
THIRD PERIODIC REPORT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

GENERAL

INTRODUCTION

1. The Slovak Republic (hereinafter “SR”), as a State Party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (hereinafter the “Covenant”), submits to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (hereinafter the “Committee”) reports on the implementation of the Covenant in compliance with Articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant.
2. The SR hereby presents its Third Periodic Report to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (hereinafter the “Report”). The report gives information on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the period from 2012 until 2016 in the implementation of the rights recognised in the Covenant.
3. The report was drawn up by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MFEA SR”) in cooperation with the sectors concerned, based on the general guidelines of the Committee containing the recommendations on the content and form of individual periodic reports¹ and in conformance with specific recommendations from final observations adopted on 8 June 2012² after the assessment of the Second Report of the SR of 2009³ (hereinafter the “Second Report of the SR”).
4. The SR fulfils its commitments arising from international human rights treaties.⁴

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 2

Guarantee of rights without discrimination

5. In 2016, the SR submitted to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination its eleventh and twelfth periodic report to the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination⁵. The report includes more specific measures adopted in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination in the SR.

ARTICLE 3

Equal rights of men and women

6. The SR is implementing the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women to the fifth and sixth periodical report of the SR adopted in its final observation on 25 November 2015.⁶

¹ E/C.12/1991/1

² E/C.12/SVK/CO/2

³ E/C.12/SVK/2

⁴ See CCPR/C/SVK/CO/4; CRC/C/SVK/CO/3-5; CRPD/C/SVK/CO/1; CEDAW/C/SVK/CO/5-6.

⁵ CERD/C/SVK/11-12

⁶ CEDAW/C/SVK/CO/5-6

7. The issue of equality of men and women was institutionally enhanced by means of key strategy documents. On 20 November 2014, the Government of the SR adopted a National Strategy for Gender Equality and a Gender Action Plan for the years 2014 - 2019. Both documents are linked to the assessment of the fulfilment of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and its action plan and they define the problematic areas for the equality of men and women, which require intervention and systematic work. Strategic areas and priorities defined in the strategy are as follows: economic independence and the labour market; participation in decision-making process within public and economic life; education, science and research; dignity and physical integrity; institutional and legislative equality of men and women; international cooperation and development aid. They also include a proposal for solutions and the specification of main tasks and operational objectives for the period.

8. One of the specific objectives of the National Strategy for Gender Equality for the years 2014 - 2019 is the reduction of gender inequalities in the participation of women and men in decision-making positions. The operational objectives are as follows: to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions in political life, including their motivation and opportunity to stand as a candidate and participate; to promote women's entrepreneurship by creating systemic measures, including the reconciliation of family and professional life; to increase the representation of women in economic decision-making positions. In 2015, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the "MLSAF SR") was actively supporting the balanced representation of women and men within the decision-making process by the means of a project called "Promotion of Balanced Representation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions in Organizations of Public and Private Sector" financed from the Progress subsidy scheme of the EC (hereinafter the "EC"). Further information is stated in point 1 of the appendix.

ARTICLE 6

Right to work

9. The right to work is governed by Law 5/2004, (hereinafter the "Law on Employment Services"). The right of access to employment is the right of a citizen, who wants to work, can work and seeks a job, to services focused on the assistance and support in relation to his access to the labour market and also the stay of a disadvantaged jobseeker on the labour market for at least six consecutive calendar months.

Employment services

10. Employment services represent a system of institutions and instruments of support and assistance for participants in the labour market in search of jobs, changing jobs, assistance in filling job vacancies and the implementation of measures on the labour market with regard to the employment of disadvantaged jobseekers. Pursuant to the Law on Employment Services, the category of disadvantaged jobseekers includes groups that encounter difficulties in gaining access to the labour market due to age, health status or other reasons. This group includes citizens younger than 26 years who are school graduates, citizens older than 50 years, the long-term unemployed, citizens with lower education, disabled citizens, single parents with at least 1 child, citizens without regular work for at least 12 months, third-country nationals who have been granted asylum or subsidiary protection.

11. Since 1 January 2015, a new active measure, specifically a contribution for promoting job creation in the first regularly paid employment, has been introduced in the area of integrating young people under 29 years of age into the labour market. This applies to a created job if an employer employs a jobseeker who is a citizen younger than 25 years who has been registered in a register of jobseekers for at least three months, or a jobseeker who is a citizen younger than 29 years and registered in this register for at least six months.

12. The Ministry of Economy of the SR (hereinafter the “ME SR”) performs tasks to promote employment particularly by means of operational programmes and structural funds, also for individual disadvantaged social groups.

13. The Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth (hereinafter the “OP CEG”), in the 2007-2013 programming period, within individual calls, provided direct and indirect support to create jobs for long-term unemployed young people (hereinafter the “jobs for young people”), by which it contributed to the implementation of a EC initiative aimed at the reduction of the unemployment of young people. The jobs for young people were created particularly in the form of the de minimis aid and in the form of State aid.

14. As of 31 December 2016, within the OP CEG, 1,349 jobs were created for young people from the planned 1,912 jobs. This is a success rate of 71 %. The decrease in the number of jobs created compared to the previous monitored period was also caused by the extraordinary closure of projects. Of the total number of 7,658 newly created jobs, approximately every 4th job is occupied by a long-term unemployed young person.

15. In the case of calls executed exclusively in the form of State aid, 584 out of 795 planned jobs for young people were created within supported projects, which accounts for the success rate of 73 %. Of the total number of 970 newly created jobs, more than a half of all jobs were created for long-term unemployed young people.

16. Job creation focused on young people will continue within the OP CEG also after the projects are finished, i.e. in the period of their compulsory sustainability.

17. The ME SR, within an approved OP Research and Innovations, supports, in the 2014-2020 programming period, mainly small and medium-sized enterprises in order to improve their competitiveness. The planned benefit of the OP Research and Innovation is stated in point 2 of the appendix.

Employment policy in the SR

18. The employment policy was implemented in compliance with the SR Government Manifesto (2012-2016). The reduction of high unemployment of young people and the systematic solution of long-term, especially regional unemployment was defined as a key task. Active labour market measures focus on better access of the unemployed to jobs and the labour market, paying particular attention to the employment of disadvantaged jobseekers. There are several types of measures, such as subsidised employment programmes – providing employers with contributions in order to promote the employment of the unemployed, providing contributions to start a business or to create jobs in public or private sectors.

19. The amended Law on Employment Services provides for the provision of active measures on the labour market since 1 May 2013. The legal framework for temporary

employment agencies was also modified. There were also changes in the rendering of public employment services by the offices of labour, social affairs and family. On 1 January 2014, Directive 2011/98/EU was transposed by the amended Law on Employment Services. More detailed information on legislative measures is included in points 3-10 of the appendix.

20. The fundamental priorities of the policy of the government of the SR include the growth of productive employment based on the economic growth and restructuring of the economy, which will take into account the requirement of the creation of job opportunities and conditions for the gradual increase of the employment rate of citizens in productive age and the reduction of unemployment.

21. In the 2016-2020 the SR Government Manifesto the Government of the SR committed itself to support policies focused on the reduction of social and regional differences and the creation of jobs in regions. It will be achieving these objectives by means of regional development programmes for the least developed districts, including supporting the social economy by means of the combination of grants and financial instruments. The measures include the improvement of local business environment by stimulating self-employment and labour force mobility, the improvement of conditions for the existing jobs and jobs that are being created, in particular for women, young people and older workers.

22. The SR's attention is also paid to the employment and status of women. The Businesswomen of Slovakia project is one of the success stories. This project was developed by the Slovak Business Agency in 1999 and its objective is to recognise women who achieve exceptional results in business and can assert themselves on the market as well. The project also focuses on the promotion of the most successful women who have managed to reconcile family and work responsibilities. The information on the representation of the ME SR within a European platform WES (The European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship) as well as individual recommendations of the Women's Voice project is included in points 11-12 of the appendix.

23. The ME SR has adopted measures such as lower fees for the first registration in commercial register by approximately 10 %, which has resulted in lower administrative costs associated with starting a business. In the same period, thanks to the adoption of new comprehensive legislation on maintaining equity and the revised responsibility of statutory bodies, the obligation to deposit equity monetary deposits into a preliminary business account was abolished. As far as the employment of young perspective entrepreneurs is concerned, the ME SR is currently assessing possibilities to support the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises and specifically the start-ups and innovations within public procurement at the national level, which are also priorities at the EU level.

24. The National Employment Strategy of the SR up to 2020 was adopted by the government on 17 December 2014. Social partners, self-governments and professional public also took part in the development of the cross-sectoral document. The strategy focused on the identification of changes that must be made within cross-sectoral cooperation, in particular in the field of the functioning of social economy. The objective of the strategy is to achieve 72 % employment, to improve living conditions of employees and to use financial resources for supporting employment more effectively. Strategic intentions are implemented in key areas: supporting job creation; innovations as an instrument to support employment; the implementation of the social economy; innovative instrument to support regional and local employment; the flexibility of employment relationships, working conditions, protection of

work and work culture; the effective solution of long-term unemployment; the networking and development of public employment services.

25. OP Human Resources for the programming period 2014-2020 is based on a National Programme of Reforms of the SR, which defines measures for the strengthening of economic growth and employment. Within priority axis Youth Employment Initiative, the set objective was to increase the participation of young people in the labour market. Key activities should ensure that all young people, who are not employed, are not continuing their education process or vocational training younger than 29 years, are given a quality offer of employment, further training, vocational training and preparation or internship within four months after they lost their jobs or after the completion of formal education. During the monitored period, annual National Programmes of Reforms of the SR were prepared, which contain measures for increasing employment and labour force mobility.

26. The issue of employment and employability of older workers, including the measures for supporting active ageing of people older than 50 years, is included in a 2014-2020 National Programme of Active Ageing approved by the government of the SR in Dec. 2013.

27. The SR actively reacted to the calls of the EC to support the access of young people to the labour market and to create jobs in 2012 and adopted measures to facilitate the access of young people to the labour market. It separately adopted incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises to hire young people to be employed for the first time. Since 2014, the SR has adopted new measures (reforms, projects) within the Youth Employment Initiative. This applies to supporting the first regularly paid job, mentored employment, self-employment and graduate work experience with the possibility of subsequent employment. The measures also include support intended for education and individualised guidance with the emphasis on the disadvantaged groups of young people.

28. Since 2014, the implementation of a system of guarantees for young people has been ensured, investments in young people continue by means of the European Social Fund, and initiatives to harmonise education with the labour market's needs and to facilitate the transition from school to work have been developed (OP Human Resources).

29. With the emphasis on the group of graduates not older than 26, a graduate work experience contribution was applied within the active measures of the labour market (hereinafter the "AMLM") under the Law on Employment Services (§ 51). In the scope of applied AMLM, separate national projects for supporting the inclusion of young unemployed people were implemented, i.e. "Successful in the Labour Market", "Graduate Work Experience Starts Employment" and "Work Experience Leading to Employment".

30. Measures for solving long-term unemployment were focused on the giving of a second chance for education, the implementation of pilot projects for the long-term unemployed, multi-professional intensive support for the long-term unemployed and the performance of activities financed from the OP Employment and Social Inclusion in the programming period 2007 – 2013 and then OP Human Resources in the programming period 2014-2020.

31. During the assessment period to support the inclusion of long-term unemployed jobseekers in the field of AMLM, the following contributions were used: a contribution to support the employment of a disadvantaged jobseeker; a contribution to support the development of local and regional employment and a contribution for active activity in the

form of smaller communal services for communities or in the form of smaller services for a self-governing region. In addition to these measures, separate national projects for supporting the inclusion of the long-term unemployed in the labour market were implemented, namely: “Chance to Work”, “We Want to be Active on the Labour Market” (50+), “Way Out of the Circle of Unemployment”, “We Are Looking for Work Together” and “Engaging the Unemployed in the Restoration of Cultural Heritage”, that significantly contributed to solve long-term unemployment.

32. On 1 July 2014, activation centres were established for supporting the maintenance of work habits of long-term unemployed jobseekers who are simultaneously recipients of material-need benefits. On 1 November 2013, a levy relief for the long-term unemployed was implemented, which was expanded on 15 December 2015 to the employment of persons from the least developed districts.

33. In 2016, an Action Plan for the Strengthening of the Integration of the Long-Term Unemployed on the Labour Market was developed. It describes specific measures, which the MLSAF SR, in cooperation with all stakeholders, plans to provide especially in the two years following its adoption (November 2016) to improve the access of long-term unemployed people to the labour market. Its implementation in the SR provides the implementation of the EU Council Recommendation of 15 February 2016 on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market.

34. On 12 March 2015 Law 61/2015 was adopted on Vocational Education and Training and the amendment of certain laws. This law creates the legal prerequisites for the active involvement of employers in vocational education and training and represents a significant step towards reducing the unemployment of young people in the SR.

Employment

35. The employment rate of citizens in productive age (15-64 years of age) increased to 64.9 % from 2012-2016. The employment rate of young people (15-24 years of age) increased for the same period to 25.2 % and the employment rate of older persons (50-64 years of age) increased to 59.5 %.

Unemployment

36. The overall situation of the development of unemployment has been gradually improving after 2012. According to the data of the Statistical Office of the SR (hereinafter the “SO SR”) from a labour force sample survey, unemployment rate in the SR in 2016 compared to 2012 was lower by 4.3 percentage points (hereinafter the “p. p.”), or it had decreased to 9.7 %. The absolute number of the unemployed had decreased by almost 30 %. In 2016, 301,000 jobseekers were registered on average. On the year-on-year basis, their number had decreased by 54,000 persons, i.e. by 15.1 %. The registered unemployment rate showed a downward trend and reached 9.48 %, which is a year-on-year decrease by 2 p. p.

37. The situation in the field of long-term unemployment has been improving as well. While in 2012, according to the data of the SO SR, the average share of the long-term registered unemployed (unemployed for more than 12 months) in the total number of the unemployed accounted for 63.8 %, in 2015 the share accounted for 62.3 % and in 2016 it had decreased to 56.6 %. Interregional differences in the level of unemployment rate have also

been decreasing gradually. In 2012, the difference between the highest and the lowest unemployment rate between counties accounted for 14.1 p.p., in 2016 the difference had decreased to 9.9 p.p.

38. Positive tendencies were also recorded in the development of the unemployment rate of women compared to the level in 2012. While in 2012, according to the data of the SO SR, the Labour Force Sample Survey (hereinafter the “LFSS”), the unemployment rate of women accounted for 14.5 %, in 2016 it was 10.7 %.

39. The unemployment rate of young people decreased significantly. While in 2012, according to the data of the SO SR, the unemployment rate of young people accounted for 34.0 %, in 2015 it was 26.4 % and in 2016 it was 22.2 %.

ARTICLE 7

Minimum wage

40. The representatives of employers and employees (social partners) negotiate the adjustment of the amount of minimum wage for the next year under Law 663/2007 on Minimum Wage. The favourable development of macro-economic indicators accelerated the rate of the increase of the minimum wage. With regard to strong economic growth in 2016, the government of the SR decided on the increase of the amount of the minimum wage for 2015 from €405.00 to €435.00 monthly, i.e. by 7.41 %.

41. The more significant growth of the amount of the minimum wage in the last three years made it possible in 2015 to implement a levy deductible item into the health insurance system in the amount of €380.00 on a monthly basis with a progressive decrease up to the amount of the employee’s income of €570.00. This measure of the government of the SR, effective from 1 January 2015, means that neither the employer nor the employee pays health contributions from income up to €380.00. Taking into account the year-on-year growth of the amount of the minimum wage by €28.00 monthly, which was a 7.95 % increase, the net wage of employees with the wage at the level of the amount of the minimum wage increased by as much as 11.24 %.

The wage and working conditions of women

42. Constitutional Law 460/1992, (hereinafter the “Constitution of the SR”), in Article 12, Paragraph 2, guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms for all regardless of sex, race, colour, language, belief and religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, nationality or membership of an ethnic group, property, gender or other status. The employer’s obligation to treat employees in compliance with a principle of equal treatment is stipulated by Law 365/2004 on Equal Treatment in Certain Areas and on Protection Against Discrimination, (hereinafter the “Anti-discrimination Law”) which, under the provision of § 2, Section 1, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex. The prohibition does not allow discrimination of women in regard to men, not even the possibility to acquire equal opportunity for all persons or to achieve a higher job position within the employment. The principle of equal treatment in employment is provided for in detail in § 6 of the Anti-Discrimination Law.

43. The principle of equal treatment is also reflected in law 311/2001, the Labour Code (hereinafter the “LC”), which, in Article 6 of Fundamental Principles stipulates that women and men have the right to equal treatment as to the access to employment, remuneration and promotion, vocational training and working conditions. The LC prohibits the discrimination of employees on the grounds of sex, marital status and family status, sexual orientation, race, colour, language, age, poor health or disability, genetic characteristics, belief, religion, political or other opinion, trade-union activity, national or social origin, nationality or membership of an ethnic group.

44. According to the data of the SO SR on the development of gender gap in the SR, this trend has been gradually decreasing. The overall gender wage gap between the average monthly wage of a woman and a man in 2005 accounted for 28.4 %, in 2011 it accounted for 24.2 % and in 2015 it decreased further to 22.4 % (the average monthly wage of women was €867.00, the average monthly wage of men was €1,117.00).

45. The analyses of the data acquired from a sample represented by more than one million employees from 8,170 reporting agents (more than 50 % of all employees in the SR) showed an unequivocal and dominant impact of the high segregation of jobs on the overall gender wage gap. The segregation index of 57.56 % means that in order to ensure a balanced distribution of men and women in jobs 57.56 % of all employees would have to change their jobs.

Safe and healthy working conditions

46. Fair and satisfactory working conditions represent an important field of social policy. They are provided for in compliance with the EU law and the conventions of ILO. Legislation related to the working conditions is ensured by a large body of legislation in order to ensure safety and health at work, amended several times.

47. The area of health and safety at work in the SR is also addressed by fulfilling the aims, objectives and instruments of the Strategy for Health and Safety at Work in the SR up to 2020 and its implementation programme for the years 2013 to 2015 with a view towards 2020, approved by the Slovak Government on 10 July 2013 as well as the updated Strategy for Health and Safety at Work in the SR for the years 2016 to 2020 and the programme for its implementation approved by the Government of the SR on 12 October 2016. These strategies contain a structured set of tasks, the implementation of which supports employers’ activities ensuring the constitutional rights of employees to protection of their safety and health at work.

Equal opportunities in employment

48. In compliance with a contractual principle contained in the LC, the agreed type of work for which an employee is hired, including a short description, is one of the four fundamental requirements of an employment contract between the employer and the employee. Further information is stated in point 16 of the appendix.

Rest, leisure

49. Legislation stated in points 103-120 of the second report of the SR applies. Further information is stated in points 17-18 of the appendix.

50. Information about reasonable limitation of working hours, regular paid leave and remuneration for public holidays is stated in points 19-21 of the appendix.

ARTICLE 8

The right to form trade unions

51. The Constitution of the SR guarantees, in Article 37, Paragraphs 1 and 2, the right of each person to freely associate with others in order to protect his economic, social and cultural rights. The legislation of unionisation compared to the second report of the SR (points 121-123, 125-127) has remained unchanged and further information is provided in point 22 of the appendix.

52. The SR is a contracting party of an ILO Convention 87 and an ILO Convention 98.

Collective bargaining, the right to strike

53. The Constitution of the SR in Article 37, Paragraph 4, and the Chart of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (Constitutional Law 23/1991) in Article 27, Paragraph 4 provide for the right to strike as one of the social rights of citizens. Law 2/1991 on Collective Bargaining provides for basic issues related to the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining.

54. Support for parity consultations between employees and employers is provided for in the LC. These are mainly issues related to working conditions and employment conditions, business transfers, and collective redundancies.

55. Under Article 54 of the Constitution of the SR, the right to strike of persons whose professions are absolutely necessary for the protection of life and health is limited by the provision of § 20 of the Law on Collective Bargaining. Strike legislation compared to the second report of the SR has not changed (points 128-129).

ARTICLE 9

Social insurance

56. The Constitution of the SR, in Article 39, Paragraph 1 guarantees to all citizens of the SR one of the basic social rights, namely the right to adequate material security in old age and during periods of work incapacity, as well as in the case of the loss of household provider. This is a right to social security that the state is obligated to implement. The social right is implemented primarily by means of social insurance performed by the Social Insurance Company as a public institution. Further information and is stated in points 23-25 of the appendix.

57. Fundamental changes in social insurance were made between 2011 and 2014. The approach of exhaustively listing persons to whom the social insurance applies was abandoned. Social insurance is connected to the income from employment or income from business that is taxed according to tax regulations.

