)

The SR is the member of the Governing Council of the UN Habitat for years 2015-2018 and the chairing country of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) of the UN Habitat; this position was held by the end of 2015 by the ambassador in Nairobi, Mr. Michal Mlynár.

The main topic of the last 25th session of the Governing Council of the UN Habitat (April 2015) was the agenda called: "Contribution of the UN-Habitat to the Development Agenda Post 2015 towards the Support of Sustainable Development of Towns and Human Settlements".

WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization)

In 2015, the SR was re-elected as a member of the Programme Budget Committee (PBC) within the WIPO for the period 2015-2017.

UNESCO

The SR participates in the performance of the main UNESCO activities in the field of development of international cooperation and understanding, in the field of education, social and natural sciences, environment, culture, information, communication, information technology, and contributes to strengthening the peace in the world. It actively supports UNESCO global priorities for years 2014-2021, particularly with the emphasis being put on Africa, gender equality and youth.

CHAPTER 39

INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: MFEA SR

International treaties are a major source of both bilateral and multilateral legal regulations regarding the relationships between states and provide a legal basis for the general international cooperation. All this objectively increases the role and importance of international treaties as a significant means of ensuring not only particular relationships between two or more states, but a large number of them regulate entire areas of international relationships, including the sustainable development.

This trend is also reflected in the interest of SR in building an efficient and comprehensive contractual basis, which the country has been actively forming since it was established on January 1, 1993. The SR further pays special attention to the improvement of contractual basis, in particular with respect to the creation of most favourable conditions for international cooperation.

MFEA SR is responsible for basic political treaties, treaties related to human rights, and treaties concluded within the UN and other international governmental organizations, unless the conclusion of such treaties falls within the competence of other departments.

Sustainable development covers a wide spectrum of areas falling within the competence of individual central government authorities of the SR. On the basis of close cooperation with authorities responsible for individual treaties, it is possible to say that the majority of international contractual documents, by which the SR is bound, are performed in a proper and smooth manner; this proves equal and sovereign position that the SR holds within the world community.

The contractual basis of the SR is stable and it will further develop in accordance with international commitments made not only at the regional, but also at the universal level.

CHAPTER 40

INFORMATION FOR DECISION-MAKING

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY: SO SR

By the Resolution No. 655/1997 the Government approved the proposal of Agenda 21 implementation and evaluation of indicators of the sustainable development in the SR. It imposed on the ministers and heads of other central government authorities of the SR an obligation to assess, according to UN requirements and methodology and according to the determined supervision, the application of individual chapters of Agenda 21 and indicators of sustainable development in the SR every year by January 31. It also imposed the task on authorities responsible for the sustainable development indicators to require every year their inclusion in the Programme of State Statistical Surveys.

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic is the central government authority of the SR for the area of state statistics. Its status is regulated by the Act No. 575/2001 Coll. on the Organisation of the Activities of the Government and on the Organisation of the Central State Administration, as amended. The Office performs tasks under the Act No. 540/2001 Coll. on State Statistics, as amended.

The Act of the National Council of the SR No. 540/2001 on State Statistics regulates the conditions for obtaining statistical information necessary for the assessment of social and economic development, status and competence of authorities exercising the state statistics, tasks of public authorities in the area of state statistics, rights and obligations of parties responsible for providing information, protection of confidential statistical data against misuse, provision and publication of statistical data, ensuring comparability of statistical information and fulfilment of obligations resulting from international treaties in the field of state statistics, by which the SR is bound.

Statistical surveys are governed by the decree that stipulated the **Program of State Statistical Surveys for the Period of Three Years (*Programme*)**. The decree is drawn up by the SO SR in collaboration with individual departments and state organizations. The *Program* contains all the important and necessary state statistical surveys. Ministries and state organisations are entitled to carry out statistical surveys also out of the *Program*. In addition to surveys included in the *Program*, the Office also conducts special surveys of natural persons (e.g. population and housing censuses, agricultural censuses, etc.).

