

# **Thirteenth Periodic Report of the Slovak Republic on the Implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**

## **I. Introduction**

1. The Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “SR“) is a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (hereinafter referred to as the “Convention“), signed on behalf of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on 7 March 1966. Following the succession of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Slovakia became a party to this Convention on 28 May 1993 with retroactive effect from 1 January 1993.

2. The SR, as a Party to the Convention pursuant to Article 9 thereof, submits reports on the implementation of the Convention to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (hereinafter referred to as the “Committee“). The SR submitted its eleventh and twelfth periodic report in May 2016. In November 2017, it was discussed in the Committee.

3. At present, the SR submits the thirteenth periodic report to the Convention (hereinafter referred to as the “Report“). The Report shall contain information on the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention as well as on the progress made in this respect for the period 2017 to 2019.

4. The Report was prepared by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs“) in cooperation with the relevant ministries on the basis of the Committee's guidelines containing recommendations to be taken into account in the content and form of individual periodic reports to the Convention (CERD/C/2007/1) and in accordance with the specific recommendations of the Committee's Final Opinion which were adopted on 6 December 2017 following the assessment of the eleventh and twelfth periodic reports of the SR.

## **II. Information on Fulfilment of Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to the Eleventh and Twelfth Periodic Report of the Slovak Republic**

### **Statistical data**

5. On 1 September 2019, Act No. 223/2019 Coll. on population and housing censuses in 2021 came into effect. The content of the Act is in line with EU law, because the census takes place in all EU Member States at the same time in a uniform format of categories and reporting structure. At the same time, in 2021, the census is also coordinated by the UN in terms of the global population and housing census programme. The Act envisages both the mobility of institutional elements implementing electronic census and assisted census on both stationary and mobile elements. It thus creates two alternatives to assisted census in marginalized Roma communities (hereinafter referred to as “MRC“). Ethnicity and multiple ethnicity issues are currently undergoing cognitive testing as part of the professional preparation phase of a measure that will modify the characteristics and structure of the survey data and census forms.

6. The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as “OPNM“) carries out tasks aimed at collecting reliable and comprehensive statistical data on the demographic composition of the population in terms of

nationality and ethnicity in pursuit of the operational objective No. 7 of the Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016 – 2020 entitled "Increasing the knowledge base to better identify target groups – national minorities and ethnic groups and their needs through statistical surveys and research in collaboration with the fulfilment of tasks arising from the National Action Plan of the Population and Housing Census 2021 for 2017 – 2020". In the framework of this Action Plan, the strategic objective No. 5 has been developed in cooperation with OPNM: "Pay particular attention to specific groups of the population whose census requires a specific approach". Populations whose census requires such a specific approach include, among other population groups, also citizens with regard to their nationality or ethnicity with regard to their mother tongue, including for the purposes of national legislation (in particular Act No. 184/1999 Coll. on the use of languages of national minorities, as amended).

7. Within this objective, OPNM cooperated with the Statistical Office of the SR (hereinafter referred to as the "SO SR") on a planned activity aimed at preparing the census methodology in terms of their nationality or ethnicity with respect to the mother tongue. In the first quarter of 2018, an Expert Working Group on the preparation of the above-mentioned methodology was constituted whose members also included, in addition to OPNM and SO SR administrators, representatives of the relevant state administration bodies and representatives of national minorities who were nominated by members of the Committee of National Minorities and Ethnic Groups. At the end of 2018, an expert group finalized an extensive census methodology in terms of their nationality or ethnicity with regard to the mother tongue.<sup>1</sup>

8. In October to November 2019, the SO SR will adopt the Measure on the characteristics and structure of surveyed data on the topics of population and housing census in 2021 and the manner of their identification, sample census forms for population census and sample census forms for housing census. In this context, it is also important to note that the Steering Committee on the 2021 Population and Housing Census approved the multi-ethnicity survey (i.e. the possibility to claim membership of two nationalities) in the 2021 Population and Housing Census.

9. In 2019, the evaluation of indicators of global and partial targets of the Action Plans of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020 for 2016, 2017 and 2018 was carried out.<sup>2</sup> In 2017, the Slovak Government adopted the National Action Plan of the Population and Housing Census 2021 for the years 2017 – 2020, which included a study on taking into account the specificities arising from the character of the municipality when preparing the Population and Housing Census 2021 with a focus on MRC. Part of the plan is also a specific approach to the electronic population census in urban areas of MRC. At the same time, the plan also includes the tasks of creating a population census methodology in terms of their nationality or ethnicity with respect to the mother tongue. For this purpose, an expert working group was established, including the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for the Roma Communities (hereinafter referred to as the "OPRC").