58. As stated in the second report of the SR (Article 9), the current social insurance consists of five separate insurance systems:

- sickness insurance,
- pension insurance, broken down to
 - old-age insurance,
 - disability insurance,
- accident insurance,
- guarantee insurance,
- unemployment insurance.

59. Mandatory sickness and pension insurance applies to the following persons:

- a) an employee with the right to regular monthly income,
- b) a self-employed person (SEP), whose income exceeds 12-times the minimum assessment base (minimum wage),
- c) state insurees are also in compulsory pension insurance (particularly a parent who is looking after a child under the age of 6, a child with a long-term ill health from 6 to 18 years of age, carers who receive a cash allowance for the care of a disabled citizen and personal assistants who under a contract of personal assistance perform personal assistance for a person with severe disabilities for at least 140 hours per month).

Sickness insurance

60. Law 461/2003 on Social Insurance, (hereinafter the “Law on Social Insurance”) defines sickness insurance as insurance against the loss or reduction of income due to temporary incapacity to work, pregnancy and maternity. It is an insurance of short-term consequences of social events in the form of cash benefits. Further information is stated in points 26-28 of the appendix.

Pension insurance

61. The pension insurance system is based on a three-pillar model. As to the old-age pension saving system, the automatic inclusion of the first-time insurees into the 2nd pillar was implemented in 2012, with possibility to exit the 2nd pillar during the first 730 days. However, this was valid only by the end of the year. Since 2013, a principle of voluntary participation in the 2nd pillar was implemented for the persons who were entitled to the first participation in the pension insurance at least once (1st pillar). These persons can decide to join the 2nd pillar until they reach 35 years of age.

62. On 1 September 2012, the rate of compulsory contributions to the old-age pension saving was decreased from the original 9 % to 4 % from the assessment base. Since 2017, this rate will be increased each year by 0.25 % so that it will account for 6.0 % in 2024. With the effect from 2013, the possibility to pay voluntary contributions to old-age pension saving, the amount of which is not limited, was implemented. A reduced rate of taxation up to 2 % of the tax base (partial tax base) was applied to these contributions, while this reduced rate of taxation was valid until the end of 2016.

63. In 2012, within the old-age pension saving system, a possibility for pension fund management companies to create the so-called index pension funds was implemented. The fixed number of four pension funds was abolished in 2013. According to new legislation, the pension fund management companies manage one bond guaranteed pension fund and one stock non-guaranteed pension fund. Also, the monitored period of the performance of the

bond guaranteed funds has been extended to 10 years. There have been several modifications of remuneration since 2012.

64. A significant change consisted in the comprehensive modification of a payment phase from the old-age pension saving system, which entered into force on 1 January 2015. The condition of the minimum period of the old-age pension saving of 10 years was cancelled and a new form of the pension payment was implemented - a temporary pension. A draft bill also brought a solution of the situation of savers whose amount of pension savings is not sufficient to buy pension for life (pensions in the regime of the so-called small saved sum were implemented). Contractual relation between the pension provider and the saver has been introduced. In order to intermediate the offers and selection of a pension from the old-age pension saving system, the Social Insurance Company has established and manages a central information offer system by means of which the savers will get all their offers in one place at the same time, which has resulted in the reduction of the saver's administrative burden and the transparency of the intermediation of pension offers.

65. Since 2012, the 2nd pillar was temporarily opened twice for people to join it or leave it, from 1 September 2012 until 31 January 2013 and subsequently from 15 March 2015 until 15 June 2015. The number of savers as of 31 December 2016 accounted for 1,375,770 people.

66. As to the supplementary pension saving system, the reduced rate of taxation related to the supplementary pension saving on the part of participant was cancelled in 2011. In 2014, the reduced rate of taxation on the part of participant was reintroduced into the system, while the participant can reduce his tax base by paid contributions up to €180.00 annually. Contributions to the supplementary pension saving paid by employers for their employees-participants are subject to the reduced rate of taxation up to 6 % of the wage of these employees.

67. Since 2014, several changes have been made in the supplementary pension saving system in order to fulfil the original purpose of this system and to make it more attractive for the participants. Within the measures adopted, the age from which the supplementary old-age pension is paid has been increased, in principle it is 62 years, while the condition of the minimum period of saving of 10 years has been cancelled.

68. Conditions for the payment of the supplementary years-of-service pension (the extension of the period of the performance of risky work from five to ten years, the increase of age from which this pension is paid from 40 to 55 years) have been changed together with the purpose of the supplementary years-of-service pension (earlier retirement than the legal retirement). Severance payment was left out and a possibility of early withdrawal for the participant has been introduced. Benefit plans were cancelled, while the benefits of the supplementary pension saving are governed by the law only.

69. The possibility to save in several contributory supplementary pension funds simultaneously has been introduced; the right of selection of a supplementary pension company has been transferred from the employer to the participant. Each participant and recipient of benefit acquires passive electronic access to his personal account and an institute of "key information", which has replaced the unsuitable information brochure, has been introduced.

70. Also, the costs of the system have been reduced by means of the overall reduction of remuneration for supplementary pension companies. In the field of investments and risk management, management companies were given possibility to increase their activity, investments in new class of assets were allowed and a strong internal control system was introduced (risk management system). Further information is stated in points 29–34 of the appendix.

Accident insurance

71. Accident insurance is an employer's insurance against cases of damage to health or death due to industrial accident or occupational disease. Further information is stated in points 35-36 of the appendix.

Guarantee insurance

72. Guarantee insurance represents insurance against the employer's insolvency in satisfying the employee's claims, the payment of remuneration and expenses of the temporary administrator of the bankruptcy assets and the payment of compulsory old-age pension contributions not paid by the employer to the basic fund of contributions to the old-age pension saving. Compulsory guarantee insurance applies to the employer of an employee in employment relation and the member of a cooperative employed by the cooperative. Compulsory guarantee insurance does not apply to an employer who is a representative office of a foreign state and an employer who cannot be declared bankrupt.

73. An employee has the right to guarantee insurance benefit from the employer's guarantee insurance, except for an employee who is a statutory representative or a member of statutory body who has at least a 50 % share in the employer's assets, after the conditions stipulated by the Law on Social Insurance are met.

Unemployment insurance

74. Unemployment insurance represents insurance against the loss of income from the employee's work due to unemployment and serves to provide income in unemployment. The insuree (a compulsory insured unemployed person - employee or a voluntarily insured unemployed person) is entitled to unemployment benefit after meeting all the conditions related to the granting of the benefit. An employee who has compulsory sickness insurance is a person whom the compulsory unemployment insurance relates to.

ARTICLE 10

Family protection

75. The basic objective of the social policy of the SR is the adoption and implementation of measures that will ensure the maintenance and development of human, economic, social and cultural rights in the interest of decent living conditions for all. Respect for human rights and principle of equal treatment is one of the essential pillars of social protection. Multiple measures are focused on family protection, either in the field of instruments supporting employment, lower taxes for selected groups, emergency benefit, instruments supporting social inclusion (community centres, field social work), instruments supporting the reconciliation of family and work life (higher maternity benefit, higher child benefit).

76. State support for families is provided primarily by means of the system of state social benefits representing a set of financial benefits by which the state participates in addressing multiple life situations, especially in relation to families with dependent children. When providing state support to families with children, the family income is not taken into account, with the exception of substitute child maintenance. Benefits provided to the families with children within the state social support system are financed exclusively from the state budget. The granting of individual benefits is legislatively provided for by separate acts stipulating the terms and conditions for the entitlement to individual benefits, their amount, the method and procedure of payment, including provisions focused on minimising the possibility of ineffective use of the funds by authorised persons. Each act adapts the terms and conditions to a specific family benefit, while it stipulates the terms and conditions equally for each applicant without possibility to apply any exception.

77. The following allowances are intended for families: child birth allowance, allowance for multiple simultaneously born children, parental allowance, child benefit, supplementary child benefit, childcare allowance, allowances to support substitute care for a child, substitute child maintenance and funeral allowance.

78. As to supporting the families with small children, increasing the amount of childcare benefit is also important. With effect from 1 January 2016, the maximum amount of childcare benefit increased from €230.00 to €280.00. The parents' administrative burden was also reduced in relation to the childcare benefit by eliminating the monthly obligation to demonstrate to the payer the parent's actual expenses for the care provided to his child.

79. Within the development of services related to the care of children up to three years of age at the community level, the MLSAF SR prepared, in 2016, an amendment to the Law on Social Services also focused on social services for supporting the families with children, while the amended Law entered into effect on 1 March 2017 by means of Law 40/2017. Within social security rights, legal conditions were created for the access to, assertion and staying on the labour market for a parent of a child up to three years of age or up to six years of age, if it is a child with impaired health. Within the social service system, a single framework was created for the activity of childcare facilities for children up to three years of age and the activity of childminders providing services supporting the reconciliation of family and working life with related quality and supervision over the childcare on the part of relevant authorities.

80. More detailed information on the protection of children's rights are included in the third, the fourth and the fifth report of the SR on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Right of the Child.⁷

Protection of mothers

81. Special protection of mothers during the period before the birth and after the birth of a child is provided for in special legislation on working conditions for pregnant women, mothers until the ninth month of the childbirth and breast-feeding women. The LC guarantees the woman maternity leave and parental leave together with protection during pregnancy (prohibition of dismissal, the right to excusal for ante-natal examinations, the right to be

⁷ CRC/C/SVK/3-5

transferred to another job, etc.) and parental leave for the man from childbirth. Legislation has not changed since the second report of the SR (points 210-217).

Employment of children and adolescents

82. Legislation has not changed since the second report of the SR (points 218-229). The LC and also special regulations (SR Government Regulation) define a group of jobs that are prohibited to adolescents (for instance night work, underground mining work, work with a higher possibility of injury, etc.). Protection is also provided in the areas of working time (shorter), breaks during working time (in relation to a shorter period of work); rest (prohibition of exceptions).

ARTICLE 11

Right to an adequate standard of living

83. The state provides social protection to citizens (individuals, families and its members) who have found themselves in need, with insufficient or no income due to various causes. The social protection system is primarily based on the instruments of aid in material need.

84. With effect from 1 January 2014, emergency benefit is governed by Law 417/2013 on Emergency Benefit, based on a constitutional guarantee of basic living conditions, further stated in point 37 of the appendix.

85. With effect from 1 January 2015, the introduction of the possibility of the concurrence of emergency benefit, income from employment and special contribution resulted in redefinition of the terms and conditions for entitlement to the special contribution. The measure focuses on the motivation of long-term unemployed and long-term non-active persons in the emergency benefit system to enter the labour market or to return to the labour market.

86. Under Law 544/2010 on Subsidies under the Authority of the MLSAF SR, subsidies are granted to support upbringing related to the fulfilment of the school duties of a child threatened by social exclusion and subsidies to support upbringing related to the nutrition of a child threatened by social exclusion. It is a support measure focused on increasing the motivation of children from low-income families to observe compulsory school attendance. Under the current legislation, these two subsidies will be granted to children attending kindergartens and elementary schools, coming from families that are granted emergency benefit or from families the income of which does not exceed the subsistence minimum. If, at least 50 % of children in the kindergarten or the elementary school come from such families, the above subsidies are granted to all children.

87. Under the above acts it is also possible to grant subsidies to support humanitarian aid as a possibility to help a citizen in a crisis life situation or in an extraordinarily unfavourable social situation.

88. The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived is another support instrument focused on the elimination of social exclusion for the programming period 2014-2020. In the interest of the implementation of the fund the SR prepared a Food and Basic Material Assistance Operational Programme, which was approved by the EC in December 2014. The

overall allocation for the SR for the period represents €64,838,286.00 including co-financing. This amount accounts for €8 million annually. In practice, the programme will be implemented by means of four measures, i.e. providing food and sanitation packages to the selected groups of recipients of emergency benefit, providing hot meals to homeless persons and also in the form of supporting the distribution of donated food.

89. Law 448/2008 on Social Services, provides for legal relations and conditions for the provision of social services, financing thereof and supervision over the provision of the services. Threat to a natural person in the form of social exclusion or the limitation of its ability to integrate itself socially and to solve its problems independently is considered an unfavourable social situation under specific conditions detailed in point 38 of the appendix. National priorities and action plans in the field of Social Services are provided in points 39-40 of the appendix.

90. Law 447/2008 on Cash Benefits to Compensate Severe Disability entered into effect on 1 January 2009. The objective of the act is to maintain, renew or develop the abilities of natural persons and their families to lead independent lives, to create conditions and support for the integration of natural persons and their families into society, based on their active participation in this process, and to overcome or mitigate the social consequences of severe disability. Cash benefits for compensation represent voluntary benefits - entitlement to the cash benefit arises on the basis of a valid decision of a competent authority. The provision of cash benefits to compensate social consequences of severe disability is, under the Law on Cash Benefits for Compensation, financed from the state budget. Simultaneously, during proceedings on cash benefits for compensation, it is necessary to ascertain the income and property of natural person with severe disability and also the income and property of persons assessed together with this natural person.

91. In January 2014, the SR government approved a “National Program for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for the Years 2014-2020”, developed in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. On 14 December 2016, the SR government approved the first summary report on the fulfilment of tasks arising from the National Programme, which document the fulfilment of tasks from 2014 until 2015.

92. In the field of the protection of rights of minors and the minors’ interests protected by the law, some amendments were incorporated, from 2012 until 2016, into the wording of Law 305/2005 on Social-Legal Protection of Children and Social Guardianship and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Law, in order to further improve the taking of measures in the field of the protection of children and social guardianship.

93. The most significant changes include the expansion of the range of measures to limit and eliminate negative effects that threaten the psychological, physical and social development of the child. The act includes child care measures, including the procedure of the imposition thereof if they do not fulfil their purpose: the performance of foster care and guardianship, including the identification of the child’s opinion of a matter concerning it. It also defines the system of substitute family care, the taking of measures in the facilities of social-legal protection of children and social guardianship (children’s homes, crisis centres, and social reintegration centres for drug and other addictions). New powers of the employees of the bodies of social-legal protection of children and social guardianship were specified in more detail in the field of the review of the care of minors and verification whether there is a

threat to their psychological, physical or social development. Within the system of social-legal protection of children and social guardianship, the principle of primacy of the family environment of the child is applied to the situation of a minor child.

94. Law 219/2014 on Social Work and the Conditions for the Exercise of Certain Professional Activities in the Field of Social Affairs and Family and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Laws provides for the exercise of social work and certain professional activities in the field of social affairs and family.

95. Law 176/2015 on the Commissioner for Children and the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Laws entered into effect on 1 September 2015 establishing two independent institutions. The essence of the activity consists in a specialised public protection of rights recognised in the UN conventions. The act also deals with the issue of the acceptance of a commissioner by representative organisations by means of their opinion of the commissioner before he is elected. On 2 December 2015, the National Council (Parliament) of the SR elected two commissioners: Viera Tomanová as a commissioner for children and Zuzana Stavrovská as a commissioner for persons with disabilities.

ARTICLE 12

The right to physical and mental health

96. The following facts can be stated beyond the framework of the second report of the SR (points 257-291).

The improvement of external living conditions

97. Increasing the share of the population supplied with safe and quality drinking water from public water systems is a priority in the supply of the population with healthy drinking water. 88.7 % of the population of Slovakia (a 2.2 % increase compared to 2007) was supplied with drinking water from public water systems in 2016. Regional differences, however, still persist. While in Bratislava region 97.8 % of the population is supplied with drinking water from public water systems (a 1.3 % increase compared to 2007), in Prešov region it is only 80.6 % of the population (a 2.8 % increase compared to 2007).

Disease prevention

98. The SR is among the European Union countries with the highest vaccination coverage. The nationwide results of the vaccination coverage within regular compulsory vaccination of children have exceeded 95 %. During the monitored period no incidents of measles, rubella, diphtheria, poliomyelitis and tetanus were reported. In 2012, the Pandemic Commission of the SR Government approved an updated Detailed Plan of Measures for the Incidents of Influenza Pandemic in the SR.

Alcohol abuse

99. The main aim of the National Action Plan for Alcohol Problems for the Years 2013-2020 is to increase health awareness in relation to supporting the responsible, civilised and controlled use of alcohol, with regard to its harmful effects on health. The second important

objective relates to controlling the sale of alcoholic beverages, checking the age of the customer, controlling the use of alcohol in workplaces and transport. Further information is stated in points 41-43 of the appendix followed by the information about transplantation programme in points 44-46 of the appendix.

ARTICLE 13

School system development

100. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR (hereinafter the “MESRS SR”) has been dealing for a long time and responsibly with the equal access of the members of all nationalities, ethnic groups and disadvantaged groups of the population living in the territory of the SR to education, which increases the rate of their social inclusion.

101. The implementation of inclusive education in the schools of regional education systems is legislatively provided for by Law 245/2008 on Education and Training (the Education Law), which entered into effect on 1 September 2008 and which prohibits any forms of discrimination, particularly segregation, and guarantees. Subjects of these rights are detailed in point 47 of the appendix.

102. In connection with the inclusive education primarily focused on marginalised Roma communities (hereinafter the “MRC”), three national projects were implemented from Operational Programme Education within the programming period from 2007 until 2013. Details about these projects are included in points 48-50 of the appendix.

ARTICLE 15

Right to cultural life and scientific progress

103. Since 2012, the Ministry of Culture of the SR (hereinafter the “MC SR”) has been creating a space for a better availability of culture by means of a free-of-charge access to cultural institutions on each first Sunday of the month. The Slovak National Gallery, the Slovak National Museum, the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising and the Slovak Technical Museum making available 37 cultural objects in this way. The Slovak National Gallery was available free-of-charge to all target groups from 2014 until 2016.

104. Chapter seven of the 11th and the 12th report of the SR to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination contains in more detailed measures implemented in the field of culture for the prevention and protection against racial discrimination in the field of culture of national minorities.

105. In the Slovak National Museum, there are specialised documentation departments focused on the history and culture of national minorities living in Slovakia. For more detailed information, see point 51 of the appendix.

106. The Slovak Art Council, as a public institution supporting cultural activities, culture and creative industry, was established by Law 284/2014. Its main mission is to support “live” arts and culture of non-governmental entities. The council provides funds for the creation, dissemination and presentation of artworks, support for international cooperation, educational programmes in the field of art, culture and creative industry, and scholarship for natural

persons who participate in the development of art and culture in a creative or scientific manner.

The culture of disadvantaged groups

107. The subsidy scheme Culture of Disadvantaged Groups, which makes it possible to fulfil and develop cultural needs of persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups of the population, is an effective and long-term financial instrument focused on the implementation of the task of the MC SR. €377,775.00 was allocated within the subsidy programme Culture of Disadvantaged Groups in 2016. In 2017, €980,000.00 was allocated to support the culture of disadvantaged groups within this programme. Further information is stated in point 52 of appendix.

Churches and religious communities

108. At the last population and housing census in 2011, 75.5 % of the population declared affiliation with churches and religious communities registered in the SR. Churches and religious communities play an important role in Slovak social and cultural life. According to the surveys of trustworthiness, they are among the institutions with stable and lasting high credibility.

109. The legislative framework of the SR includes a wide concept of legal regulations governing the general relations between the state and the church, in points 53-55 of the appendix.

The media

110. The adoption of Law 532/2010 on the Radio and Television of Slovakia, which entered into effect on 1 January 2011, resulted in the merger of the Slovak Television and the Slovak Radio into one public institution - the Radio and Television of Slovakia (hereinafter the "RTVS"). Under the act, the RTVS is a public, national, independent, information, cultural and educational institution the mission of which is to provide the public with services in the field of radio broadcast and television broadcast. The main activities of the RTVS include, among other things, taking account of the needs of the deaf and other social minorities within the broadcast.

111. Duties related to multi-modal access are provided for in several legal regulations in relation to broadcasters, providers of audio-visual media services at request and other entities. These and other legal regulations providing for the exemption from paying a payment for public services, the rights and duties of persons performing their activity in the audio-visual field, the activity of the Slovak Film Institution focused on the exercise of the rights of person with hearing or visual disability, and the provision of funds to support audio-visual culture and industry in connection with the multi-modal access are listed and defined in points 56-72 of the appendix. The definition of copyright legislation is stated in points 73-77 of the appendix.

On concluding recommendations of the committee for the SR of 8 June 2012

On recommendation C 6:

112. Awareness about the covenant among judges and prosecutors has been increasing continuously during events organised in the premises of the Justice Academy according to the relevant approved academic plan of education for the given calendar year.

113. The Ministry of Justice of the SR (hereinafter the “MJ SR”) found out that some addressed regional courts or district courts in their jurisdiction (RC in Trenčín, RC in Košice) also record decisions in relation to which the judges directly applied the covenant. The chairs of most regional courts (RC in Žilina, RC in Nitra and RC in Trnava) as well as of the Supreme Court of the SR confirmed that the judges had been acquainted with the covenant and they know its content, however, in the monitored period the regional courts in Žilina, Nitra and Trnava and the Supreme Court of the SR did not issue any decisions in which the provisions of the pact were directly applied or quoted.