The Strategy of Public Administration Informatization is a major strategic document defining strategic objectives of the process of implementation of eGovernment and defined the steps leading to modernisation of public administration and electronization of its services. The Strategy of Informatization of Public Administration was approved by the Slovak Government Resolution no. 131/2008 of 27 February 2008. The Strategy of Informatization of Public Administration is the basis for the **National Concept for Informatization of Public Administration**. It determines the architecture of integrated information systems of public administration and prescribes the standards for the development thereof, with the aim to ensure interoperability and independence on technological platforms. In February 2011, the document titled **eGovernment Development Revision** was approved; it does not replace the existing approved strategic documents, it evaluates particularly the

practical aspect of the implementation of projects, while, however, indicating the need to revise also conceptual basis in the medium-long term.

The Strategic Document for Growth of Digital Services and for Infrastructure of New Generation Access Network (2014 – 2020) was elaborated by the Ministry of Finance of the SR in order to fulfil the ex ante requirements defined within the topical objective 2 “Improvement of Access to Information and Communication Technologies and Improvement of Their Use and Quality“, by which the European Union evaluates the readiness of member states to implement selected investment priorities in the programme period 2014 – 2020.

The strategic document determines the strategy for further development of digital services and infrastructure of the new generation access network in the SR for the programme period 2014 – 2020. It also fulfils the objectives defined in the position document of the EC and implements the measures of the Digital Agenda for Europe, in connection with the activities carried out within the operational programme Informatization of Society in the programme period 2007 – 2013.

The strategic document serves as the basis for the preparation of the **Integrated Infrastructure Operational Programme (Information Society priority axis)** in the programme period 2014 - 2020.

Investment priorities for further development of the information society in Slovakia, defined in the strategic document, include:

- Services to citizens and entrepreneurs;
- Efficient public administration;
- Wide-band connections/NGN;

On 8 January 2014, the government of the SR acknowledged this strategic document.

The key legislation in the field of informatization of society represents:

- The Act No 275/2006 Coll. on Information Systems in Public Administration, as amended,
- The Act No 305/2013 Coll. on e-Government and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts, as amended (the e-Government Act).

Accessibility of the information for decision-making is crucial for the support of sustainable development. The evaluation parameters for this area within the Agenda 21 are the following indicators: *Main Telephone Lines per 100 Inhabitants* and *Access to Information*. Existence and creation of environmental statistics are indicated by the *Programmes for National Environmental Statistics* indicator.

Number of active local loops in the fixed network (*main telephone lines*) in Slovakia is declining in the long term. It is a global trend caused by the substitution of the fixed public telephone service with the mobile service and it currently does not reflect the actual situation on the market in electronic communications in the SR. End users of voice services currently prefer mobile voice services.

Obtaining the data and the calculation of the *Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants* indicator is in compliance with the Act No 351/2011 Coll. on Electronic Communications and in compliance with the *Programme*.

Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants (%)

	1992	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants (%)	15.45	31.43	28.93	26.08	24.07	23.22	22.21	21.66	21.33	20.08	20.04	18.07	17.56	16.17	16.27	15.53

Source: MTCRD SR

Access to Information means the quantity and variety of newspapers printed and distributed in the given country per 100 inhabitants. The source of the data for the given field – periodical press, is the register of periodical press, as specified in the Act No 168/2008 Coll. on Periodical Press and Agency Press Service and on amendments and supplementations to certain acts (the Press Act), as amended by the Act No 221 /2011 Coll.

With regard to the fact that the data on number of issues of individual periodicals are not obtained within the culture sector, it is not possible to calculate the data on published newspapers per 100 inhabitants. This indicator could only relate to dailies with nation-wide distribution; however, they do not represent even 1% of the total number of published newspapers.

In 2010, in the SR there was 482 different newspapers published, their quantity has been annually increasing up to the level of 600 different newspapers in 2014.

Publishing dailies was stable for several years, but in 2015 their quantity increased to 13, including 1 daily published in the language of the major ethnic minority living in the Slovak Republic, in Hungarian language, and one in Italian language. According to the territorial extent of the distribution, there are 9 dailies with the nation-wide distribution; 1 daily is issued in the capital city and 2 dailies are issued in regional capitals. In addition to a typical daily format, 2 dailies have specific focus, 1 on economy and 1 on sports.