10. OPRC completed the preparation of the Atlas of Roma Communities 2019, which contains data totalling 405,024 members of MRC, living in 949 concentrations – urban

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<sup>1</sup> The methodology in the Slovak language was published on the Plenipotentiary's website at [https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7470\\_metodika-sodb-2021.pdf](https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7470_metodika-sodb-2021.pdf) and also on the website of the SO SR.

<sup>2</sup> Data are published at <http://www.minv.sk/?monitorovanie-a-hodnotenie-1>

settlements, which create a total of 37,117 dwellings. The atlas maps the living conditions of the communities in great detail. At the same time its further finalization continues in the monitored 164 indicators, as well as in 35 indicators so far of the comparative development of the state with the previous atlas. Data collection shows that access to drinking water has improved, in the 100 largest Roma communities in Slovakia, 61% of the population currently have access to drinking water from tap water, compared to 48% in 2013 and around 36% in 2004.

11. The collection of complex statistical and demographic data in the SR is also governed by the secondary law of the EU. In particular, Regulation (EC) No. 1177/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 June 2003 concerning Community statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC); Regulation (EC) No. 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 establishing a common statistical classification of territorial units, Regulation (EC) No. 763/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Population and Housing Censuses, as well as Regulation (EC) No. 1260/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on European demographic statistics. The programme of statistical surveys for the years 2018 – 2020 was issued by the Decree of the SO SR No. 250/2017 Coll. as amended by Decree No. 266/2018 Coll. Demographic and social statistics, together with regional, sectoral, multilateral and other statistics, are published on the website of the SO SR. These are also processed for the general public in the relevant information publications and yearbooks, equally accessible at the above mentioned website, partly also in English<sup>3</sup>.

### **National human rights institution**

12. The Ministry of Justice of the SR (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministry of Justice”) prepared an in-depth analysis of the Paris Principles and Recommendations of the GANHRI (Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions) and their compliance with the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights regulation and the Public Defender of Rights. The analysis included recommendations from international monitoring bodies, including the Committee. Subsequently, the Ministry of Justice led a public discussion on the possibilities of legislative changes and specifically negotiated with the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, which was directly involved in the drafting of the legislative proposal. In December 2018, the Ministry of Justice submitted to the Government of the SR a draft amendment to the Act on the Establishment of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, which seeks to maximize the compliance with the Paris principles and GANHRI recommendations. The bill was approved by the Government on 9 January 2019. At the same time, an agreement was reached on increasing the staff and material capacities of the he Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, while the budget has been increased by 40% since 2019 and foresees the creation of 7 new jobs. Given that the National Council of the SR did not approve the government bill at its meeting on 26 June 2019, the Ministry of Justice will negotiate with the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights on further options in the new parliamentary term from 2020.

### **Implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Act**

13. Important measures to intensify enforcement of the Anti-Discrimination Act, to ensure effective litigation concerning racial discrimination, were taken in the recodification of civil

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<sup>3</sup>[https://slovak.statistics.sk/wps/portal/ext/home!/ut/p/z1/04\\_Sj9CPykssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfIjo8ziA809LZycDB0NLPyCXA08QxwD3IO8TAwNTEz1wwkpiAJKG-AAjgZA\\_VFgJc7ujh4m5j4GBhY-7qYGno4eoUGWgcbGB07GUAV4zCjIjTDIdFRUBADse0bP/dz/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/](https://slovak.statistics.sk/wps/portal/ext/home!/ut/p/z1/04_Sj9CPykssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfIjo8ziA809LZycDB0NLPyCXA08QxwD3IO8TAwNTEz1wwkpiAJKG-AAjgZA_VFgJc7ujh4m5j4GBhY-7qYGno4eoUGWgcbGB07GUAV4zCjIjTDIdFRUBADse0bP/dz/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/)

procedural law under the Civil Procedure Code (hereinafter referred to as “CPC”), where anti-discrimination disputes were identified as a separate type of dispute with different procedural rules. Strengthening of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights is also an important measure to improve the enforcement of the Anti-Discrimination Act, which is empowered to tackle incentives for discrimination, to provide legal assistance, including representation in litigation and strategic litigation.

14. The issue of lengthy court proceedings does not only concern racial discrimination but also court proceedings as such. The Ministry of Justice has introduced and is constantly introducing measures to improve the situation and reduce the average length of court proceedings. In cooperation with the European Commission for Effective Justice of the Council of Europe (CEPEJ), an audit of the courts has been carried out. In cooperation with CEPEJ, the Ministry of Justice continues to implement a project aimed at improving the efficiency and quality of the Slovak judicial system.