On recommendation C 7:

114. The amendment to the Law 575/2001 on the Structure of Activities of the Government and Central State Administration Authorities, (hereinafter the “Competency Law”) resulted on 1 September 2015 in the shift of competences in the field of the development and implementation of state policy and the coordination and fulfilment of tasks in the field of human rights from the MFEA SR to the MJ SR.

115. According to the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the SR (adopted by the government on 18 February 2015), the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (hereinafter the “Centre”) fulfils not only the tasks of Equality Body under the relevant guidelines of the EU, but also the tasks of a national human right institution (NHRI) according to the requirements of the UN and the so-called Paris Principles. Under SR Government Resolution 71/2015, the MJ SR is to prepare, in a participative and professional manner, comprehensive legislation for the Centre and to submit it to the meeting of the government of the SR. In order to fulfil this task, the MJ SR formed, in 2016, a working group that participated in the preparation of a draft amending law on the establishment of the Centre. Both the representatives of the state administration and the representatives of non-governmental sector actively participated in the works of the working group of the MJ SR. A discussion on the issue resulted in a requirement that changes in the legislation of human rights institutions should become a part of a wider concept of the institutional protection and promotion of human rights in the SR. This new concept should react to the development in society, legislation and the establishment of various authorities and institutions established since the establishment of the Centre (i.e. from 1993). Therefore, the MJ SR adopted the conclusions of the working group, namely to prepare an overview of the tasks and status of institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights and based on the overview to consider legislative changes. In connection with these conclusions, the deadline for the fulfilment of this task was shifted to the end of 2017.

On recommendation C 8:

116. Following the amendment of the Competency Law in 2012, the MLSAF SR has become the central body of the state administration for gender equality and equality of opportunities and for the coordination of the state policy in this field. As to the organisational structure, a Gender Equality and Equality of Opportunities Department reports directly to the minister of labour, social affairs and family of the SR. Priorities in the field of equality of men and women include the following tasks: to make it possible for labour inspectorates to better

inspect compliance with the principle of equal pay and to develop a relevant methodology (within a National Programme (hereinafter the “NP”) Prevention and Elimination of Gender Discrimination); to support the implementation of objective criteria for the evaluation of work and the resulting transparently set personal evaluations and other variable components of salary (within the NP Prevention and Elimination of Gender Discrimination); to support gender audits in workplaces at least in the public sphere; to support legal awareness of women and to exercise the rights - the LC - in practice; to develop systemic instruments for the motivation of employers in the implementation of flexible forms of work in order to better reconcile family and work life (e.g. a call for a NP Family and Work – further information provided in point 13 of the appendix); to support research in the field of the quantification of unpaid work, as well as projects and solutions in the field of remunerating educational and nursing care of family members, including a possibility of an adequate evaluation of family nurses (within the NP Prevention and Elimination of Gender Discrimination). A so-called Equal Pay Day is evaluated and promoted by means of the media every year.

117. In order to ensure the fulfilment of tasks in the field of the status and rights of the members of national minorities, the government of the SR set up, on 13 June 2012, a function of a plenipotentiary of the SR for national minorities (hereinafter the “Plenipotentiary”). The Plenipotentiary has the status of an advisory body of the government of the SR with fairly broad competences. His main tasks include the monitoring, analysis and evaluation of the respecting of the rights of the members of national minorities by the state administration authorities, local authorities and other relevant entities, within which it submits to the government of the SR an annual Report on the Status and Rights of the Members of National Minorities. Within his area of competence, the Plenipotentiary also fulfils a function of an administrator within the subsidy system of the Government Office of the SR in the field of the allocation of funds for the protection and promotion of the preservation and development of the identity and culture of national minorities.

118. The Plenipotentiary chairs the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (hereinafter the “Committee for National Minorities”) as a permanent professional body of a Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality as to the issues related to national minorities and ethnic groups and their members and the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. This participative mechanism ensures the participation of members of national minorities in addressing issues that relate to them. This committee deals with the legislative and non-legislative measures of the government of the SR or state authorities, local authorities and other entities in relation to the rights of the members of national minorities. The committee submits to the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality three evaluation reports every year: An Evaluation Report on the Use of the Languages of National Minorities, an Evaluation Report on the Promotion of the Cultures of National Minorities and an Evaluation Report on the State of Minority Education.

On recommendation C 9:

119. The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma Communities (hereinafter the “OPGRC”) is in charge of the Roma community agenda. It also prepares strategic documents and legislation related to the issue of Roma integration. The Plenipotentiary of the Government for Roma Communities reports directly to the government of the SR. Based on his activities, within the SR Presidency in the EU Council, member states

adopted on 8 December 2016 the conclusions of the EU Council on the acceleration of the process of Roma integration, which comprehensively establish calls for all member states and the commission to accelerate the Roma integration.

120. Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration until 2020 is a basic document, which has the ambition to comprehensively improve the living conditions of the citizens of the MRC. In relation to the issue of the permanent improvement of the situation in Roma community, the strategy emphasises the need to implement the state's measures in the field of education, employment, health care and housing simultaneously, since improvement in only one field does not have to mean improvement in other fields of the life of this group.

121. For the purposes of social inclusion of Roma citizens, the funds of the European Social Fund (hereinafter the "ESF") are also used by means of the Operational Programme Human Resources (hereinafter the "OP HR"). There are three axes of the OP HR, both explicitly (PA 5 Integration of Marginalised Roma Communities and PA 6 Technical Equipment in Municipalities with the Presence of Roma Communities) and implicitly (PA 4 Social Inclusion) focused on Roma inclusion. Individual national projects and their objectives are listed and described in points 78-80 of the appendix.

122. The principle of non-discrimination on the labour market in the SR is thoroughly implemented in the preparation of legislative standards. The inclusion of the MRCs, which are most at risk of social exclusion due to long-term unemployment, is implemented by means of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration until 2020, from 2011 until 2015 with integration continuity with action plans (revised) of the 2005-2015 Decade of the Inclusion of Roma Population. The updated Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration until 2020, in the section Employment, defines a new global objective and partial objectives that react to the current development in the field of the employment of MRCs.

123. The Ministry of Transport and Construction of the SR (hereinafter the "MTC SR"), in terms of its competences, enters the field of supporting the MRC integration also by means of housing policy measures. The direction and objectives of the housing policy have been set since 1994, in approximately 5-year cycles, in a framework document of the state called "State Housing Policy Concept".

124. The "State Housing Policy Concept up to 2020" is the currently valid document in this field, which was approved by the government of the SR on 7 January 2015. The concept also deals with the issue of the housing of disadvantaged groups. The state's primary objective is to ensure suitable conditions for all citizens so that they can procure adequate housing depending on their possibilities.

125. The State Housing Policy Concept until 2020 defines measures for the period of the next five years, the implementation of which should positively influence the availability of adequate housing for the citizens of the SR. These measures include the need for a legislative amendment of housing allowance, or the implementation of a system of multi-level transitional housing, which would take into account the social situation of households and which would create preconditions for the gradual increasing of housing standards.

126. The MLSAF SR or the OPGRC intervenes in the field of the improvement of access to housing through its measures.

127. Public health authorities, in compliance with Law 355/2007 on the Protection, Support and Development of Public Health, focus on the protection, support and development of health of all citizens of the SR. Measures and initiatives in the field of public health are aimed at each and every citizen of the SR. Any form of discrimination is excluded.

128. There are no differences in the monitoring of the health condition of Roma population and other citizens. Ethnicity as a statistical indicator is not used. It is not allowed by Personal Data Protection Law that prohibits the processing of personal data that disclose ethnic origin. Simultaneously, it is not possible to state ethnicity in relation to the National Health Information Centre, or other public health authorities (report on communicable diseases) or medical records and therefore it is impossible to evaluate the health of the population based on this indicator. The status of public health is monitored in the case of the incident of selected infectious diseases and the application of anti-epidemic measures. In the case of an infectious disease incident, the information on the low hygienic standard of a person with such disease is also monitored - patients from Roma settlements are included in this group. The health status of Roma population was evaluated only within targeted projects or programmes.

129. The main objective of a Healthy Communities project in 2016 was to support the access to health care and public health, including preventive health care and health education and to reduce the difference between the health status of the Roma and the majority population.

130. In 2016, a Healthy Communities non-profit organisation employed 234 health education assistants and 23 coordinators of the health education assistants. These employees were operating in 239 locations. In the field, there is a cooperation network of health care providers consisting of 750 doctors. The number of clients for the first half of 2016 was 48,068. Further information is stated in point 81 of appendix.

131. The public health authorities rendered assistance services within the “Healthy Communities” project, in order to intervene in several fields (for instance in the field of health education, improvement of hygiene standards, etc.). They contacted pupils from socially disadvantaged background (hereinafter the “SDB”) and children from the MRCs in the area of healthy way of life and environmental hygiene (first aid, dental hygiene, injury prevention, healthy diet, care of human body, harmfulness of drugs, smoking, alcohol, and prevention of parasitic diseases). They ensured the inspection of selected infectious diseases in relation to persons living in the environment of low hygienic standards.

132. Regional public health authorities have been cooperating for a long time with schools with the highest concentration of pupils from the SDB. Pupils are repeatedly subject to intervention in the areas such as healthy way of life and environmental hygiene, dental hygiene, first aid and injury prevention, education about responsible marriage and parenthood, healthy diet, care of human body, harmfulness of substance and non-substance abuse, smoking, alcohol, prevention of parasitic infections and infectious diseases, maturation and physical and mental changes.

On recommendations C 9 and C 26:

133. The MESRS SR has been working for a long time on a legislation in the field of segregation and discrimination in order to achieve such an application of the Education Law

that would not allow the exchange of special educational needs based on health handicap with special educational needs arising only from the SDB. The reason is that the development of a child in the SDB does not automatically mean a health handicap, which is decisive for the inclusion of a child or a pupil into a special school or special class. That means the improvement of situation in the education of pupils from the SDB, a significant part of which consists of children from the MRCs.

134. On 30 June 2015, the National Council of the SR approved an amendment to the Education Law in order to improve the situation in the education of pupils from the SDB, the significant number of whom are children from the MRCs.

135. The Education Law, in § 107, stipulated that a child or a pupil whose special educational needs arise only from his development in the SDB could not be admitted to a special school or a special class of a kindergarten, a special class of a special school or a special class of a secondary school. In practice it means that the SDB cannot be the reason for being admitted to the special school. The inclusion of pupils from the SDB into classes with other children and pupils is explicitly stipulated. This measure definitely prevents segregation. The legislation also applies to the activity of a specialised class - this class is intended for pupils who did not master education in the given year to “catch up” on their missing knowledge. Pupils are included in this class based on a class teacher’s proposal, after a guidance counsellor’s opinion and with a parent’s (legal representative’s) consent for not more than one year.

136. The changes apply to the provision of an allowance for pupils from the SDB. In 2016, the amount of the allowance per 1 pupil from the SDB was €109.00. Since 1 September 2016, the allowance was given to pupils from the SDB who are included in a “regular classroom”. More detailed data for 2016 are available on the website of the MESRS SR.⁸ In 2017, the allowance per pupil from the SDB is €260.00. In 794 schools, 21,718 pupils from the SDB in the total amount of €5,646,680.00. All detailed data for individual years are available on the website of the MESRS SR.⁹

137. The granting of the allowance was arranged so that it would fulfil the purpose of supporting an elementary school taking into account the educational needs of the pupil, i.e. requirements for ensuring conditions, consent, forms, methods and access to education, the implementation of which is necessary to develop abilities or personality of the pupil and to achieve adequate education and adequate inclusion into society (§ 2 (i) of the Education Law).

138. The allowance is to be used to improve educational process and pedagogical-psychological influence on the pupil in terms of his educational needs to balance the disadvantage reflected in his development and not in terms of poverty.

139. Since 1 September 2016, the allowance has been given only to pupils from the SDB who have an opinion of a centre of educational and psychological counselling and prevention and who are included in the “regular classroom” of an elementary school. The allowance will not be given to the pupils of:

- special elementary schools,
- special classes of elementary schools and

⁸ <http://www.minedu.sk/data/att/10774.zip>

⁹ <http://www.minedu.sk/socialne-znevyhodnene-prostredie-prispevok/>

- individually included pupils due to health handicap and general intellectual talent in the elementary schools.

140. Amendment to the Education Law has made the state's control mechanism over school facilities of educational counselling and prevention stricter, and it has also made it possible for relevant entities to re-value diagnostic procedures and proposals for the inclusion of a child or a pupil into a specific form of education. The State School Inspection (hereinafter the "SSI") can consider, for instance, incorrect diagnostics a serious shortcoming in the activity of a special educational facility or a school facility of educational counselling and prevention.

141. In the school year 2014/2015, the SSI, at the initiative of the MESRS SR, started to deal with the conditions of inclusive education in schools in more detail. The SSI, in cooperation with non-governmental organisations, has set criteria in relation to segregation in schools. The SSI report on the state and level of education in schools and school facilities in the SR in the school year 2014/2015 contains spatial segregation in 3 cases. The SSI imposed measures for the elimination of identified shortcomings on head teachers and it sent the information on the findings to the Centre and Consultancy for Civil and Human Rights.

142. In order to ensure inclusive education for pupils from the SDB, an inspection was conducted in 57 elementary schools, of which 53 were state schools and 4 church schools. In the inspected entities, there were 12,794 pupils, of which 1,808 pupils were from the SDB. Criteria, based on which the status of the creation of conditions for inclusive education was evaluated, consisted in the development of school educational programmes, the definition of educational objectives and strategies and the development of curricula of schools considering the specific needs of education of pupils from the SDB. No unauthorised inclusion of pupils into special classes of elementary schools for disabled persons was identified.

143. An alarming finding was that pupils from the SDB within the inspected entities in the second half of the school year 2013/2014 had 21,800 unauthorised absences and 8,762 absences in the first half of the school year 2014/2015. The reason for their absenteeism consisted in bad financial situation of families, low motivation of pupils to study, indifferent approach of parents to the fulfilment of duties related to the regular school attendance of children or to their homework. Teachers were dealing with absenteeism together with the relevant state administration authorities and municipality. Effective measures for the improvement of pupils' attendance also included regular monitoring of attendance, home visits of teaching assistants to families and individual discussions with pupils and legal representatives. The above information is available on the website of the SSI.¹⁰

144. In the inspected entities the SSI found out that in 31 elementary schools it was not possible to assess the creation of conditions for inclusive education due to the high share of pupils from marginalised Roma communities (70 % to 100 %). Further, in three elementary schools the education of pupils was conducted in two shifts due to insufficient space for classic classrooms, there was no gymnasium in 10 entities and there was no school canteen in 3 schools.

145. In a Report on the State of Creating Preconditions for Ensuring Inclusive Education for Pupils from the SDB in Elementary Schools in the School Year 2015/2016 in the SR, the SSI states that in connection with the inspection of creating preconditions for ensuring

¹⁰ http://www.ssiba.sk/admin/fckeditor/editor/userfiles/file/Dokumenty/velka_sprava/sprava_14_15.pdf

inclusive education for pupils from the SDB and the MRC it also found serious breaches of general binding legal and internal regulations, which had a negative impact on the quality of education of pupils (spatial exclusion of pupils from the MRC by creating classes attended only by pupils from the MRC, separate eating places for pupils from the MRC; pupils without diagnosed handicap were included in the first year of a specialised class for pupils with mild degree of mental disability; no school educational programmes were developed for pupils with a moderate degree of mental disability; teaching expertise was not ensured in the specialised class; the maximum number of pupils in the specialised class was exceeded; not prepared by the Institute of Educational Policy).

146. The SSI imposed on the head masters of the inspected entities a duty to take measures in relation to the identified shortcomings in order to eliminate them. Further, it implemented 20 recommendations that were also focused on ensuring preconditions for inclusive education of pupils from the SDB and the MRC in schools.

147. The creation of preconditions for ensuring inclusive education in the school year 2015/2016 was monitored in 21 elementary schools. The schools were attended by 186 pupils from the SDB and 685 pupils from the MRC, the education of whom required the application of specific educational methods. There were 143 pupils from the MRC and 82 pupils from the SDB in special classes for pupils with mental disability. An allowance for improving conditions for education was given to schools for 433 pupils from the MRC. Basic educational documents were developed in schools according to the principles and objectives of education stipulated by the Education Law, but the implementation of them did not always lead to the creation of preconditions for inclusive education, the acceptance of needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, from the SDB and the MRC.

148. Educational programmes for pupils with mental disability were not thoroughly developed in some schools. Pupils with mild mental retardation were mainly taught in special classes and were not included in regular classes of mainstream education. Two schools had classes with Roma pupils only and in another school the organisation of separate eating of Roma pupils was conducted contrary to the principles of education stipulated by the Education Law. Education in the regular classes of the 1st and the 2nd level was conducted by teachers who met qualification preconditions and special qualification preconditions for teaching activity. Teaching expertise was not always thoroughly ensured in special classes. With regard to education at the 1st level, teachers had assistants who could not speak the native language of pupils from the MRC.

149. A project of a day-long educational care was implemented only in three from the inspected schools. Roma pupils were not interested in afternoon activity in a school children's club (SCC). Their attention was attracted by extra-curricular activities in interest groups.

150. Cooperation with legal representatives seemed to be less than efficient from the teachers' point of view. Parents were not interested in educational results of their children. They did not thoroughly ensure their school attendance. Cooperation possibilities offered by schools remained basically unanswered on the part of the legal representatives of the pupils. Cooperation between teachers and advisory services, municipalities and community centres were relatively more effective. Educational process was conducted in an open working atmosphere, without indications of discrimination behaviour, under suitable spatial conditions of classes with good material-technical equipment. The selection of forms and methods of teaching predominantly respected the age specificities of pupils, their abilities and

possibilities, but also limitations arising from the background in which they lived or from their health handicap. A stronger application of specific methods and forms of work in special classes and in classes for Roma pupils only was absent.

On recommendation C 10:

151. At present, the SR legislation, which also includes international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms ratified by the SR, prohibits discrimination on any grounds, including discrimination based on sexual orientation.

152. A Committee for the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons was formed under a SR Government Resolution 516 of 3 October 2012.

153. On 4 June 2014, the parliament approved an amendment to the Constitution of the SR, based on which, with the effect from 1 September 2014, “marriage is a unique bond between a man and a woman” (Article 41, Paragraph 1).

154. In July and August 2014, the MFEA SR organised a series of the meetings of experts on a National Strategy for Human Rights Protection and Promotion.

155. In September 2014, more than 400,000 people signed a petition to declare a national referendum against the marriages of persons of the same sex and against registered partnerships of persons of the same sex and also against sexual education in schools. The referendum was held in February 2015 with the participation of only 20 % of persons entitled to participate in the referendum. With regard to the fact that a constitutionally required 50 % participation was not achieved, the referendum was invalid or unsuccessful.

156. The current plan of legislative tasks of the MJ SR does not include legislation related to the legal status of homosexual couples.

157. Amendment to the Penal Code in 2015 provided for a special motive that relates to all crimes motivated by hatred toward any social group. Under § 140 (d) and (f), the special motive means the commitment of a crime in order to publicly incite violence and hatred toward a group of persons or individuals due to their membership of race, nation, nationality, colour, ethnic group, gender origin or for their religion if it is a pretext for threats based on the previous reasons, and simultaneously the commitment of a crime of national, ethnic or racial hatred, hatred based on skin colour or hatred based on sexual orientation.

On recommendation C 11:

158. The issue of gender equality was institutionally strengthened in 2014 by means of the approval of fundamental strategic documents: The National Strategy for Gender Equality and an Action Plan for Gender Equality for the Years 2014-2019 (more detailed information is included in Article 3 of the report).

On recommendation C 12:

Measures for reducing big regional differences

159. The SR was intensively addressing the creation of new jobs in districts with the highest unemployment rate in order to reduce social and regional differences. In this context,

a Law 336/2015 on Supporting the Least Developed Districts was adopted. The Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family keeps and publishes a list of the least developed districts in its headquarters. The list includes districts, the unemployment rate of which was for at least nine calendar quarters during previous twelve consecutive calendar quarters higher than 1.6 times the average rate of registered unemployment in the SR for the same period. Beneficiaries of the support in the least developed districts are municipalities located in the least developed district and other entities of local cooperation in compliance with an Action Plan for the Development of the Least Developed District.

160. In December 2015, under the above act, a list of the 12 least developed districts was prepared, which are in the Prešov, Banská Bystrica and Košice regions. The districts are as follows – Lučenec, Poltár, Revúca, Rimavská Sobota, Veľký Krtíš, Kežmarok, Sabinov, Svidník, Vranov nad Topľou, Rožňava, Sobrance and Trebišov. Subsequently, action plans were developed for them by a team of experts from several sectors in cooperation with regional partners, representatives of cities and municipalities of selected districts, self-governing regions and offices of labour, social affairs and family.