The largest group of newspapers, in terms of their content, are local, the so-called municipal newspapers; they are mostly published by municipalities and deal with life in the nearest surroundings of readers. Broader regions are covered by approximately 1/6 of the total number of newspapers.

Periodical press / newspapers in the SR – categorisation by the year of issuance

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*
Dailies	11	11	11	11	11	13
Regional newspapers	94	98	91	95	104	115
Municipal newspapers	326	427	423	425	434	460
Advertisement newspapers	40	32	38	45	43	47
Other	11	17	16	13	11	16
Total	482	585	579	589	603	651

*data for 2015 – status as of 18 December 2015

Source: MC SR

Programmes for national environmental statistics are programmes for the development of statistics and collection of environmental statistic data aimed at regular publishing of environmental status reports and/or publishing short summaries of environmental statistical data.

According to Article 45 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic: "everyone has the right for timely and complete information on the status of environment and on the causes and consequences of such status". This right of citizens for information on the environment was laid down by the Act No 17/1992 Coll. on Environment which stipulates that the Ministry of Environment of the SR is obliged to issue *Annual Environmental Status Reports*¹.

¹ These obligations are specified in more details also in other acts - the latest one is the Act No 205/2004 Coll. on Collection, Storage, and Dissemination of Environmental Information and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts. According to the Section 7 of this Act, environmental status reports must contain particularly the data on the environmental status and on the causes and consequences of such status, as well as the data on trends of its development and the measures for the environmental protection and improvement, including the international cooperation. Unlike previous legal standards, the Act No 205/2004 Coll. imposes an obligation to distribute Environmental Status Reports mainly through public telecommunication networks, particularly the Internet.

Information and monitoring systems of the environment ensure the execution of the communication and information support of activities for institutions operating in the field of environment management. The presentation of outcomes is divided into several sections:

- Reports on the environment: Reports are based on verified statistical data and information originating from the documents of the Statistical Office of the SR, the Ministry of Environment of the SR, professional organisations of the Ministry of Environment, as well as databases of other central governmental authorities and their professional organisations. Reports are available at URL: <http://www.minzp.sk/dokumenty/sprava-stave-zp/>;
- Indicators: Indicators represent an important basis for the subsequent elaboration of various reports. The Slovak Environmental Agency (SEA) processes and regularly evaluates various sets of indicators, particularly: key indicators, sector indicators, indicators of sustainable development (SD), indicators of green growth, and indicators of source efficiency. The indicators are assessed at URL: <http://www.enviroportal.sk/indikatory>;
- Atlas of Country: The Atlas is an electronic form, containing nine chapters, of a comprehensive review of the status and historical development of the Slovak territory in the context of large number of mostly statistical data. It is a basic outcome in the field of geoinformatics, providing specialized and also cross-sectional information useful for the state administration, scientific institutions, schools, research workplaces, and design agencies.
URL: <http://globus.sazp.sk/atlassr/>;
- EnviroGeoPortal: The portal represents one of the building stones of the environmental national infrastructure for spatial information (eNIPI). It provides a set of links with relevant explanatory texts that enable access to applications specified by the NIPI topics, i.e. efficient creation and sharing of spatial data as the necessary part of the information society development. The NIPI represents meta-data, sets of spatial data, services of spatial data, networking services and network technologies, agreements on sharing, accessing, and using the data for any kind of activities for which these data are useful, coordination and monitoring mechanisms, processes and procedures established, operated or made accessible. All these components ensure the conditions of interoperability of geographical data and services. URL: <http://geo.enviroportal.sk/>;
- EnviroInfo: The meta-information system facilitates standardized creation (according to ISO 19115), collection and making accessible descriptive information (meta-data) on documents, databases, grid maps, vector maps, and other data which are important within the meaning of the definition of the environment-related information, pursuant to the Act No 205/2004 Coll. on Collection, Storage, and Dissemination of Information on the Environment. It also ensures the implementation of the Act No 211/2000 Coll. on Free Access to Information and also the obligation to collect and provide the meta-data, as specified in the EU Directive No 2007/2/EC on Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE). URL: <http://mis.enviroportal.sk/>;
- Building and operation of information systems of individual institutions and provision of data therefrom.

(source: <http://www.enviroportal.sk/spravy/spravy-o-zp/kapitola/1>).