15. Based on the project outputs, priorities were set under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice and working groups started working on the following topics:

- setting appropriate conditions in the courts for family law,
- possibilities of using the institute of "flying judge" in the Slovak legal system,
- specialization of courts and judges,
- time frames and analysis of constituent things,
- the Court Map,
- redistribution of (human and financial) resources,
- improving IT tools in the judiciary.

16. Such work should result in streamlining court proceedings, including those on discrimination. Among the important measures to relieve the civil courts adopted in 2017 is certainly the concentration of the electronic payment orders agenda, which has been transferred to one court – the District Court Banská Bystrica. In the same year, an amendment to the Enforcement Code established the only execution court in the SR, which has exclusive causal jurisdiction to execute the execution agenda – the District Court of Banská Bystrica.

17. It is clear from the available statistics of the Ministry of Justice that the duration of proceedings in anti-discrimination disputes ranges from two months to ten years, and the district courts with a large amount of civil agenda have the worst results, such as those in the capital of Bratislava. We believe that the above measures will help speed up these proceedings.

18. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has entrusted the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as "ODIHR") with the task of developing programmes to assist participating states in the fight against hate crimes. To this end, the ODIHR developed training for law enforcement authorities in the fight against hate crimes (TAHCLE), attended in 2018 by selected members of the Police Force (hereinafter referred to as "PF") and the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights staff. The aim of this training is to improve police skills in preventing and responding to hate crimes and to build trust in investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies. The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights employees were trained to further train the PF members.

19. The trained police officers are subsequently train in the above mentioned issues the members of the National Counterterrorism Unit of the National Criminal Agency of the Presidium of the PF (hereinafter referred to as “NCU”) during instructional and methodological

jobs and consultations. The NCU was created in order to make the fight against terrorism and extremism more effective in the SR in 2017 within the structure of the National Criminal Agency of the Presidium of the PF (hereinafter referred to as “NCA”).

20. The training of members of the basic units is provided by trained members of the Police Enforcement Police Department assigned to the Presidium of the PF and the regional directorates of the PF.

21. The requirements and tasks arising from the Convention are an implicit part of regular education, which is systematically organized by the Police Force Academy (hereinafter referred to as “PFA”) in all accredited degree programmes, forms and degrees of higher education.

22. The target group within this specific vocational higher education is all students of PFA, i.e. not only those who are already members of the police, but also potential applicants to the police who are preparing for the demanding police profession in the future. Important objects in this systematic educational process are also students of security and legal services in public administration, who are also confronted with the requirements of the Convention in their daily practice.

23. The selected PFA departments regularly, systematically and purposefully apply the latest knowledge of racial discrimination to the teaching of their subjects, which, in the context of relevant social science subjects, allow a better understanding of the broader socio-political, socio-psychological, sociological and moral context of the negative, socio-pathological phenomenon. The information gathered enables students to gain a more comprehensive picture of the subject, while at the same time giving them a deeper understanding of the need to respect and protect human rights while actively taking effective action to eliminate racially discriminatory acts and practices.

24. In addition to systematic instruction, the departments regularly provide themes for final bachelor and master theses for full-time and part-time students, which are focused on the characterization of the existing situation and specific social, psychological, ethical and political aspects of racism.

25. In 2017, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights organized the education of NCU members and prosecutors of the Office of the Special Prosecutor's Office of the General Prosecutor's Office of the SR. The aim and content of the seminar was to provide information on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as the “ECHR”) on hate speech, as well as on the symbolism of racism and extremism. The lecturer of the seminar was the co-representative of the SR before the ECHR and employees of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights.

26. In cooperation with the Office of the Representative of the SR before the ECHR, the Slovak translations of the ECHR case law reports are regularly published in the Bulletin of the Supreme Court of the SR, which are published in selected areas by the ECHR press office in French and English. The reports are thematically selected according to the current needs and the level of usability in the Slovak practice. The reports are not binding and do not provide exhaustive information on ECHR decisions, but are an important aid in finding relevant ECHR decisions on a specific issue<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> In Bulletin No. 2/2017, the Slovak translation of the ECHR case law report on hate speech is published. Bulletin No. 2/2017 can be found at this link [https://www.nsud.sk/data/files/1829\\_bulletin\\_odak\\_2\\_2017.pdf](https://www.nsud.sk/data/files/1829_bulletin_odak_2_2017.pdf).