161. Regional action plans also include the “Road to the Labour Market” national project, which is being prepared and which will be used to perform the following activities: supporting the creation of jobs for jobseekers, supporting the creation of jobs for disadvantaged jobseekers in social enterprises of work integration established under an Law on Unemployment Services, supporting the creation of jobs on the part of public employers, supporting self-employment in primary agricultural production, providing a financial contribution to promote mobility and providing individualised services of jobseekers.

On recommendation C 13:

162. On 27 February 2017, the SR adopted a new action plan for employment of a Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration until 2020, and the growth of employment will also be influenced by national projects implemented by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma Communities, especially an NP Field Social Work and an NP Community Centres.

163. Legislation related to the employment, similar relation or self-employment of asylum seekers is defined in the provision of § 23, Section 6 of Law 480/2002 on Asylum, (hereinafter the “Asylum Law”). Also in a new monitored period of the third implementation report, only such legislative steps were taken which result in the fact that the wording of the provision of § 23, Section 6 of the Asylum Law is still in compliance with relevant European legislation and recommendation of the committee. Amendments to the Asylum Law have shortened the period from which an asylum seeker can obtain a work permit (from one year to nine months of the start of the proceedings) and exceptions when such permit cannot be granted to the asylum seeker were partially modified.

164. Under § 23, Section 6, of the Asylum Law, the asylum seeker cannot enter into employment relationship or similar relationship or he cannot start his own business; the asylum seeker, however, is entitled to enter into employment relationship after nine months of the start of the proceedings except when the bringing of administrative proceedings against the decision of the ministry issued within asylum procedure has no suspensory effect and an administrative court did not decide on the granting of the suspensory effect, or if the court of appeal did not decide on the granting of the suspensory effect of an appeal against the

decision of the administrative court that related to administrative action against the decision of the ministry issued within asylum procedure”.

165. The Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the SR (hereinafter the “MI SR”) does not consider the concern of the committee related to asylum seekers applying for the work permit justified since the current legislation is fully in compliance with European legislation, i.e. with Council Directive 2003/9/ES laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers. Under the current legislation, under the provision of § 23, Section 6 of Law 480/2002 on Asylum and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Law, the asylum seeker cannot enter into employment relationship or similar relationship or he cannot start his own business, however, the asylum seeker is entitled to enter into employment relationship after nine months of the start of proceedings, with the exception if:

- a) the bringing of administrative proceedings against the decision of the ministry issued within asylum procedure has no suspensory effect and the administrative court did not decide on the granting of the suspensory effect, or
- b) the court of appeal did not decide on the granting of the suspensory effect of cassation complaint against the decision of the administrative court that related to the administrative proceedings against the decision of the ministry issued within asylum procedure.

166. The overall process of recognition of professional qualifications is defined in European Union legislation (Directive 2005/36/EC). The main objective of Law 422/2015 on the Recognition of Documents from Education and on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications was the transposition of Directive 2013/55/EU. The deadlines for recognition of the achievement of education, mutual recognition of professional qualifications are determined at European level and govern the EU Member States, EEC and Switzerland. The deadline for issuing a decision on the recognition of professional qualifications is set by European Parliament and Council Directive 2005/36/EC, as within three months, with the possibility of extending by a maximum of one month. Under Law 422/2015 there is a deadline of two months for a decision on the recognition of an educational document in the SR and for issuing a decision on the recognition of a professional qualification it is one month of receipt of the complete application. A list of the current regulated professions in the SR is published on the web site of the MESRS SR in the section on the recognition of documents on education and professional qualifications. In the case of unregulated professions, for blue card applications decisions from a higher education institution in the SR which carry out a study program for the same or related study branch, as indicated by the education document submitted by the applicant for a Blue Card are acceptable. The processing time is set according to Law 422/2015 as two months from the submission of the complete application. Law 422/2015 also introduced a mechanism for assessing and verifying the education or professional qualifications of an applicant with international protection who cannot provide evidence of education, in the form of an examination.¹¹

167. Several employers, such as enterprises (US Steel) or local governments (Spišský Hrhov) paid higher attention to the employment of ethnic Roma compared to the previous period. Certain ethnic diversity in workplaces was also created through the implementation of the above national projects by means of which the members of ethnic Roma were employed. With regard to job selection procedure within national projects Field Social Work in

¹¹ <http://www.minedu.sk/profesijne-uznavanie-dokladov-o-vzdelani-a-odbornych-kvalifikacii/>.

Municipalities and Supporting Selected Social Services, a favouring criterion is applied: the knowledge of the language of the target group (Roma, Hungarian, etc.).

168. Several measures were taken in the field of employment of citizens with disabilities. Under the Law on Employment Services, the employer who employs at least 20 employees is obligated to employ citizens with disabilities in the number of 3.2 % of the total number of employees, the quota (“compulsory share”). The employer can adhere to the compulsory share by directly employing citizens with disabilities who are in the employment, service or civil service relationship toward the employer, or by making use of a substitute measure in the form of placing an order suitable for employing citizens with disability or in the form of placing an order to a citizen with disability who is self-employed or in the form of a levy for non-compliance with the compulsory share or in the form of mutual combination of the above options. Offices of labour, social affairs and family thoroughly monitor compliance with the compulsory share under the Law on Employment Services (§ 13, Section 2).

169. Targeted measures focused on the improvement of the status of citizens with disability on the labour market were reflected in the positive development of the economic activity rate, employment rate and unemployment rate of citizens with disability.

170. The development of the economic activity rate, employment rate and unemployment rate of citizens with disability in the SR - Table 1, Source: SO SR, (annual average in %)

Indicator	2013	2014	2015
Economic activity rate	17.6	21.4	20.1
Employment rate	14.0	17.2	16.6
Unemployment rate	20.1	19.6	17.4

On recommendation C 14:

171. In 2007, within the amendment to the LC, an important § 119 (a) was added, which stipulates the same wage for the same work and for the work of the same value for women and men. Despite suitable legislation, it is necessary to state that significant differences in the remuneration of women and men still persist in Slovakia. Recently, the gender pay gap has been slowly decreasing and currently it accounts for about 18 %. The average hourly wage of women makes up only 82 % of the average wage of men. In the EU member states, the average has long ranged from 16 % to 17 %. The good news is that the gender pay gap in Slovakia has been gradually decreasing as shown in the table below:

Year	GPG month	GPG hour
2005	27.66	26.66
2006	26.10	23.74
2007	25.03	22.85
2008	23.13	21.09
2009	24.41	21.70
2010	23.42	20.65
2011	22.74	20.17
2012	23.00	20.37
2013	20.82	17.90
2014	23.02	18.73
2015	22.33	17.80
2016	21.93	18.03

Table 2 - The development of GPG in hourly and monthly wage for the years 2005 - 2015, in % and relevant chart, Source: Trexima

172. The gender pay gap based on a gross monthly wage in 2016 accounted for 22 % to the detriment of women; the difference in the median in the same period was 18 %. Traditionally, the gap is higher in the business sphere where in 2016 it accounted for 22.4 % (median 18.9 %), while in non-business sphere the gap was lower (10.8 %) and the median reached a negative value for the first time, i.e. according to the median women made

more money (-0.38 %). Inequalities are strongly reflected in responsibility for household and family - women spend disproportionately more time in unpaid (but also in paid) work focused on taking care of children, family members and household. Studies show that marriage of women is negatively reflected in wages. While married men earn on average by 4.5 % more than their single colleagues, married women earn by 3.7 % less than single women.

173. In the SR, there is a strong gender dimension of the influence of parenthood on the employment of women and men, the presence of children younger than 6 years in the family, where the female employment rate is significantly decreased, but the employment of men is increased. The employment rate of women from 25-49 years of age with a child younger than 6 years is lower than 40 %. However, the employment rate of men in the same age category and in the same phase of parenthood is higher than 83 %. The employment rate of women of 20-49 years of age with a child is lower by more than 30 p.p. compared to women without children. For men the opposite is true - the employment of fathers is higher by approximately 12 p.p. compared to men without children. The wage “scissors” between men and women are opening more and more after the birth of each child. The impact of parenthood is significantly different with regard to women and men in the SR. Such a “parenthood effect” is reflected almost in all EU countries, it is, however, extremely strong in the SR and the suppression of this effect represents a long-term process. Further information about the involvement of fathers in childcare fathers is stated in point 82 of the appendix and information about reconciling work and family life is stated in point 14 of the appendix.

174. The female employment rate increased over the last 5 years just as the male employment rate, which is still higher by 14 p.p. Table 3 - the employment rate of women and men 2010-2016 in productive age (15-46 years) in %, Source: SO SR, LFSS

<i>Year</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Women	52.3	52.5	52.7	53.3	54.3	55.9	58.3
Men	65.2	66.1	66.7	66.4	67.7	69.5	71.4

175. In terms of education, women in the SR are better educated. However, it is not reflected in the level of wages. The highest gender pay gap relates to men and women with university education, mainly in business sphere, where the wage of women is lower by one quarter. Investment in education - human capital is better for men than women. Work performed by women is usually considered work of lower value, which is reflected in the amount of wages in dominantly feminised sectors. So, the very good educational level of women does not lead to the balancing of wages or it leads only to a little reduction of this gap.

176. The right to inspect compliance with employment regulations, including wage regulations and obligations arising from collective agreement on the part of the representatives of employers is stipulated in § 239 of the LC.

177. An employee who is harmed by the breach of duties on the part of the employer, which arise from employment relationship, can, under § 150 of the LC, submit a complaint to the relevant labour inspection authority. The labour inspectorate territorially competent according to the employer’s registered office also inspects compliance with the provisions of the LC on the equal working conditions for men and women, including equal pay for men and women.

178. Under § 14 of the LC, disputes between the employee and the employer about claims arising from employment relationships are discussed and decided by independent courts.

On recommendation C 15:

179. More detailed information is included in Article 7 (a) - Minimum Wage.

On recommendation C 16:

180. Anti-discrimination Law entered into effect on 1 July 2004. According to the data collected by the MJ SR, 3 disputes were settled in 2014 and 9 disputes were settled in 2015 in relation to the right to equal treatment and protection against discrimination; of which compensation to the victims of discrimination was awarded in 2 cases in the form of a non-material sum in cash. That information results from court statistics of the MJ SR and depends on the correct identification of proceedings in a statistical document of the competent court.

181. The government of the SR has adopted a 2014-2019 National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women, which defined the following tasks:

- implement a public information campaign on the issue of sexual harassment of women in workplaces and other forms of violence in the public in a way that would eliminate the persisting gender insensitive myths in this field;
- promoting legal awareness by means of seminars and other educational activities related to the issue of violence within employment relationships;
- prepare information-guidance materials for employers and employees on the equality of men and women and sexual harassment in workplace and possibilities of help for the victims;
- monitor the cases of sexual harassment and bullying of women and ensure a regular supervision over equal treatment of employees;
- ensure the training of labour inspectors in the field of compliance with the Anti-Discrimination Law, including sexual harassment.

182. The objective is to adopt any necessary legislative and other measures to prevent, investigate, punish and compensate the acts of violence against women in workplaces. The Anti-Discrimination Law defines the terms harassment and sexual harassment which represent a breach of the principle of equal treatment.

On recommendation C 18:

183. In recent years the SR has intensified the combat against violence against women and domestic violence. Amendments to several acts have been adopted. The government of the SR has adopted several strategic documents.

184. According to the existing legislation of the SR, domestic violence is unlawful conduct which, in terms of seriousness, fulfils the conditions for a criminal offence (offence or crime); in less serious cases it fulfils the conditions for a misdemeanour. Under criminal law the term “offence” means a type of the crime. Offence is defined in § 10, Section 1 of the Criminal Code as a crime committed with negligence or an intentional crime for which this act, in a special part, provides for imprisonment with a maximum term not exceeding five years.

185. In 2011, the Criminal Code incorporated the act of “Stalking” in § 360 (a) of the Criminal Code, which penalises the “stalking”, i.e. a long-term pursuit in a way that can give rise to a reasonable doubt for life or health of the pursued person, or life and health of his/her related person or in a way that significantly impairs the quality of life.

186. Sexual violence is defined as a specific crime under § 200 of the Criminal Code. The crime of rape is defined as a specific crime under § 199 of the Criminal Code, while this paragraph also includes rape within marriage.

187. The amendment to the act on compensation of victims of violent crimes, which entered into effect on 1 July 2013, is also important. Under the act, the victims of rape, sexual violence and sexual abuse are entitled to compensation also for non-material damage suffered.

188. The protection of the victims of violence is also defined in § 27 (a) of Law 171/1993 on Police Force, with possibility to evict the violent person from the dwelling. The institute of evicting a person from a shared dwelling is a preventive measure the purpose of which is to provide the exposed person with the immediate protection of their life and health in the early phases of violence, which is also connected with the lower risk of completing the act or with the prevention of continuation of the violent behaviour of the perpetrator. A police officer can evict a person in relation to which it is possible, on the basis of identified acts, to expect an attack on life, health, freedom or a serious attack on human dignity of the exposed person, from an apartment or a family house or from other place occupied with the exposed person or also from its immediate environment, especially with regard to previous such attacks; an entry ban imposed on the person evicted from the shared dwelling is also a part of the eviction.

189. On 1 January 2016, the entry ban for the person evicted from the shared dwelling was extended from 48 hours to as many as 10 days. The person evicted from the shared dwelling is also obligated not to approach the exposed person at a distance shorter than 10 metres. From 1 January 2016 it applies that if an act of domestic violence committed by the same person is classified as a misdemeanour (for which a fine is imposed) and the same perpetrator commits the same or similar act of domestic violence within the next 12 months, this act will be investigated as a crime under § 208 of the Criminal Code.

190. In terms of providing the exposed person with an effective protection, the time factor plays an important role, i.e. creating sufficient time space to find professional assistance. The victims of domestic violence are provided with a specific access and assistance of experts, while organisations that provide persons threatened by domestic violence and their children with specialised social, legal and psychological consultancy and other services, play an indispensable role.

191. An amendment to the Criminal Code, which entered into effect on 1 January 2016, amended the definition of the crime of torturing a close or an entrusted person under § 208 of the Criminal Code, by leaving out the word “torturing”, the proving of which during criminal proceedings created application ambiguity and disunity within the procedure of law enforcement authorities. In order to define a crime, it is enough to prove the infliction of physical suffering or psychological suffering by one of the actions stated in § 208, Section 1 (a) to (e) of the Criminal Code. Simultaneously, the criminality of abusing a close person or an entrusted person in relation to relapse into offence was introduced, i.e. if the perpetrator was sentenced for a similar act during the previous twelve months (§ 208, Section 2 of the Criminal Code).

192. An amendment to a Law on Misdemeanours, which entered into effect on 1 January 2016, resulted in distinguishing the commitment of a misdemeanour against a close person and an entrusted person from other facts within the misdemeanour “against civil coexistence”. The legislative change is connected with the introduction of the criminality of the relapse into offence in relation to domestic violence (§ 208, Section 2 of the Criminal Code).

193. There is no legal definition of the term domestic violence in the SR. It is possible to use the term domestic violence pursuant to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing Violence against Women and Domestic Violence according to which domestic violence means any acts of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence in a family or in a domestic unit or between the former or the current spouses or partners, regardless of whether the perpetrator has or had in the past a shared habitual residence with the victim.

194. The SR signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter the “Istanbul Convention”) on 11 May 2011. At present, the possibilities of ratifying the convention are being analysed.

195. National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Years 2014-2019 defines the systemic solution of institutional support for victims of violence against women and domestic violence. The Committee for Gender Equality of the Government Council of the SR for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality annually monitors and continuously evaluates the plan. The Expert Group on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Families at the Government Council of the SR for Crime Prevention, in cooperation with a Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities of the MLSAF SR, also participates in the implementation and monitoring of the action plan. Implementation areas of the action plan include: strengthening the legal and strategic framework, providing assistance and available support services, methodology and standards, training the helping professions, primary prevention, monitoring and research and violence against women in workplace. The action plan also defines 63 specific tasks, together with responsible authority, source of financing, and indicators and deadlines of performance.

196. The project of the establishment of a Coordination-Methodical Centre for Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter the “CMC”) in compliance with Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention remains one of the key projects in this field. Within the project, a media campaign aimed at raising sensitivity and reducing tolerance of the public for sexual violence in young people's intimate relationships was launched in April 2017. A toll-free 24-hour hotline was launched in order to provide effective support to women who experience violence and look for help. The data for detailed statistics, which remains anonymous, are collected in order to monitor the effectiveness of the hotline. On average, there are 600 calls a month to the hotline and 350 long-term clients. In addition, the General Prosecutor’s Office of the SR established a toll-free hotline for abused persons and an e-mail address to which criminal complaints can be sent. The Prosecutor’s Offices forwards the complaints to the competent police unit. Further information about the project is in point 83 of the appendix.

197. The total financial allocation for activities related to combating violence against women and domestic violence for the period from 2013 until 2015 accounted for €12 million. A significant contribution in this field was granted by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism in the amount of €7 million. Most of the funds from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism were

allocated to support services - consultancy centres, homes for victims of violence against women and domestic violence.

198. Two national projects supported from the OP Employment and Social Inclusion in the programming period 2007-2013 - Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women (PPEN1) and Support for the Elimination and Prevention of Violence against Women (PPEN2) were launched in 2014 and finished in 2015. These projects were focused mainly on institutional support for victims, especially to support the existing homes, to establish new ones and to ensure their availability in all self-governing regions in the SR. Support from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism contributed to the creation of 26 new family places in safe houses at the end of 2015. The total number of family places in the SR at the end of 2016 accounted for 179, while the availability of them is ensured in all self-governing regions. Further information is stated in points 84-89 of the appendix.

On recommendation C 19:

199. Based on the strengthening of identification of cases associated with human trafficking and the increase of qualification of the members of the Police Force dealing with the detection and investigation of crimes, the issue of human trafficking was, on 1 July 2013, included in the structure of the National Unit for Combating Illegal Migration of the Border and Alien Police of Police Force Presidium (hereinafter the “BAP”). Within the BAP, a Department for Combating Human Trafficking was formed, while specialised departments with investigators qualified for this type of crimes deal with the investigation of the crime of human trafficking. All suspicions of the committal of this crime are thoroughly reviewed by the members of the Police Force and if the crime of human trafficking is proved then such suspicions are investigated. Since many cases of human trafficking, the victims of which are citizens of the SR, are detected and investigated abroad, because these victims are exploited abroad, it is more effective to conduct criminal proceedings in the country of exploitation. The police actively participate in the investigation of these cases.

200. In order to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach to the identification of the victims of human trafficking from among migrants, the Police Force has been conducting, since 2012 in cooperation with the National Labour Inspectorate, joint inspections of business entities under an Agreement on the Implementation of Joint Inspections of Business Entities. The inspections are focused on detecting the cases of illegal employment, illegal stay of third country nationals and the victims of human trafficking.

201. The BAP police officers, within the profiling during border control, try to identify possible victims of human trafficking, to identify perpetrators who have committed crimes of human trafficking and to identify vulnerable persons who need international protection from among possible victims of human trafficking.

202. The Migration Office of the MI of the SR, within asylum procedure, carefully examines whether asylum seeker is a vulnerable person. Amendment to the Asylum Law in 2015 defined vulnerable persons as minors, persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant women, single parents with minors, victims of human trafficking, persons with serious illness, persons with mental disorders and person who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological violence, physical violence or sexual violence. If, based on the individual assessment of the state of vulnerable persons, the MI SR identifies special needs of these persons. It will take them into account when creating suitable

conditions for accommodation and when taking care about these persons. Suitable conditions also mean the adoption of measures to avoid attacks and violence, as well as the provision of protection to the victims of human trafficking.

203. Since the beginning of 2016, the more effective collection of data on potential and identified victims of human trafficking - the citizens of the SR abroad - has been ensured in cooperation with the MFEA SR by means of the information provided from embassies of the SR abroad. This is particularly the information on the citizens of the SR who were included in the national reference mechanism of a destination country, the citizens of the SR in relation to whom there is a suspicion of a human trafficking crime, and also annual statistical data on the citizens of the SR in relation to whom the staff decided that they had become or could become victims of human trafficking. The Information Centre for Combating Human Trafficking and Crime Prevention of the MI SR (hereinafter the "IC MI SR") is, as the administrator of the Program for Supporting and Protecting the Victims of Human Trafficking, informed on potential and identified victims of human trafficking included in individual national reference mechanisms abroad and in cooperation with the service providers of the programme an assisted voluntary return to the SR is intermediated for these victims. 38 employees of the ministry participated in training courses in 2016. The objective of the training was to inform the participants on the issue of human trafficking, primarily on the specific procedures related to the provision of assistance to the victims of human trafficking in cooperation with the IC MI SR and the IOM.

204. The fulfilment of recommendations within education, cooperation and preventive measure was ensured in 2012-2016 and results are included in points 90-124 of the appendix.

On recommendation C 20:

205. The MLSAF SR does not agree with the opinion that "a significant part of the population still lives under the poverty line", since it is not based on official data. The poverty line is calculated from the data of statistical survey of income and living conditions of the EU SILC (EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) based on the income classification of all households. There is no specific monitoring of poverty or risk-of-poverty rate, i.e. the share of the population below the poverty line in relation to specific groups, namely marginalised groups of the population, but in relation to the whole population. Measures that are defined and taken by the government in order to decrease the risk of poverty, i.e. the income level of the population, are based on the civic principle for all groups of the population. Approaches to the reduction of the risk of poverty are of a multi-dimensional nature and are implemented by a wide spectrum of measures, namely providing direct financial transfers to increase income, reduce expenses and direct measures of active inclusion, which support access to employment, education and participation in social life.

206. The National Framework Strategy for Supporting Social Security and the Fight against Poverty, adopted in 2015, is an important framework document covering individual measures, national strategies, concepts and action plans focused on supporting social inclusion and the fight against poverty. The creation of the national framework strategy provides a better overview of national politics focused on social inclusion, with a greater emphasis put on active inclusion, monitoring and evaluation of these policies in connection with the objective of the Europe 2020 strategy, i.e. to reduce the risk of poverty or social exclusion.

207. In May 2012, the SR submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities a first comprehensive report on measures adopted in order to fulfil obligations arising from this convention. A SR Government Resolution of 20 February 2013 appointed the MLSAF SR as a main contact point for the issue of the implementation of this convention. In April 2016, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities assessed the initial report of the SR on the UN convention. The adopted final conclusions were subsequently incorporated into the National Development Program of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for the Years 2014-2020, which, by means of defined tasks and measures, is to ensure progress in the field of the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities recognised by the convention.

On recommendation C 21:

208. Public health authorities, within their specialised tasks, routinely monitor the quality of consumer's drinking water from public water systems. In addition, they purposefully perform state health supervision over public drinking water supply and also monitor the quality of water in hygienically important individual water systems and public wells, such as the wells in Roma settlements - especially in eastern Slovakia. In Roma settlements, there still are great shortcomings in the protection and quality of water resources (bad construction-technical condition, insufficient protection) which are largely caused by their inhabitants. The challenge for the SR is to introduce measures to protect the technical sustainability of the facilities during their use by members of the MRC. Public health authorities perform public education in Roma settlements, within which they try to explain to the inhabitants the health effects of contaminated water on the human body and the importance of basic hygienic habits in order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Another activity of health protection authorities is, on the occasion of the World Water Day, to perform the annual, free-of charge analysis of drinking water samples from individual water resources within selected medically important indicators, to provide consultancy on the issue of drinking water, individual water resources, the hygiene of wells and the care about water resources, in relation to all citizens of the SR, including marginalised and rural population.

209. In order to support the access to water, ensuring sufficient quantity of quality drinking water, sanitation and many other issues associated with water, in 2011 the SR ratified the Protocol on Water and Health to a Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes of 1992, the administrated by the Ministry of Health (hereinafter the "MH SR"). In 2014, new national objectives of the Protocol on Water and Health were defined, where the OPGRC showed interest in cooperation in order to achieve the national objectives of the Protocol focused on the supply of drinking water and sanitation for selected Roma communities in segregated and separated Roma settlements. The solution of this issue depends on the successful focusing of development interventions and funds.

On recommendation C 22:

210. In accordance with the objective to increase the availability of housing, a system of economic instruments supporting housing development has been developed. The instruments are classified by the social situation of applicants for housing.

211. In terms of the improvement of the housing conditions of the MRC, it is support for the acquisition of rental apartments intended for social housing financed by means of the combination of subsidies from the MTC SR and a soft loan from the State Building Fund.

212. The MTC SR provides subsidies for the procurement of rental apartments and related technical equipment under Law 443/2010 on Subsidies for Housing Development and Social Housing. Subsidies for the procurement of rental apartments are mainly provided to municipalities and cities. Rental apartments can be of two standards, i.e. common and standard, which is also called a lower standard. It should be noted that the lower standard does not mean a lower quality of housing. It is rather the selection of several elements in the basic regime so that this housing is significantly more available to certain groups of population compared to the apartments of usual standard. Therefore, a subsidy in the amount of 85 % of the acquisition costs is provided for this type of construction.

213. The state budget annually allocates funds for the provision of subsidies from the MTC SR. From 2012 until 2016, the MTC SR provided the following funds for the construction of rental apartments intended for social housing (Table 4):

Year	Number of supported constructions	The number of social apartments of common standard	Subsidy provided in EUR	Total in EUR
		The number of rental apartments of lower standard		
2012	84	1,037	12,172,180	16,055,310
	23	251	3,883,130	
2013	69	1197	13,906,940	16,743,680
	12	202	2,836,740	
2014	119	1904	31,462,940	33,480,430
	11	103	2,017,490	
2015	103	1,844	30,110,570	31,182,190
	6	56	1,071,620	
2016	82	1,160	20,318,980	24,503,140
	7	190	4,184,160	

On recommendation C 23:

214. Public health authorities also arrange preventive activities in the prevention of smoking under the National Tobacco Control Programme. They organise lectures in elementary, secondary and special schools on the topic: Smoking prevention. Simultaneously, within smoking cessation advisory centres established at the regional public health authorities of the SR, they perform the measurement of carbon monoxide in inhaled air and determine the risk of dependence on nicotine with a subsequent consultancy for general public. Since 2016, there has been a smoking cessation telephone line operated by the Public Health Authority of the SR in cooperation with regional public health authorities. Further details are stated in point 125 of the appendix.

215. All materials (national report, press release, infographics and promotional video¹²) are available on-line¹³ and they can be freely downloaded and used.

216. The results of the HBSC show that in connection with the experience of smoking tobacco (at least once in a lifetime) - comparison of findings from HBSC 2009/2010 and HBSC 2013/2014, the number of schoolchildren in Slovakia having experience with tobacco smoking dropped significantly in all analysed groups (11, 13 and 15 years old pupils). More

¹² https://youtu.be/TXN7Tmm02_g.

¹³ <http://www.coherent.sk/>

detailed information is included in a National Report on Health and Health Related Behaviour of 11, 13 and 15 Years Old Schoolchildren, HBSC – Slovakia 2013/2014.¹⁴

On recommendation C 24:

217. Hormonal contraception is one of the many methods that can lead to the prevention of unwanted conception. The MH SR, from professional point of view, is of the opinion that there is no ideal contraceptive and none of the existing available form of contraception will guarantee absolute protection against conception. Each form also brings risks and possible side effects. Hormonal contraception can be highly effective only if used correctly. Generally, we perceive the contraception as a protection against unwanted pregnancy by means of contraceptive methods intended not only for a woman, but also for a man. Medicines that contain a substance preventing conception, pregnancy, such as contraceptives, are not included in a list of officially set prices or in a list of categorised drugs since conception and pregnancy are natural physiological phenomena which cannot be considered pathological. The legislation is provided in points 126-129 of the appendix.

218. According to the data of the database of registered medicines at the State Institute for Drug Control, there currently are registered or available in the SR 387 types of hormonal contraception preparations and 13 types of contraceptives for local use, which a healthcare provider can prescribe to a woman and she can, based on a prescription, buy it in a pharmacy, paying the full price. A pharmacist will provide the woman with necessary information on the product and the method of use. Contraceptives, as other contraception methods, are available in the SR and if the use of contraceptives is medically justified, the patient's health insurance company can pay for it from the public health insurance. An individually assessed request for a special method of payment makes it possible to better consider the health risks of treatment and to effectively use public funds intended for health care.

219. The MH SR issues, under the Education Law, state educational programmes for medical courses preparing students for medical professions in medical vocational schools. The state educational programmes, within general and vocational theoretical education, contain topics focused on sexual education and reproductive health. Also during practical instruction and professional clinical practice in relation to treatment and assistance, the students also familiarise themselves, among other things, with the issue of pregnancy at an early age and sexually transmitted diseases. Within the further education of healthcare professional, the MH SR lays down minimum standards for specialised study programmes, minimum standards for certification study programmes and minimum standards for study programmes of continuous training. The scope of theoretical knowledge of minimum standards for relevant courses includes specific knowledge related to sexual health.

On recommendation C 25:

Methodological and legislative guidance and recommendations of the MESRS SR

220. In accordance with the right of the child to protection against physical, psychological and sexual violence, sufficient information on the risk that the child can become a victim of sexual abuse, exploitation and child pornography is available in a way corresponding to the

¹⁴ https://www.upjs.sk/public/media/11746/2015-06_08%20narodna%20sprava%20HBSC.pdf.

age of the child. Direct educational activity puts emphasis on the reduction of this risk, with a special attention paid to the risk arising from the use of the Internet and social networks.¹⁵

State educational programme

221. The content of education for matrimony and parenthood (hereinafter the “EMP”) is defined in curriculum approved by the MESRS SR in 2010. The EMP is of a significantly inter-disciplinary nature since it relates to all areas and phases of human life. It integrates in itself pedagogical, biological, psychological and sociological knowledge on maturing, sexuality, matrimony, family life and intimate relations. Therefore, it is implemented through individual educational subjects according to the specifics and possibilities of a school educational level, e.g. in the following subjects: Slovak language and literature, basics of humanities and natural science, natural science, national history, biology, civics, ethical education and religious education. A revised state educational programme for elementary school and a revised state educational programme for grammar schools, in which the EMP is included in cross-cutting themes, entered into force on 1 September 2015.

222. The content of the EMP is based on a Concept of Education for Matrimony and Parenthood developed on the basis of a SR Government Resolution 389/1996 approving a Concept of State Family Policy, further a Comprehensive Program for the Prevention of HIV/AIDS in the SR adopted by a SR Government Resolution 390/1996 and the National Health Promotion Programme approved by SR Government Resolution 659/1991.

223. This concept also implicitly includes the issue of sexual education included in the curriculum for elementary schools and secondary schools and it represents a proposal acceptable for various opinion groups. The fundamental part of preparation consists in dealing with sexuality in a way that, under the definition of sexual health, it would “enrich personality, improve its relations with people and develop the ability to love” (WHO Copenhagen, 1974).

224. The implementation process of the EMP is connected with the age category of students and the level of their physical, psychological and social maturity, and also with specific conditions of the school. In every school there is a recommended EMP coordinator who is responsible for the inclusion of the EMP into the school education. The educational programme of each school must be developed in accordance with the principles and objectives of the Education Law. The MESRS SR does not support such educational programmes that would favour, in a discriminative manner, education focused exclusively on the individual benefit to the individual, or the denial of the fundamental rights of the family. And certainly not such programmes that could threaten the moral education of children and young people.

On recommendation C 27:

225. The rights of citizens belonging to minority groups, including linguistic rights, are enshrined in legislation and they are fully exercised. Law 270/1995 on National Language of the SR does not create barriers to the use of the languages of national minorities in official communication. The legislation is provided in points 130-133 of the appendix.

¹⁵ Pedagogical-organisational instructions for the school year 2016/2017, Part 1.5.11. Safety and prevention, Point 4

226. On the basis of incentives submitted to the Committee for National Minorities, the office of plenipotentiary initiated the process of recognising the Russian language and Serbian language as minority languages in the SR under a Language Charter. The proposal to recognise the Russian language and the Serbian language as minority languages in the SR under Part II of the Language Charter was approved by the Government Council of the SR on 15 October 2015. Subsequently, the material was approved by the government of the SR on 18 November 2015. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe was informed on 25 November 2015 on the recognition of the Russian language and the Serbian language as minority languages in the SR under Part II of the Language Charter.

227. Law on National Language and the Law on the Use of Languages of National Minorities were amended in 2011. More detailed information is included in points 134-138 of the appendix.

On recommendation C 28:

228. The MFEA SR, published on its website www.mzv.sk the second and the third report of the SR submitted to the committee in the Slovak and English languages. It also published the final recommendations of the committee from 2012 in the English language. It published a government approved Report on the Assessment of the Second Periodical Report of the SR according to the pact in front of the committee with a proposal of entities responsible for the implementation of recommendations included in a Final Opinion of the Committee, which contains data on the implementation of recommendations of the committee by the relevant state authorities of the SR, in the Slovak language.

APPENDIX

TO THE THIRD PERIODICAL REPORT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC TO THE INTERNATIONAL PACT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

ARTICLE 3

1. The project called “Promotion of Balanced Representation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions in Organizations of Public and Private Sector” also focused on acquiring information and identifying obstacles and good practice in terms of women working in decision-making positions; increasing awareness and the necessity to support the balanced representation of women and men in decision-making positions; developing tools to enhance the equality of men and women in decision-making positions at the different levels of hierarchy in private and public organisations. The project also included research and media outputs about women participating in economic decision-making process, including a film documentary on the “glass ceiling”, and also a panel discussion conference on this topic was organised. During the conference, employers who create above-standard conditions for the reconciliation of family and professional life and the participation of women in decision-making process were presented with awards.

ARTICLE 6

2. The planned contribution of the Operational Programme (hereinafter the “OP”) Research and Innovations in the programming period 2014-2020 consists of increasing the effectiveness and performance of the system of research, development and innovations in order to increase competitiveness, sustainable economic growth and employment. Unlike the programming period 2007-2013, when Bratislava region, within OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, was not entitled to receive contribution, there will be support and creation of new jobs in the whole territory of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “SR”). Providing support through OP Research and Innovation is intended to help reduce unemployment by creating new jobs. Support under the OP R&I will also be aimed at increasing the participation rate of underprivileged social groups (women, the under 30s, the over 50s, the long-term unemployed, third-country nationals, socially disadvantaged and disabled persons). Following the Strategy on Roma Integration by 2020, approved by the Slovak Government in 2012, special attention will also be paid to support for Roma entrepreneurship.

3. Changes to the legislative framework in the field of employment services: the implementation of major reforms in the field of employment services was ensured by means of an amendment to a Law on Employment Services, which entered into effect on 1 May 2013. The amendment has simplified and limited the number of contributions to the active policy of the labour market, their practicality and directness have been made more precise, the compulsion to provide contributions has been replaced with optionality; the practicality of contribution has been increased to self-employment, innovative active measures of the labour market have been implemented and they are also focused on supporting the employment of citizens with disabilities and labour mobility.

4. Also, the legal framework of temporary employment agencies (hereinafter the “TEA”) have been modified: the purpose and term “temporary assignment” have been defined in more

detail, including conditions for a repeated temporary assignment, conditions for the qualification preconditions of persons who perform the activity of the TEA have been tightened, fees for the issuance and change of a permit, its cancellation and the group of entities who can submit a proposal for suspension, activity or cancellation of the permit have been increased.

5. Changes were also made in the field of public employment services, the definitions of selected groups of participants have been modified, the number of groups of disadvantaged jobseekers has been reduced; the status and competence of a Committee for the Issues of Employment have been modified and changes in medical examination activity have been made. In the field of rendering international employment services EURES, the definition of recruitment has been expanded and the duty of the office to monitor the process of adaptation of a recruited employee has been left out.

6. The administrative process of including applicants in the registry without administrative proceedings has been simplified. In connection with the cancellation of monthly visits of applicants, the emphasis on individual work with client has been strengthened and the period for the repeated inclusion of a citizen in the registry if he was excluded for his failure to cooperate has been extended from 3 to 6 months. Changes have also been made in the field of the information and professional consulting services, while these can also be rendered in schools or in school facilities of educational consultancy.

7. Amendment to the Law on Employment Services, which entered into effect on 15 November 2013, introduced a financial aid to maintain employment in small enterprises or mid-sized enterprises. The financial aid will be granted by means of a selected bank or a foreign bank branch. A total cumulative limit for financial aid has been set. The Ministry of Finance of the SR will inspect the compliance with the conditions for the financial aid.

8. The amendment to the Law on Employment Services, which entered into effect on 1 January 2014, transposed Directive 2011/98/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011. The directive laid down a single procedure for handling applications that leads to a single permit covering a temporary residence permit and work permit and a single procedure for handling applications for the issuance of an EU blue card within one administrative act. A more effective process of the handling of applications of third country nationals in one place has been put into practice, which resulted in simplified administrative proceedings. Conditions for the granting of the work permit to third country nationals in the SR have been modified. The work permits are granted by offices that also issue confirmations about possibility to fill vacant posts. The competence of headquarters has also been extended. The competence relates to the possibility to cancel the confirmation about possibility to fill a vacant post that corresponds to a highly-qualified profession (in order to grant the EU blue card), the competence of the office to issue and cancel the confirmation about possibility to fill a vacant post has been extended (in order to grant temporary stay for the purpose of employment, the so-called single residence permit).

9. Employer can employ only a third country national who:

- has a confirmation of possibility to fill a vacant post and temporary residence for the purpose of employment,
- is a holder of the EU blue card,
- has the work permit and temporary residence for the purpose of employment,
- has the work permit and temporary residence for the purpose of family reunification,

- has the work permit and temporary residence of a third country national with the status of a person with long-term residence in an EU member state, unless a special regulation stipulates otherwise, or
- is not obligated to have the confirmation of possibility to fill a vacant post that corresponds to a highly-qualified profession, the confirmation of possibility to fill a vacant post or the work permit.

10. Employer is obligated to inform the office on vacant posts, the number and description of them before submitting an application for the work permit for selected groups of third country nationals or the granting of temporary residence for the purpose of employment for a third country national or the issuance of the EU blue card for the third country national.

Female employment

11. The Businesswomen of Slovakia project is one of the success stories. This project was developed by the Slovak Business Agency in 1999. By promoting these businesswomen, the agency tries to motivate other women to start their own businesses or not to be afraid of developing their entrepreneurial activities. It is intended not only for businesswomen who are starting their businesses, but also for those whose companies have been firmly established on the market. In addition, there are many platforms that are actively participating in the improvement of the status of women. One of them is a Platform of Slovak Women. Its project "Women's Voice" contains nine recommendations focused on the overall improvement of the status of women in society. They are particularly focused on three areas - supporting entrepreneurship and employment of women, reconciliation of professional, family and personal life, and challenges that female leaders and managers are facing.

12. The Ministry of Economy of the SR is a member of a WES platform (the European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship) - consisting of members from 31 European countries (EU-28, Iceland, Norway and Turkey). Delegates from individual countries represent national governments and institutions. Individual representatives are responsible for advancing and promoting women's entrepreneurship at the national level. WES members provide consultancy, support, information and contacts related to the existing measures for supporting female entrepreneurs. The EC (DG GROWTH + WES) has developed an e-platform WeGate as a new e-platform and a one-stop-shop for women - entrepreneurs. WeGate, as an e-platform, aims to provide basic information on female entrepreneurship - and is available to general public (<http://www.wegate.eu>). It provides information not only for start-up female entrepreneurs, but also for female entrepreneurs with long-term experience, such as information on possibilities to start business in the whole territory of the EU, information on support or finance, or information on possibilities of mutual cooperation. It simultaneously creates space for on-line discussion where all parties can exchange their best practices and talk about problems and challenges in the field of entrepreneurship. Within the Voice of Women project, the following 9 recommendations have been made focusing on the overall improvement of the status of women in society:

- Reducing administrative burden related to the establishment of companies by using one register in one place within 24 hours.
- Creating co-working and motivational-educational centres on the basis of local partnerships.
- A small credit scheme for women-entrepreneurs with a symbolic flat interest rate associated with business consultancy.

- The active engagement of public administration in the utilisation of flexible forms of employment, work from home and part-time employment with regard to individual needs in relation to taking care of a family member.
- An amendment to Law on Social Insurance, namely maternity and parental leave modelled on the Czech Republic.
- The introduction of a gender equality bonus modelled on Sweden focused on the elimination of gender imbalance between men and women.
- To change the functioning and evaluation of nursing services for children and dependent family members.
- The systematic placing of children from 0 to 6 years of age in pre-school facilities (state and private ones).
- The adoption of measures for the prevention of marginalisation of women in society - a higher representation of women in decision-making positions.

13. In 2015, a pilot national project “Family and Work” was implemented, which supported jobs in the form of flexible forms of work (in compliance with § 49, 49 (a) and 52 of the LC). The project was also focused on creating suitable pro-family conditions and care of children in families with employed parents. The objective of the project was to improve conditions for reconciling work and family life, supporting the so-called temporary care corners. Either employers or cooperating organisations rendering childcare services could establish the temporary care corners. The costs of the total price of work of professional teaching staff (educators) were reimbursed, however not more than the total cost of work calculated from the median of a monthly gross wage for this position (approximately €700.00 in gross wage). 765 employers became involved in the project, creating 1,406 jobs for persons with parental responsibility in relation to flexible forms of work - shorter working hours, job sharing and work at home. Of these jobs, 4 were filled by men who returned to the labour market after parental leave. The remaining jobs were filled by women. Support was provided in the form of the reimbursement of the total cost of employees up to 90 % of the total labour costs. On average it was €880.00 per month. Within the project, 33 temporary childcare corners were established employing 58 female educators. In total, 90 employers made use of the services. In 10 cases they directly established the so-called child corner and in other cases they entered into a contract with an external organisation. Based on the experience with the pilot project, an RO OP HR is preparing a call for demand-oriented projects with similar focus.

14. A “Reconciling Work and Family Life in Changing Society” conference was held within the SR presidency in the EU Council in September 2016 in Bratislava. The main objective was to react to the urgent need for reconciling work, family and personal life with regard to the changing models of work organisation and new trends on the labour market, and also other relevant challenges. The conference reacted to the adoption of a new initiative of the EC called “A New Start in Addressing the Challenges of Reconciling Work and Private Life Faced by Working Families”. The specific discussed topics of the conference included the existing and available possibilities and current trends of flexible forms of work and flexible forms of care of children and family, care of seniors and other dependent persons, also in terms of responsibility and reallocation of care between women, men and society. The discussion focused on the analysis of the current situation in the EU and the introduction of examples of good practice in other member states.

15. Under § 41, Section 1 of the LC, the employer is obligated, before entering into an employment contract, to inform the natural person with the rights and duties arising for the

person from the employment contract, working conditions and wage conditions under which it is to perform the work. § 13 of the LC also contains an employee's defence mechanism in the event that the employer breaches the principle of equal treatment: the right to submit a complaint to the employer in connection with the breach of the principle of equal treatment. The employer is obligated, without undue delay, to respond to the employee's complaint, to correct the situation, to refrain from such behaviour and to eliminate the consequences. The employee can also turn to a court and to seek legal protection stipulated in § 9 and 11 of the Anti-Discrimination Law.

16. In accordance with Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Matters of Employment and Occupation and ILO Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, women and men have, under § 119 (a) of the LC, the right to equal pay for equal work or for work of equal value:

- in the phase of negotiating wage conditions - under Section 1 wage conditions must be agreed without any sex discrimination; when paying wage for the work done - under Section 2 women and men have right to equal pay for equal work or for work of equal value;
- during the evaluation of the intensity of works in order to include them into a hierarchy of intensity levels j- under Section 3 if employer applies a system of the evaluation of job positions he must use the same criteria for the complexity, responsibility and intensity of work for men and women.

ARTICLE 7

Rest, leisure

17. The LC, in § 91, stipulates a work break for rest and meal. If an employee's work shift is longer than six hours (four hours for a minor) there is a 30-minute work break. If there are works that cannot be interrupted, it is necessary to provide the employee with adequate time for rest and meal even without interrupting the operation or work. The LC, in § 92, stipulates an uninterrupted daily rest. Between the end of one shift and the beginning of the next one, the employee should have a minimum rest of 12 consecutive hours within 24 hours (the minor should have at least 14 hours). The LC, within exceptions in special cases (e.g. Repairs), makes it possible to shorten the rest for the employee older than 18 years to 8 hours with a duty to provide the employee, within 30 days, with corresponding interrupted compensatory rest.

18. The LC, in § 93, stipulates a weekly rest. Once a week, the employee should have two consecutive days of uninterrupted rest which fall on Saturday and Sunday or Sunday and Monday. The LC provides for exceptions if the nature of work or the conditions of operation does not make such rest possible in relation to the employee who is older than 18 years (in practice e.g. agriculture, continuous operation, etc.)

Reasonable limitation of working hours

19. The LC, in § 85, defines the maximum working time in a week - not more than 40 hours a week, and also in a day - it cannot exceed 12 hours within 24 hours. Some cases

require shorter working time (e.g. the employee regularly or alternatively works in different shifts, works with chemical carcinogens, etc.).

Regular paid leave

20. The LC provides for the right to an annual leave, for a proportional part of it worked or for days worked (§ 101 et seq.). The annual leave (if the employee works at least 60 days) represents at least 4 weeks and in the case of an employee who reaches the age of at least 33 years in the calendar year it is 5 weeks. Selected groups of employees in educational sector (e.g. Teachers) are entitled to at least 8 weeks. An employee who has worked 21 days and less than 60 days is entitled to 1/12 of the leave for each 21 days worked. The leave is reimbursed by means of a wage compensation based on the employee's average wage. Leave of up to four weeks cannot be reimbursed; it must be used.

Remuneration for public holidays

21. For the days that are considered public holidays, the employee, in addition to his wage, is also entitled to a wage benefit of at least 50 % of his average wage (§ 122 of the LC) or he can agree on a compensatory leave for working during holidays.

ARTICLE 8

Trade unions

22. Trade unions are formed independently from the state. It is not allowed to limit the number of trade unions and to favour some of them in a company or an industry. Serving military personnel must not form trade unions or join them. As to the members of the Police Force of the SR (hereinafter the "PF"), the right to join trade unions is in compliance with the Article 37 of the Constitution of the SR.

ARTICLE 9

Social insurance

23. Social insurance can be described as a set of insurance relations and benefit relations ensuring an entitled entity. In Slovakia, it is a compulsory public insurance based on the payment of levies and the receipt of benefits. Its main objective is to protect a large part of the population against risk arising from life situations stipulated by the law and also to ensure the allocation of the national income.

Personal scope of social insurance

24. There are different entities that are obligated to be insured in relation to individual types of the social insurance and the Law on Social Insurance imposes compulsory social insurance on a person if there is an assumption that in the future there will be a fact establishing a claim to some of the benefits from a relevant insurance. The person is not insured for a certain type of social insurance if there cannot be the fact establishing the claim to a benefit from the relevant insurance, e.g. an employee - a recipient of old-age pension - is not insured for unemployment. The start and end of individual types of social insurance are in principle connected to the performance of occupational activity, or the registration of a

physical person for insurance. The personal scope, start and end of participation in old-age pension saving are governed by the Law on Old-age Pension Saving. In order to participate in old-age pension saving it is necessary to conclude a contract of old-age pension saving with only one pension management company, while the participation starts on the first calendar day of the calendar month following the month in which the contract of old-age pension saving was concluded.

25. The personal scope of social insurance provided for by the Law on Social Insurance does not include the members of the police force, the Slovak Information Service, the National Security Authority, the Judiciary Guards and Prison Wardens Corps, the Railway Police, the Fire and Rescue Brigade, the Mountain Rescue Service, customs officers, professional soldiers of the armed forces and soldiers of extraordinary service the social insurance of whom is governed by a special law.

Sickness insurance

26. Voluntary sickness insurance insuree can be a natural person older than 16 years of age with permanent residence in the territory of the SR as a citizen of the SR, temporary residence permit or permanent residence permit as an alien if the person has no compulsory sickness insurance, and

- a) has no old-age pension, early old-age pension or disability pension due to reduced ability to be engaged in gainful employment by more than 70 %,
- b) is not a beneficiary of disability pension after reaching pension age and
- c) simultaneously is a voluntary pension insurance insuree.

27. The sickness insurance, under the terms and conditions of the Law on Social Insurance, is used to pay sickness benefits, namely:

- sickness benefit
- nursing benefit
- equalisation benefit
- maternity benefit.

28. The basic condition for claiming sickness insurance benefit is the fact that there has been a loss of income due to social events defined by the law. Entitlement to sickness benefits is conditioned by the fulfilment of terms and conditions stipulated by the law.

Pension insurance

29. Pension system in the Slovak republic is based on 3 pillars:

1. pillar - compulsory, continuously financed - this pillar includes all citizens in active age and their employers who compulsorily pay contributions from each wage to the Social Insurance Company. The pillar is continuously financed from the insurance premium, is managed by the Social Insurance Company and is financially guaranteed by the state.
2. pillar - pension saving, a compulsory capitalisation pillar implemented on 1 January 2005, is contribution-based and financed through contributions credited to personal pension accounts of the system participants, i.e. savers. Two-thirds of the savers' contributions to the old-age insurance remain in the Social Insurance Company and one-third is transferred to their personal pension account in a particular fund management company.

3. pillar - compulsory for workers working in risky workplaces included in the 3rd and 4th working category and voluntary for other employees is financed from the funds of the employer and the employee to the specific personal accounts of participants, is controlled by the state and maintained by supplementary pension companies. Not only employees, but also each natural person older than 18 years can participate in supplementary pension saving.

30. Pension insurance includes old-age insurance, which provides income past the retirement age and in case of death, and disability insurance, which provides income in cases of impaired ability to perform gainful activities due to the insuree's long-term adverse health condition and for the case of death.

31. The Law on Social Insurance provides for the 1st pillar of the pension insurance. It represents a continuous method of funding pensions. Participation in the first pillar is compulsory for all earning citizens and their employers. The specific form and the relative size of the continuous pillar have been changed. The possibility of early or late retirement has been implemented. The insuree can decide when he will stop working and retire. According to the current first pillar legislation it is simultaneously possible for pensioners to work without any limitation and to get pension in addition to their wages (with the exception of the early old-age pension). Simultaneously, pensioners can increase their pension by working alongside getting their pension.

32. The Law on Social Insurance divides the pension insurance into two parts. In the first case it is *old-age insurance* as an insurance to provide income past the retirement age and in the case of death, and in the second case it is *disability insurance* related to the reduced earning capacity due to long-term adverse health condition of the insuree and in the case of death. The system of pension insurance benefits consists of insurance of long-term consequences of social events through cash benefits in the time of the long-term loss of income.

33. Voluntary pension insurance insuree can be a natural person older than 16 years of age with permanent residence in the territory of the SR as a citizen of the SR, or temporary residence permit or permanent residence permit as an alien without having the early old-age pension. Voluntary pension insurance is not conditioned by the existence of voluntary sickness insurance or voluntary unemployment insurance.

34. The old-age insurance system is used to pay:

- old-age pension
- early old-age pension
- widow's pension
- widower's pension
- orphan's pension
- equalisation benefit

The disability insurance system is used to pay:

- disability pension
- widow's pension
- widower's pension
- orphan's pension.

Accident insurance

35. Accident insurance, in terms of relation to other insurance sub-systems of the social sphere, is in the position of sui generis insurance system, i.e. a special type of insurance. For a specially defined group of persons and for a specially defined group of social risks it is a part of social insurance in most EU countries. The difference between the compulsory accident insurance and the sickness insurance and the pension insurance is that it is connected with the employer who is in the position of the insuree and pays insurance premium for the accident insurance. The compulsory accident insurance relates to an employer who employs at least one natural person performing a gainful activity within employment relation, civil service relation, membership relation, which also includes an employment relation to a cooperative, as a civil servant except a natural person who is a judge or prosecutor, or who employs at least one natural person performing a gainful activity which consists in the performance of public function under special regulations. The employer is obligated to pay accident insurance from the day on which he started to employ at least one employee and this obligation ceases to exist on the day on which he does not employ any employee. Accident insurance does not apply to SEPs and no voluntary accident insurance is allowed.

36. Accident benefits are paid from accident insurance to employees who are incapable of working and the bereaved of such employees

- accident allowance
- accident annuity
- one-off settlement
- survivor accident annuity
- one-off compensation
- working rehabilitation (benefit in kind) and rehabilitation benefit
- retraining (benefit in kind) and retraining benefit
- compensation for pain and compensation for impaired employability
- compensation for the cost of treatment
- compensation of funeral costs.

ARTICLE 11

Right to an adequate standard of living

37. As to the Law on Emergency benefit, basic living conditions are one hot meal for a day, necessary clothing and shelter. The provision of emergency benefit is exclusively based on the social situation of the applicant and the members of his household, who are assessed together with him, and the meeting of legal conditions. When providing emergency benefit, the emphasis is put on the directness, merit and protection of those who, by their effort, cannot or are unable to get or increase their income through their own work. In the interest of mitigating the poverty, a special contribution is provided in relation to emergency benefit. One of the measures applies to the activation of citizens in need, making the emergency benefit or a part of it conditional, rendering smaller communal services, voluntary work or works associated with avoiding or eliminating the consequences of natural disasters, accidents, disasters, etc. in the time of emergency. The contribution lies mainly in the activation of these citizens so that they get, among other things, the opportunity to establish new social relations and working habits.

38. As to the Law 448/2008 on Social Services, natural person is considered an unfavourable social situation:

- because they do not have necessary conditions for satisfying their subsistence costs,
- due to their living habits, way of life, dependence on addictive substances or addictive harmful activities,
- due to the threat to their development because of its disability, if it applies to a child younger than seven years of age,
- due to severe disability or adverse health condition,
- because they have reached the age necessary for claiming old-age pension,
- due to taking care of a natural person with severe disability,
- due to the behaviour of other natural persons or if the person became a victim of the behaviour of other natural persons, or
- due to staying in a locally segregated location with the presence of concentrated and generationally reproduced poverty.

39. National Priorities for the Development of Social Services for the Years 2015-2020, developed in accordance with the Strategy of De-institutionalisation of Social Services and Foster Care, are an instrument of the state policy to direct and present the initial system interests, tasks and support measures of the SR government in the field of social services. The documents react to the current challenges of social aid for citizens, especially the development of various care services at the communal level, including the need to modernise social services. Social services have become an integral part of the fulfilment of the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. The national priorities reflect the current situation in the provision of social services in the SR, primarily the lack of capacities provided in the natural (home and community) environment of citizens and the need to ensure sustainability of financing social services. In order to create system preconditions for the implementation of the full citizenship of people dependent on social services in their everyday life (i.e. human-legal aspects), the SR government approved, on 30 November 2011, the Strategy of De-institutionalisation of Social Services and Foster Care in the SR by resolution 761/2011.

40. The National Action Plan for the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care in the Social Services System for the Years 2012-2015 was also developed. The new National Action Plan for the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care in the Social Services System for the Years 2016-2020 was a subject of comments proceedings on the part of the members of a Committee of Experts on De-institutionalisation and it was approved in October 2016. Subsequently, on 24 November 2016, The National Action Plan for the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care in the Social Services System for the Years 2016-2020 was approved by a meeting of the management of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “MLSAF SR”).

ARTICLE 12

Alcohol abuse

41. A health-educational campaign called “Day of Responsibility” was organised. Its objective is focused on preventing the excessive use of alcoholic beverages, increasing the nationwide awareness about responsible consumption of alcoholic beverages, and increasing the nationwide awareness of the scope and nature of health problems caused by the harmful use of alcohol.

42. On the occasion of the “International Day of Awareness of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome” scheduled on 9 September, the staff of public health offices organise an educational campaign for women from 15 to 35 years of age.

43. The National Health Information Centre, within its statistical surveys since 2014, has been monitoring the use of alcohol in connection with various diseases. The results of the surveys are subsequently published in Health Yearbook and Health Statistics publications.

Transplantation programme

44. Law 317/2016 on the Requirements and Procedures for the Collection and Transplantation of Human Organs, Human Tissue and Human Cells (Transplantation Law) uses a single European code as a unique identifier that is used to mark human tissue or human cells in the territory of the SR and to mark human tissue or human cells in the European Union member states.

45. State health care has also been improving by means of National Health Programmes. In 2015, the new National Transplantation Programme for the Years 2014-2018 was adopted, with a perspective towards 2020, the objective of which is to increase the collection and transplantation activity in the SR to the level of the average in the developed European countries. In 2016, a 2017-2018 Action Plan of the National Transplantation Programme for the years 2014-2018 was developed, with the perspective to 2020.

46. The MH SR Decree 232/2014 provides for the procedure of health care provider, health insurance company and the Health Care Surveillance Authority in providing cross-border healthcare.

ARTICLE 13

47. According to the Education Law, any forms of discrimination, particularly segregation, and guarantees are prohibited against:

- a) all children/pupils in the age of compulsory school attendance in the SR the right to:
 - the equality of access to education and training taking into account the educational needs of the individual and his joint responsibility for his education,
 - the free selection of education taking into accounts the expectations and abilities of children and pupils in accordance with the possibilities of the educational system,
 - individual approach respecting his abilities and possibilities, talent and health,
 - the provision of advice and services related to education and training,
 - the organisation of education and training adequate to his age, abilities, interests, health and in accordance with the principles of psychohygiene.
- b) children/pupils with special educational needs the right to:
 - education and training using specific forms and methods that correspond to their needs and to create necessary conditions that make the education and training possible (educational programmes developed for categories covering various types of disabilities, which determine the framework of specifics for the education of pupils with disabilities, are a part of the state educational programmes for individual levels of education);
- c) school integration in the education and training of children and pupils with special educational needs in the classes of schools and school facilities intended for children or pupils without special educational needs
 - using a special textbook and special didactic and compensatory aids,

- education based on the sign language for deaf people,
 - education and training using Braille,
 - education and training by means of alternate methods of communication
- d) children and pupils belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups
- the right to education and training in their own language in addition to the right to learn the official language
- e) children of foreigners
- they are provided with education and training, accommodation and meal in schools under the same conditions as the citizens of the SR (with a permitted stay in the territory of the SR and the children of asylum seekers).

48. A national project “Education of Teaching Staff to Inclusion of Marginalized Roma Communities” (MRC1) was implemented from 1 October 2011 until November 2015. The project was implemented by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre (hereinafter the “MPC”). The project included 200 elementary schools in which 400 jobs for pedagogical assistants were created. The project also included a pedagogical inclusive model of a school with a day-long educational system aimed at the creation of a school educational programme focused on the work with pupils from socially disadvantaged background. Teachers from all participating schools were trained in the field of specifics related to the work with pupils from socially disadvantaged background.¹⁶

49. A national project implemented by the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre - “Inclusive Model of Education at Pre-primary Level of School System” (MRC2). The project was implemented from February 2013 until November 2015. The project included 110 kindergartens in which 110 jobs were created for pedagogical assistants. The overall support within the project was aimed at kindergartens attended by children from marginalised Roma communities. Individual project activities were intended for teachers of these kindergartens, professional employees in educational consultancy school facilities, children from marginalised Roma communities and the parents of children who attended the kindergartens participating in the project.¹⁷

50. The national project “PRINED - Inclusive Education Project” was implemented in 50 kindergartens and 100 elementary schools. The content of the national project consisted in supporting a day-long educational system focused on the reduction of the number of children included in special schools/special classes, improving educational process, improving the work of teachers by creating jobs for experts such as a school special teacher, a social teacher, a school psychologist, a remedial teacher and teacher assistant. The objective of the project was to significantly support inclusive background in kindergartens and elementary schools in order to avoid the inclusion of pupils into the special education system. The project was improving the diagnostic process in kindergartens by means of acceleration programmes. A significant contribution of the project consisted in the formation of inclusive teams consisting of teachers and experts (teacher assistant, psychologist, special teacher, remedial teacher or social teacher) who, when working with children, did not work only in schools, but also in the field.¹⁸

ARTICLE 15

¹⁶ <http://web.eduk.sk/>

¹⁷ <http://www.mpc-edu.sk/projekty/inkluzivny-model-vzdelavania-na-predprimarnom-stupni-skolskej-su>

¹⁸ <http://www.prined.sk/>

Right to cultural life and scientific progress

51. In the Slovak National Museum, there are specialised documentation departments focused on the history and culture of national minorities living in Slovakia (Museum of the Culture of the Czechs and the Slovaks in Martin, Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia in Bratislava, Museum of Carpathian German Culture in Bratislava, Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia in Bratislava, Museum of Roma Culture in Prešov, Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava. These museums are specialised documentation, scientific-research and methodological workplaces which have been systematically looking for, acquiring, preserving and professionally processing material and spiritual documents on the history, culture, traditions of relevant ethnic groups in the territory of the current Slovakia and they present the results of their work in public by means of publication activity, educational activity, exhibitions and cultural events the objective of which is to introduce rich cultural heritage to the public.

Culture of disadvantaged groups

52. This subsidy programme supports cultural activities of persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups of the population, also cultural activity of these persons and groups focused on supporting equal opportunities, integration into society, the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, discrimination, racism, xenophobia and extremism, supporting tolerance, strengthening social and family cohesion and the development of intercultural dialogue. In addition to supporting live culture, the subsidy programme also supports the publishing of periodicals, which contributes to the creation of equal opportunities in the field of cultural activity and brings information on the life and culture of persons with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups of the population, and the publishing of non-periodicals in the field of original, beautiful, professional and translated literature, the publication of electronic carriers and the publication of websites that develop the cultural activity of persons with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups of the population. The subsidy programme is focused on supporting projects the target group of which are disadvantaged groups of the population, for instance:

- people with disabilities (physical, mental, visual, hearing disability including the protection of mental health - under the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities),
 - children and youth - especially children from children's homes, children living in the MRC, refugee children, child victims of violence,
 - women (supporting projects in the field of culture contributing to the implementation of the equality of men and women), e.g. non-discrimination of women older than 45 years of age, single mothers, victims of violence, women living in the MRC, women at risk of poverty,
 - seniors, especially seniors at risk of poverty and supporting projects in the field of culture focused on the promotion of active ageing,
 - migrants (supporting projects focused on the promotion of cultural integration),
- people at risk of poverty and social exclusion (e.g. people without work, homeless people, people from socially excluded communities, LGBTI people, and victims of human trafficking).

General rules governing relations between the state and the Church

53. The SR has a relatively broad concept of legal regulations defining the status and activity of registered churches and religious communities in society. These regulations are in compliance with the international commitments of the SR and they guarantee equal rights for

all churches and religious communities regardless of their size. The body of law relating to religion simultaneously respects and guarantees the constitutional commitment to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief. The state, in relation to registered churches, relies on the recognition of their social and legal status as “sui generis” legal entities, while it has a specific approach to them and cooperates with them according to the principles of a partner cooperation.

54. The SR guarantees religious freedom by Law 460/1992 the Constitution of the SR, Constitutional Law 23/1991 introducing the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms and Law 308/1991 on the Freedom of Religion and the Status of the Church and Religious Communities. These legal regulations provide for the freedom of conscience and religion and give guarantees for complying with these fundamental human rights and freedoms.

55. Basic issues of relation between the state and the Church are governed by the Law 308/1991. In addition to giving guarantees for compliance with the freedom of conscience and religion, the definition of the status of the Church and the declaration of their equality, the act also provides for some conditions for the registration of churches. The above legislation of the SR guarantees the equal status of all churches and religious communities before the law. Church or religious community means a voluntary association of persons of the same religion in an organisation formed according to the membership of a religion based on the internal rules of the members of the church or the religious community.

Media

56. Under § 18 of Law 308/2000 on Broadcasting and Transmission, (hereinafter the “Law on Broadcasting and Transmission”) a broadcaster, under the Law (from 1 January 2011 - the RTVS), is obligated to provide multi-modal access to programme service so that each television programme service, which it broadcasts digitally, includes at least:

- a) 50 % of all broadcast programmes accompanied by subtitles for persons with hearing impairment,
- b) 3 % of all broadcast programmes translated into the sign language of deaf people or in the sign language of deaf people,
- c) 20 % of all broadcast programmes accompanied by voice comment for blind people.

57. The RTVS, as the public television company, continuously complies with the duty. According to a 2015 Annual Report on the Activity of the RTVS, within the television programme service “One” 73.44 % of programmes were accompanied by open or hidden subtitles, 4.98 % of programmes were translated into the sign language of deaf people and 24.81 % of programmes were accompanied by voice comment for blind people. Within the television programme service “Two” 63.91 % of programmes were accompanied by open or hidden subtitles, 8.37 % of programmes were translated into the sign language of deaf people and 28.11 % of programmes were accompanied by voice comment for blind people.

58. Under § 18 (a) of the Law on Broadcast and Transmission, a broadcaster with a licence is obligated to ensure the multi-modal access to the programme service so that each television programme service, which it broadcasts digitally, includes at least

- a) 10 % of all broadcast programmes accompanied by subtitles for persons with hearing impairment, or translated into the sign language of deaf people or in the sign language of deaf people,
- b) 3 % of all broadcast programmes accompanied by voice comment for blind people.

59. Amendment to the Law on Broadcast and Transmission in 2015 resulted in the inclusion of a definition of the term “subtitles for people with hearing impairments” into the Law, in order to create a uniform standard of subtitles for persons with hearing impairment and to facilitate the access for people with hearing impairment to programmes and selected audiovisual works, which are distributed to the public. The subtitles for persons with hearing impairment under § 18 (aa) of the Law on the Broadcasting and Transmission means “visually captured text in Slovak language, which

- a) is synchronised with the audio track of an audiovisual work or a programme,
- b) captures speech in the audiovisual work or in the programme in a way which makes it possible for people with hearing impairment to understand the content and
- c) is in compliance with requirements stipulated by a generally binding legal regulation issued by the Ministry of Culture of the SR (hereinafter the “MC SR”).

60. A Slovak Republic MC SR Decree 12/2016 on Subtitles for Persons with Hearing Impairment stipulates requirements that must be met by the subtitles accompanying the audiovisual work, the programmes of the television programme service and the programmes of the audiovisual media service upon request.

61. Under § 18 (b), Section 1 of the Law on Broadcasting and Transmission, the broadcaster and the provider of the audiovisual media service at request has a special duty, in relation to programmes with multi-modal access, to “clearly mark all programmes that are accompanied by subtitles for persons with hearing impairments, voice comment for blind people, or that are translated into the sign language of deaf people or that are broadcast or provided in the sign language of deaf people and to inform the board on the method of the marking of these programmes”. The broadcaster is obligated to use the above marking in relation to the broadcasting of programmes, notices on the broadcasting of such programmes and in the programme offer of his broadcasting, and also in the overview of programmes which he provides to be published in periodicals and other mass media, and the provider of the audiovisual media service is, at request, obligated to include this marking in a catalogue of programmes.

62. Under § 18 (c) of the Law on Broadcasting and Transmission, “the share of programmes under § 18 and 18 (a) will be determined as a share of broadcasting time from the total broadcasting time of the programmes for one calendar month. The total broadcasting time under Section 1 does not include a broadcasting time dedicated to

- a) musical programmes and programmes of which the musical element makes up a significant part,
- b) complementary broadcasting by which the broadcasting of a programme is interrupted.

The provisions of § 18 and 18 (b) do not apply to local broadcasting and broadcasting abroad”.

63. Under the Law on Broadcasting and Transmission, the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission (hereinafter the “Council”) supervises the compliance with duties in relation to the provision of multi-modal access. Broadcasters are obligated, upon request, to provide the Council with the following information necessary to inspect the compliance with these duties:

- a) the data on percentage, number and time range of broadcast programmes accompanied by subtitles for persons with hearing impairment, voice comment for blind people, translated into the sign language of deaf people, in the sign language of deaf people,
- b) a list of broadcast programmes accompanied by subtitles for persons with hearing impairment, voice comment for blind people, translated into the sign language of deaf people, in the sign language of deaf people, stating the date and time of broadcasting within the programme service.

64. In order to inspect the compliance with the above duties, the provider of the audiovisual media service is, at request, obligated to provide the Council with a list of provided programmes accompanied by subtitles for persons with hearing impairment, voice comment for blind people, translated into the sign language of deaf people, in the sign language of deaf people, stating the date and time when they were included in the provided audiovisual media service upon request.

65. The broadcaster and the provider of the audiovisual media service is, upon request, obligated to provide the above information to the Council within 15 days of the delivery of a Council's request for the provision of the information.

66. Law 340/2012 on Payments for Public Services Provided by the Radio and Television of Slovakia, (hereinafter the "Law on Payments for Public Services") entered into effect on 1 January 2013. A payer of payment is a physical person registered by an electricity supplier in a register of household customers as a household customer in a delivery point, for the consumption in an apartment of a family house. Under § 5, Section 1 of the Law, the payment does not have to be paid by a payer who lives in a household with a severely disabled physical person who has a permanent residency at the address of the delivery point of this payer, or who himself is a severely disabled physical person and he announces and simultaneously proves to the collector of the payment, in writing within 30 days of the day on which the fact, which establishes entitlement to exemption from the obligation to pay the payment, occurred.

67. Law 40/2015 on Audiovision, entered into effect on 1 July 2015 (hereinafter the "Law on Audiovision") providing for the rights and duties of persons working in the field of audiovision, the registry of Slovak audiovisual works, the registry of persons working in audiovision and the registry of independent producers, unified system of marking, the status and activity of the Slovak Film Institute and conditions for professional storage of original carriers of audiovisual works and audiovisual records making up the audiovisual heritage of the SR.

68. On 1 January 2016, an amendment to the Law on Audiovision, in order to facilitate the access of persons with hearing and visual impairment to audiovisual works, introduced a new duty for distributors of audiovisual works who publicly disseminate a Slovak audiovisual work or an audiovisual work in Slovak original language. Under § 15, Section 5 of the Law, the distributor of an audiovisual work who publicly disseminates a Slovak audiovisual work or an audiovisual work in Slovak original language also provides subtitles for this work for people with hearing impairment and voice comment for blind people.

69. Activities focused on the exercise of the right of persons with hearing impairment or visual impairment to participate in cultural life are also performed by the Slovak Film Institute (hereinafter the "SFI"), which, under the Law on Audiovision, is a state-funded organisation participating in the preservation, protection, renewal, improvement and provision

of audiovisual heritage as an integral part of the cultural heritage of the SR in order to preserve the audiovisual work as a form of cultural expression. The SFI, within its main objectives, has adjusted its official website in compliance with the application of Article 15 of the covenant so that it also can be operated as a so-called "*blind friendly website*" which means that it is also intended for and available to poor sighted people because the website can be switched to a text version.

70. In connection with the application of Article 15 of the pact, the SFI has reconstructed and modernised its Lumière cinema in Bratislava, which it has been operating since 2011, and has furnished it with new technical equipment for people with disabilities to have barrier-free access to cultural and social life.

71. The Audiovision grant system of the MC SR was a significant instrument for supporting state cultural policy until 2010. In 2006 it was used to support the production and development of audiovisual works, post-production, distribution and presentation of audiovisual works. Under Law 516/2008 on Audiovisual Fund and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Laws, (hereinafter the "Law on Audiovisual Fund"), it is the Audiovisual Fund which is in charge of the support in the field of audiovision, which has significantly broadened the possibilities of audiovisual culture and industry.

72. The Audiovisual Fund, under the Law on Audiovisual Fund, is a public institution providing funds in the form of subsidies, scholarships and loans to support and develop audiovisual culture and industry. According to the structure of the Audiovisual Fund's support for 2016 it was also possible to apply for a financial support for the distribution of a Slovak audiovisual work, including the provision of multi-modal access to Slovak audiovisual works within Programme 2.

73. On 1 January 2016, Law 185/2015 on Copyright entered into effect. Primarily, the Law is a comprehensive set of copyright and related rights as it was developing within international copyright contracts and agreements, including European Union law in this field.

74. The above legislation corresponds to copyrights and related rights in traditional countries with a market economy. Efforts to harmonise copyrights and related rights at the international and regional level started to intensify together with the development of single market and new technologies that make it possible to disseminate works in non-material form across national boundaries. In terms of the concept of copyrights and related rights, it corresponds to the continental understanding of the right, while the right to the results of intellectual work is granted to a natural person and is included in fundamental human rights.

75. Copyrights and related rights are, based on their nature, inalienable and cannot be waived. The concept of dualism of personality copyrights and related rights is a basis of the new legislation. Within this understanding, personality rights *mortis causa* expires and the exercise of property rights is transferred to an heir.

76. In order to achieve a more transparent functioning of the collective management of rights and a more effective activity of collective management organisations, the new Copyright Law has also transposed the latest Directive 2014/26/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on Collective Management of Copyright and Related Rights and Multi-Territorial Licensing of Rights in Musical Works for Online Use in the Internal Market. By this, the new Copyright Law has supplemented the comprehensiveness of the

legal framework of copyrights and related rights, including a special right to the database and issue of the management of rights.

77. Also, Directive 2004/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council has been transposed to the new Copyright Law. The new Copyright act was prepared so that the level of provided protection corresponds with the current high standards and also with efforts to harmonise the protection, including the enforcement of intellectual property rights at the international and regional level, especially in connection with the development of single market, the free movement of goods and services with protected intellectual property rights which are affected by the constant development of new digital technologies that make it possible to disseminate the works in non-material form across national boundaries.

On concluding recommendations of the committee for the SR of 8 June 2012

On recommendation C 9:

78. Within priority axis (hereinafter the “PA”) 5 MRC Integration OP Human Resources, for which €163,529,413.00 have been allocated, the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities (hereinafter the “OPGRC”) will implement national projects focused on supporting activities aimed especially at the inhabitants of MRCs. The basic precondition for solving problems is to apply a comprehensive approach in the field of employment, education, poverty and social exclusion in a selected territory. Planned interventions within national projects (Field Social Work and Field Work in Communities with the Presence of MRC I, Community Centres in Towns and Municipalities with the Presence of MRC - the 1st Phase, Supporting Pre-primary Education of Children from MRC and Supporting the Settlement of Land) are adjusted to the nature of needs and specifics of individual locations included in an Atlas of Roma Communities. The total allocation for national projects accounts for €71,312,209.00 with the expectation of employing approximately 1,491 field social workers, field workers, community centre workers, pedagogical assistants of teachers and professional employees.

a) The national project Field Social Work and Field Work under the management of the OPGRC with an indicative allocation of €26,511,131.00 from PA 5, which will be implemented in 150 selected municipalities, is focused on the comprehensive support for the integration of the members of MRC into society, especially on the improvement of their employability and employment.

b) The national project Community Centres in Towns and Municipalities with the Presence of the MRC - the 1st Phase with an indicative allocation of €18,721,078.00 under the management of the OPGRC is focused on the operation of community centres and the development of communal work aimed at supporting social inclusion and positive changes in selected 150 municipalities with the presence of MRC.

c) The national project Supporting Pre-primary Education of Children from MRC is to increase the educational level of the members of MRC by means of the higher number of children from MRC who will receive pre-school education in order to improve their abilities for the successful mastering of higher educational levels. There is an indicative allocation of €23,480,000.00.

d) The national project Supporting the Settlement of Land in MRC, the objective of which is to provide support to municipalities leading to the settlement of legal relations to the land under Roma dwellings in Roma settlements under applicable legal regulations, in order to ensure a higher quality of housing conditions of the members of MRC. There is an indicative allocation of €2,600,000.00.

79. In order to ensure professional rendering of services in municipalities with the presence of MRC it is necessary to disseminate knowledge and professional skills of field workers and community centre workers. Anti-discrimination legislation and provisional countervailing measures are one of the important areas. Educational modules will be applied within national projects Field Social Work and Field Work in Municipalities with the Presence of MRC I with an indicative allocation of €26,511,131.00 in order to comprehensively promote the integration of the members of the MRC into society, especially to improve their employability and employment, and Community Centres in Towns and Municipalities with the Presence of the MRC - the 1st Phase with an indicative allocation of €18,721,078.00 focused on the operation of community centres and the development of community work aimed at supporting social inclusion and positive changes in municipalities with the presence of MRC, except Bratislava region.

80. €368,671,978.00 has been allocated for the PA 4 Social Inclusion OP Human Resources for the programming period 2014-2020. The implementation of measures included in national projects (Field Social Work in Municipalities I and Supporting Selected Social Services of Crisis Intervention at the Community Level) has resulted in a higher participation of the most disadvantaged persons in the life of society, the activities of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion will increase and access to quality services will improve. Based on the national project Field Social Work in Municipalities I (2016-2019), with the total allocation of €29,340,353.00, approximately 600 field social workers should be employed.

a) At present, the field social workers do not keep records of cases related to the discrimination of individual clients. When talking to the field social workers, the clients talk about the cases of discrimination on the part of potential employers and other institutions. To ensure a higher sensitivity of social workers to the acts of discrimination, a series of educational activities was launched within the previous NP FSW in cooperation with organisations People against Racism and Centre for Research of Ethnicity and Culture. 20 regional coordinators have been re-trained in the field of the application of the anti-discrimination act.

b) With regard to the seriousness and demonstrable need of the topic of anti-discrimination legislation, a new NP Field Social Work in Municipalities I, launched in 2016, includes activities specified for this area. Almost 190 field social workers and 20 county coordinators will take part in a training focused on “hate crimes in vulnerable communities” with experts in this area. In cooperation with the Council of Europe and European Roma Rights Centre, the OPGRC organised a similar training for the members of the Police Force of the SR (hereinafter the “PF”).

c) In the new programming period 2014-2020, the national project Supporting Selected Social Services of Crisis Intervention is being implemented at the community level with the total allocation of €20,915,000.00. The project continually follows NP Community Centres supported from an OP Employment and Social Inclusion 2007-2013 with the total allocation

of €17,173,522.00, from 1 January 2014 until 31 November 2015. It was implemented in all self-governing regions except Bratislava region. Continuation made it possible to apply good practice and measures from finished pilot project applying innovative procedures that expand services rendered at the communal level in an eligible area including Bratislava region. Professional rendering of social services to the recipients of social services is also ensured by means of the training of employees rendering social services of crisis intervention. Within several educational modules, “Principle of Equal Treatment and Possibility to Protect Clients against Various Forms of Discrimination” is also one of the topics.

81. The national project Healthy Communities/Regions will also be financed from the OP Human Resources in a new programming period 2014-2020. The project is focused on supporting the health of the inhabitants of MRC, disseminating prevention and education in marginalised locations. The project has been successfully meeting also its partial objectives.

- To improve and enhance communal hygiene in the MRCs.
- To monitor pollution and the risk of living in locations located on old environmental burdens.
- To ensure the access to and the quality of drinking water.
- To improve the real access to health services by means of the elimination of obstacles and structural barriers.
- To improve communication between the members of the MRCs and healthcare professionals.
- To reduce the number of infectious diseases by means of better health literacy and a higher number of persons who participate in compulsory vaccination and preventive examinations.
- To improve the awareness of reproductive health.
- To support the prevention of drug dependence and social pathologies, including violence committed on women and domestic violence, sexual abuse and human trafficking.

On recommendation C 18:

The involvement of fathers in childcare

82. The number of fathers on parental leave in the SR is still disproportionately low, at the level of one percent. Much more successful is the model of father's drawing maternity benefits as social insurance benefits, where the trend showing an increasing number of men receiving maternity benefits is becoming more pronounced. While in September 2014, 292 men received maternity benefits, in September 2015, the number had risen to 733 and in the same month of 2016 1341 men were on maternity benefits. Also, the father can be entitled to maternity benefits if mother is paid neither maternity nor parental benefit and if they meet all statutory conditions. While pregnancy and care of a newly born child is a reason for being entitled to maternal benefit in relation to a woman - the mother, in relation to a man it is taking over the care of a child. A man can apply for maternity benefit from Social Insurance after taking the child into custody but not sooner than six weeks from the birth.

On recommendation C 18:

83. The CMC project is financed from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and co-financed from the state budget. The CMC was officially established in April 2015. The main

objective of the CMS is to develop, implement and coordinate a comprehensive national policy in this field. Within the CMC, an expert team was formed and the team is responsible for the professional coordination and supervision of the implementation of system prevention and intervention to support the victims and to render services in the field of violence committed against women and domestic violence. The CMC ensures the professional coordination of activities by means of methodological guidelines on the rendering of services in the field of primary prevention and the elimination of violence against women and children. It also creates conditions for multi-institutional cooperation. Training courses intended for law enforcement authorities; including police officers, investigators and prosecutors, as well as judges and medical professions in connection with domestic violence are one of the key activities of the CMS in cooperation with the Council of Europe.

84. By Slovak Republic Government Resolution 730 of 18 December 2013, a National Action Plan for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for the Years 2014-2019 was adopted (the administrator is the MLSAF SR).

85. Under the auspices of the MI SR, as to an important legislative measure in the field of prevention and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence in the reporting period, we can mention an amendment to the provision of § 27 (a) of Law on the PF, which entered into effect on 1 January 2016 extending the period for which a police officer is entitled to evict a violent person from a shared dwelling from 48 hours to 10 days. The eviction also includes the evicted person's duty not to approach the exposed person at a distance shorter than 10 metres. The amendment was initiated by the Office of Criminal Police of the Presidium of the Police Force (PF) based on the evaluation of the application of the institute of eviction from a shared dwelling in the police practice in order to strengthen the protection of the victims of domestic violence by creating a sufficient time period to cope with the situation without the pressure of the violent person and to seek professional assistance.

86. In the reporting period, the Presidium of the PF also issued internal standards focused on the procedure of the members of the PF in the cases of domestic violence. The president of the PF issued an Order 37 of 19 April 2016 providing for the procedure of the members of the PF in relation to the eviction of a person from a shared dwelling. An order of the president of the PF to ensure uniform procedures of the PF units prior to the commencement of prosecution and pre-trial proceedings for offences committed in connection with domestic violence was issued on 1 February 2016.

87. In the previous years, the Presidium of the PF developed several guides related to the procedure in the cases of violence against women and domestic violence, which are used in the police practice.

88. In May 2015, the Presidium of the PF updated a guide "Domestic Violence - Methodology for the Procedure of the Police in the Cases of Domestic Violence" of 2006, which is primarily intended for the members of the PF in carrying out police actions in the cases of domestic violence. In connection with adopted legislation changes, another update is being prepared in cooperation with a Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities of the MLSAF SR.

89. In the context of the ratification of the so-called Istanbul Convention we state that this recommendation of the committee has not been fulfilled yet. With regard to a 2016-2020

Manifesto of the Government of the SR, which includes a need for nation-wide discussion on international documents related to violence against women and children, and also persisting open issue of rising objections in the ratification of this convention, the deputy prime minister of the government of the SR and minister of justice of the SR asked, by letter 43773/2016/13 from June 2016, the prime minister of the SR for another postponement of the fulfilment of the above task to a later deadline (within 30 June 2017).

**On recommendation C 19:
Education**

90. In the period of 2012-2016, training courses were conducted in compliance with a schedule prepared by a Slovak Republic Government Resolution 96/2011 focused on the target groups of the workers of community activity centres, the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, pastoral centres, the Slovak Catholic Charity, the International Organisation for Migration, the representatives of municipalities, municipal authorities/the police, field social workers, the members of the PF included in the National Unit for Combating Illegal Migration of the Border and Alien Police of the Police Force Presidium (hereinafter the “BAP”), the Migration Office of the MI SR, selected employees of healthcare institutions, and consular staff abroad.

91. As to human trafficking, the staff of the Information Centre for Combating Human Trafficking and Crime Prevention re-trained the members of the PF included in a personnel database of policemen who are to participate in international missions and also the members of the Armed Forces of the SR included in foreign missions.

92. Special training on human trafficking has been included in the curriculum of the training of judges and prosecutors since 2015 based on cooperation with the Judicial Academy of the SR. In 2016, this training was also conducted with the participation of investigators, who directly deal with the investigation of the crime of human trafficking; in order to make the approach of judges and prosecutors to the victims of human trafficking more sensitive. Educational actions are also planned for senior judicial officers and prosecutors candidates.

93. In cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of the SR, the issue of human trafficking has been included into a regular cycle of the preparation of the members of the armed forces sent to the missions abroad.

94. With regard to the fact that this issue is a part of a comprehensive training programme within the pre-deployment preparation of the MFEA SR staff, the MI SR, in cooperation with lecturers of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), conducted in the reporting period subsequent regular training courses for selected employees of the ministry in connection with their deployment and activity in consular sections of the representative offices of the SR abroad.

95. The Office of Criminal Police of the Presidium of the PF annually organises a training meeting with the participation of the representatives of Criminal Police of the County Directorates of the PF, Criminal Police Departments of the District Directorates of the PF and civil experts on the issue of crimes committed by young people and crimes committed against young people. This activity also includes the exchange of information with the offices of labour, social affairs and family, elementary and secondary schools and non-governmental

organisations in the detection and investigation of crimes related to violence against children, including domestic violence.

96. The Presidium of the PF has been cooperating for several years with the Faculty of Law of the Trnava University in Trnava, where within a subject “Clinic of Victims of Domestic Violence” annually presents to students practical experiences with the investigation of the cases of domestic violence.

97. FRONTEX agency trained in the SR the policemen of the BAP as trainers in the field of combating human trafficking for the Foreign Police. These members subsequently trained the members of the Border Police focusing on the performance of a first-line and a second-line control. Training courses were conducted according to a handbook “Combating Human Trafficking for the Border Police” developed by FRONTEX agency in cooperation with the experts of the EU member states, non-governmental and international organisations.

98. Education and training courses focused on the issue of human trafficking will continue.

Cooperation

99. Within the project “Prevention and Expanded Harmonised Collection of Data on Human Trafficking”, the MI SR organised from 26 until 27 March 2013 in Bratislava an international conference the objective of which was the exchange of experience and information related to the harmonised collection of data in practice in the field related to human trafficking.

100. In 2014, the MI SR organised an international conference within a project “Strengthening Common Measures in the Prevention of Forced Labour of the Members of Roma Communities and the Development of Reference Mechanism”, which was held in Bratislava from 16 until 17 October 2014. During the conference, 10 experts from the SR, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Latvia, Belgium and Hungary had presentations within 4 areas: support, detection, prevention and partnership.

101. Police units dealing with the detection of crimes of human trafficking have long been cooperating by means of the Office of International Police Cooperation of the Presidium of the PF with international institutions such as EUROPOL, INTERPOL and also by means of police attaches deployed abroad. In connection with the operative detection of crimes of human trafficking, intensive cooperation between the partner units of participating countries has been ongoing. This applies to requests for operative verification from target countries in relation to the citizens of the SR who were identified as the victims of human trafficking or as suspects of committing the crime of human trafficking. Simultaneously, within the international cooperation, an institute of joint investigation teams (JIT) is being used in order to facilitate the investigation and prosecution of the cases of human trafficking.

102. On 26 September 2013, the SR signed an Agreement on the Establishment of Joint Investigation Team (hereinafter the “JIT”) Operation Svanetia with the London Metropolitan Police. The purpose is to facilitate the investigation and prosecution in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in connection with crimes of human trafficking committed by organised groups or individuals. The objective of the JIT is to acquire evidence and relevant information, to identify responsible persons, to foil their activities if necessary and to

use the evidence acquired for the purposes of prosecution in both states. Based on an excellent cooperation between the British and the Slovak authorities, six perpetrators were sentenced in the Central Criminal Court on 24 November 2015.

103. Within the intensification of international police cooperation, the National Unit for Combating Illegal Migration of the BAP organised in 2015 a meeting of directors of operative services of V4 countries which deal with the combat against human trafficking, illegal migration and migrant smuggling, with the representatives of the State Border Service of Ukraine.

104. The SR is represented in a working group EMPACT of Europol in The Hague, which is focused on combating the threats of organised crime. With regard to the seriousness and currency of the issue of labour exploitation, the SR is engaged in a project on labour exploitation, which is based on multi-disciplinary cooperation. Also, cooperation in relation to individual projects has been agreed on, such as the detection of human trafficking on the Internet and labour exploitation.

Preventive measures

105. The MI SR has prepared, based on documents provided by addressed entities, an overview of the issue of begging and forced begging as one of the form of human trafficking, which was added to the definition of the crime of *Human Trafficking* based on the cases of applied practice.

106. A campaign focused on the prevention of human trafficking and the distribution of new leaflets about compensation for the victims of human trafficking was launched in 2013. Individual leaflets have been prepared in Slovak, English and Roma languages.

107. Within the project supported by the EC called Strengthening Common Measures for the Prevention of Forced Labour in Roma Communities and the Development of National Reference Framework, which was launched in 2013, film and promotional materials have been made and distributed not only in the SR, but also in the United Kingdom, which is the most frequent target country of the victims of human trafficking. Also, a handbook for employers in various sectors is being prepared in order to raise awareness of the employers on the issue of human trafficking. Within this project, research focused on the analysis of the Roma victims of human trafficking from selected regions of the SR and the United Kingdom will be conducted. The campaign is focused on strengthening preventive activities in order to raise awareness of the members of Roma communities in relation to risks associated with working abroad and also the representatives of selected professional government and non-government entities on effective prevention in Roma communities by strengthening activities in the field of promotional campaigns, training activities, workshops and international conference and by broadening the reference mechanism of general public on the issue of human trafficking not only for the purposes of forced labour.

108. The implementation of another project called “Strengthening Common Measures in the Prevention of Forced Labour of the Members of Roma Communities and the Development of Reference Mechanism” financed from the EC Programme “Prevention of and Fight against Crime” was implemented from January 2013 until December 2014. The Crossroads Youth and Community Association from the United Kingdom and People in Need, Slovak branch, were partners of the MI SR.

109. In 2012, the MI SR by means of the Information Centre for Combating Human Trafficking and Crime Prevention in cooperation with Tesco Stores inc. within a campaign “*Do you know what your child is doing?*” organised a travelling exhibition with the same name in the shopping centres of Tesco Stores inc., which continued until August 2013.

110. Within the fulfilment of the task of a National Programme for Combating Human Trafficking, a campaign focused on the raising of awareness of the general public on the issue of human trafficking not only for the purposes of forced labour was published on the Internet websites of Azet.sk. The “Human Trafficking” campaign was published in the form of Internet banners with 10 million displays connected to a 30-second TV spot.

111. In connection with informing foreign victims of human trafficking, in all asylum facilities and police detention centres for foreigners there are brochures containing a set of questions in 15 languages focused on the self-identification of victims of human trafficking. The brochures provide the basic information on assistance within the Programme for Supporting and Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking.

112. Asylum facilities are regularly visited by the staff of the Slovak Catholic Charity conducting preventive-information training for foreigners within which the foreigners acquire comprehensive information on their rights and on the Programme for Supporting and Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking.

113. On the occasion of the European Day against Human Trafficking on 18 October, the following workshops are organised every year.

114. The Slovak Catholic Charity, within a project called “People Are Not For Sale - GIFT box Slovakia”, organised in cooperation with STOP THE TRAFFIK and UN. GIFT organisations supported by the MI SR, conducted the following workshops.

115. In the reporting period 2012-2016, preventive activities focused on the risks of working abroad and on possibilities of prevention of human trafficking were organised in schools and school facilities. The activities were performed by the staff of the MI SR and partner organisations with the participation of 7,000 pupils and students of elementary and secondary schools. Preventive projects implemented by policemen included in prevention sections of the departments of communication and prevention departments of Regional Directorates of the PF and groups of prevention of internal sections of District Directorates of the PF were dedicated to the issue of human trafficking.

116. The MI SR organised campaigns focused on the promotion of a National Hotline of Assistance for Victims of Human Trafficking 0800 800 818 and forced labour as one of the forms of human trafficking.

117. The PF regularly performs preventive activities focused on the issue of violence against women and domestic violence. The intention of these activities is mainly to raise awareness and legal awareness, including giving advice and recommendations as to how to timely identify violence and what are the possibilities of solving this kind of situation. On the occasion of the International Day of Elimination of Violence against Women, the PF organises, every November, a nationwide preventive campaign focused on the issue of

violence against women and domestic violence, which also includes an information leaflet distributed during lectures and discussions and also to places accessible to the general public.

118. As to other campaigns, we can mention, e.g. a nationwide campaign “Everybody Can Become a Slave...Even Today!” within cooperation of the MI SR with a civil society *Bránit’ sa oplati Slovensko* focused on combating human trafficking, which consists of two phases:

- a campaign *superzarobok.sk* - through a provocative communication fictitious web it showed the exposed target groups all the risk they would face if they were “tricked” by the perpetrators of human trafficking. The campaign hit 700,000 people in 3 days by means of social networks, while more than 40,000 of them reacted actively and visited the *superzarobok.sk* website where the exposed groups and their relatives acquired information on the issue, risks and dangers with the motivation to recognise them and to avoid them or to contact relevant authorities or organisations by means of the *novodobiotroci.sk* website.

- the campaign Guardian Angel – the creation of a community portal “Guardian Angel” which engages the immediate vicinity of potential victims in prevention (<http://www.anjelistradni.sk>).

119. Become a modern slave for a while! You too! (Bratislava, 20 October 2015) – An experience conference organised by *Bránit’ sa oplati Slovensko* association with the MI SR. The objective was to warn young people against the danger of human trafficking. In addition to 50 experts, the conference was also attended by 200 students of secondary schools and children from children’s homes. Role play scenes showing 4 forms of exploitation (sexual exploitation, forced labour, forced marriage and forced begging) were a part of the conference, besides professional lectures.

120. “Into the Life with Guardian Angel” – an experiential educational game which is a part of the Guardian Angel project and is intended for young adults from children’s homes and crisis centres who enter the life after reaching adulthood - prepared by VSE Holding company, a member of Innoga, in close cooperation with the MI SR, *Bránit’ sa oplati Slovensko* civil association and *Úsmev ako dar* company.

121. The Slovak Catholic Charity, in cooperation with the MI SR, organised a film festival “Together against Human Trafficking” (Košice, 16 October 2015) in order to remember the merciless reality of the modern-day slavery.

122. A first point of contact before departure abroad (Michalovce) - on 22 October 2015, the town of Michalovce, in cooperation with the MI SR, opened a first point of contact the objective of which is to provide information on the issue of human trafficking, to provide advice before travelling abroad to find a job, to prepare preventive activities and consultancy for the students of the 3rd and the 4th years of secondary schools and the general public as well.

123. “Marathon of Combating Human Trafficking” (October 2016) a preventive activity in the form of an experience conference in Košice, where approximately 400 students from six Košice schools found themselves “faced” with modern-day slavery. The conference will be gradually extended to other cities.

124. HESTIA - Prevention of human trafficking and forced marriages: a multi-disciplinary solution - a joint research report - research in the field of forced marriages and sham

marriages, which, during a two-year period, was organised in 5 European countries - Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Ireland and the SR.

On recommendation C 23:

125. Methodological and legislative guidance and recommendations of the MESRS SR
- the task is fulfilled annually by means of pedagogical-organisational instructions for the school year concerned, which contain, among other things, recommendations for smoking prevention. Information available on the website of the MESRS SR

- schools and school facilities are advised to pay greater attention to the prevention of the use of alcohol and tobacco.

b) Supporting specific projects in elementary, secondary and special schools in the field of the prevention of smoking in schools within *2016 Anti-drug Prevention and 2016 Health and Safety in Schools development programmes*.

The priority topics of the call *2016 Anti-drug Prevention*:

- innovative forms of the prevention of tobacco smoking,
- prevention of problems associated with the drinking of alcohol,
- prevention of the use of illegal drugs,
- development of communication and life skills,
- activities supporting healthy life style,
- improving psychological-social climate and supporting mental health,
- supporting the exercise of the rights of children,
- exchange of experiences and the dissemination of examples of good practice within priority topics.

c) Supporting specific projects in elementary, secondary and special schools in the field of smoking prevention in schools within the project *2016 Health and Safety in schools*. The priority topics of the call:

Activities and programmes focused on:

- forming a relation to healthy life style,
- protection of physical and mental health,
- oral and dental health,
- prevention of allergies and respiratory problems,
- improving psychological-social climate in schools,
- elimination of harmful effects and the prevention of risky behaviour (violence, bullying, absenteeism, aggression, delinquency, criminality, drug addiction, abuse, manifestations of extremism, terrorism, HIV/AIDS, human trafficking),
- engagement in a Child Friendly School programme.

d) Supporting the publicising of the HBSC international survey (Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children) – Slovakia 2013/2014 (authors from the Medical Faculty of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice).

On recommendation C 24:

126. Under § 8 (a) of Law 577/2004 on the Scope of Healthcare Covered by Public Health Insurance and on the Reimbursement of Healthcare-related Services, healthcare not indicated for medical reasons is not reimbursed from the public health insurance.

127. Under § 7, Section 1 of Law 363/2011 on the Scope and Terms of Payment of Medicines, Medical Devices and Dietary Foods Based on Public Health Insurance, (hereinafter the “Law 363/2011”), the effectiveness of a medicine confirmed by clinical tests

performed on the principles of medicine based on proofs in relation to the following points is not taken into account in relation to drug classification:

- life-saving,
- curing an illness,
- alleviating the symptoms of a disease,
- prevention of serious health complications,
- prevention of the worsening of the seriousness of a disease or its transition into a chronic state,
- effective prophylaxis against a disease,
- effectiveness and safety of a medicine confirmed under the conditions of usual therapeutic practice,
- the benefit of a medicine in reducing morbidity and mortality,
- recommended therapeutic procedures taking into account cost-effectiveness and estimated impact on the funds of public health insurance.

128. Under § 16, Section 4 (e) of the Law 363/2011 it is not possible to include into the list of categorised drugs a medicine if it is a medicine exclusively intended to regulate conception (contraceptives), a medicine for erectile dysfunction, a weight loss medicine, a medicine for stopping smoking, a medicine to treat tobacco dependence, a medicine for the alleviation of need to smoke or the reduction for alleviating the withdrawal symptoms of smoking.

129. Under § 90, Section 1 of the Law 363/2011, medicines in the SR are categorised so that the amount of funds used by health insurance companies is sufficient to cover medicines paid for on the basis of public health insurance.

On recommendation C 27:

130. Law 184/1999 on the Use of Languages of National Minorities, (hereinafter the “Law 184/1999) provides for the use of languages of the members of national minorities - citizens of the SR who belong to national minorities. The Law stipulates the rules of the use of a language of a minority in official communication and in other areas in municipalities in which the share of citizens belonging to a national minority achieves a percentage limit required by the law. Under the Law, there are nine languages of national minorities: Bulgarian, Czech, Croatian, Hungarian, German, Polish, Roma, Ruthenian and Ukrainian language. The Law 184/1999 provides for the use of the languages of national minorities in official communication, signs in the language of national minorities, local referenda on changing the name of municipality in the languages of minorities, information in the languages of national minorities, the powers of the Government Office of the SR in the field of the use of the languages of national minorities and administrative offences in the field of the use of the languages of national minorities.

131. Law 270/1995 on National Language of the SR, and Law 184/1999 on the Use of Languages of National Minorities, were amended in 2011 in order to ensure a better protection of the rights of the members of national minorities living in the territory of the SR in order to strengthen compliance with human-legal principles enshrined in international conventions by which the SR is bound. Both acts, in compliance with the Constitution of the SR and international principles, determine the rules for using these languages in the basic areas of public communication in the territory of the SR. The adoption of the amendment to the Law on National Language in 2009 resulted in several additional legal possibilities guaranteeing the application of minority languages within public communication.

132. Under § 7 (a), Section 1 of Law 184/1999, the Government Office of the SR provides professional and methodological assistance to the state administration bodies and the organisational units of security and rescue forces in the implementation of this act. For this purpose, a panel, which is a permanent advisory body of the head of service office, was formed in the Government Office of the SR. Representatives of relevant ministries are members of the panel.

133. Under § 7 (a), Section 1 of Law 184/1999, the Government Office of the SR provides professional and methodological assistance to the state administration bodies also in the area of providing care of technical terminology in the languages of national minorities. With this objective in mind, the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR initiated the development of two terminological dictionaries, which simplify, facilitate and make more effective the use of minority languages in official communication. They are primarily intended for the employees of the state administration bodies who use the languages of national minorities in everyday communication, further for interpreters and translators who work with technical texts in the field of public administration and also for citizens who need to use technical terminological terms in minority languages when taking care of their matters. A terminological framework in national language was created in order to develop the terminological dictionaries. The framework was discussed with all ministries concerned and it represents a database of the most frequent terms and phrases from the selected field of the state administration and self-government of the SR

134. The following dictionaries have been published on the website of the office so far: Slovak-Hungarian Technical Terminological Dictionary, Slovak-Roma Technical Terminological Dictionary, Slovak-Ruthenian Technical Terminological Dictionary and Slovak-Ukrainian Technical Terminological Dictionary. All Slovak parts of the technical terminological dictionaries were subject to technical language proofreading based on which they were innovated.

135. Under § 7 (a) of Law 184/1999, the Government Office of the SR submits to the government of the SR, once in two years, a Report on the Status of the Use of the Languages of National Minorities in the Territory of the SR (hereinafter the “Language Report”). The Government Council of the SR for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality gives its opinion on the Language Report before it is submitted. In order to acquire information for the preparation of the report, the Government Office is entitled to request information from public administration bodies and written materials on the use of the language of minorities in the field of their competence. The Office of the Plenipotentiary is in charge of the preparation of the Language Report and the collection of field data. Up to now, three Language Reports have been published for 2012, 2013 – 2014 and 2015 – 2016.

136. On 11 January 2017, the government of the SR approved the Language Report for 2015 – 2016. The Language Report summarises the national legislative framework of the use of the languages of national minorities in the SR, maps the process and results of the implementation of international-legal framework of the protection of minority languages in the SR and also the current development in the field of the institutional provision for the use of the languages of national minorities in the SR and the fulfilment of duties and the exercise of rights arising from Law 184/1999

137. The Language Report for 2015 – 2016 provides, in comparison with the previous reports, more comprehensive data on the scope of monitored entities and the extent of the

details of the mapping of individual legally designated areas of the use of the languages of national minorities. The scope of a questionnaire survey focused on the collection of current data was extended, compared to surveys conducted in the preparation of previous reports in terms of the addressed types of relevant entities, by many mapped areas and situations in which, under conditions stipulated by the law, the languages of national minorities are used, and also the number of questions for individual types of respondents. In total, 763 respondents were addressed. Of this number, 714 respondents sent their questionnaires, which accounts for a 94 % return rate.

138. The government, in its resolution, imposed on the head of the Government Office of the SR and the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities a duty to prepare a guide to Law 184/1999, to form an interdepartmental working group to prepare an analysis of generally binding legal regulations in the field of the language rights of the members of national minorities in the SR and in cooperation with the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia to prepare an analysis in order to identify needs in the field of systematic training of the staff of the bodies of local state administration, the bodies of local authority and the staff of legal entities established by local authorities in the field of the rights and duties arising from Law 184/1999.