27. In 2017, the Judicial Academy, which provides training for judges, bailiffs and prosecutors, carried out three training activities and the total number of participants was 86. In 2018, it organized 4 activities for 138 participants and two activities for 41 participants in 2019. Activities related to hate speech and hate crime.

28. In the past period, the Ministry of Interior of the SR (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministry of Interior”) carried out several information campaigns focused on the issue of racial discrimination and extremism.

*More information is provided in the Annex, Point A.*

29. As part of the PF Police Service, its senior officers for community work are preventive in socially excluded groups (communities), provide expert assistance and information, lecturing, and publishing, and develop relationships with Roma as well as with all the institutions involved.

30. The work of the Senior Community Officer is also to address the diverse challenges in the assigned communities and to improve the security situation (the senior community officers meet almost daily for requests for cooperation and assistance from representatives of different institutions, be they educators, social workers, health workers, representatives of non-governmental organizations and workers of municipal authorities).

31. Every year, the Ministry of Justice provides subsidies aimed at promoting, supporting and protecting human rights, within which it also supports projects focused on education. The call for projects is aimed at promoting, supporting and protecting human rights and freedoms, and preventing all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other manifestations of intolerance. The challenge has identified priorities, with projects focusing on preventing radicalization of youth as well as combating the manifestations of extremism every year. Through the demand-oriented call, the Ministry of Justice distributes EUR 763,500, with information campaigns aimed at combating discrimination and intolerance each year among the supported projects. In 2018, projects focused on information and education activities aimed at preventing radicalization and extremism (hate crimes) were supported with a total amount of EUR 293,878.

### **Racially motivated crimes**

32. In the amendment to the Criminal Code (hereinafter the “CC”), effective from 1 January 2017, the objective aspect of the crime of supporting and promoting a movement aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms (Section 421 of the CC) was supplemented by the procedure of establishing a group or movement that is demonstrably aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms of persons previously absent from the legislation. The current legislation with effect from 1 January 2017 is considered fully in accordance with Article 4 of the Convention.

33. The PF regularly monitors the security situation in the SR and, if necessary, responds and takes measures to continuously improve it and implements continuous measures to combat organizations and groups that encourage cybercrime and promote racial discrimination through social networks.

34. As part of their tasks related to detecting, clarifying and investigating crimes of extremism and crimes of terrorism, NCU officers also focus on identifying organizations that encourage and support racial discrimination. In recent years, manifestations of racial discrimination and other forms of intolerance have gradually shifted from 'street' to 'virtual space', so in many cases this crime is committed through social networks on the Internet. Most often in this form are committed crimes of support and promotion of groups aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms pursuant to Section 421 of the CC, expressing sympathy for movements aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms pursuant to Section 422 of the CC, defamation of the nation, race and convictions pursuant to Section 423 of the CC and incitement to national, racial and ethnic hatred pursuant to Section 424 of the CC.

35. All cases of racially motivated crimes are treated individually and impartially, as with other crimes. They are immediately investigated by members of the PF in order to properly find out the facts of the case and subsequently to fairly punish the perpetrators of such unlawful acts.

36. Racially motivated crimes are included in the Slovak legal order in Section 421 – establishment, support and promotion of a movement aimed at suppressing the fundamental human rights and freedoms, Section 422 – expressing sympathy for a movement aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms, Section 423 – defamation of the nation, race and beliefs, Section 424 – incitement to national, racial and ethnic hatred, Section 424a – apartheid and discrimination against a group of persons. Section 140 (e) of the CC defines a crime committed on a specific motive. Investigation of these crimes falls within the material scope of NCU, which has deployed investigators within the whole SR at individual NCU exposures (Bratislava, West, Central and East). In connection with the strengthening of the fight against extremism, these crimes fall within the competence of the Special Prosecutor's Office and the Specialized Criminal Court since January 2017.

37. The CC recognizes the motives for committing a hate crime against a group of persons or an individual for their actual or presumed affiliation to a race, nation, nationality, ethnic group, their real or presumed origin, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, political belief or religion (Section 140 (e)). The special motive is part of the qualified criminal offence, i.e. that it is a form of committing an offence for which there is a higher sanction

### **Suppression of hate speech**

38. In addition to detecting and investigating crimes related to terrorism, the NCU also focuses on detecting and investigating extremist crimes. The investigation of these crimes is dealt with by closely specialized NCU investigators who have received several specific training in this field and cooperate very closely with prosecutors of the Office of the Special Prosecutor's Office of the General Prosecutor's Office of the SR who are earmarked for this type of crime.

39. Within the NCU, an extremist screening centre has been set up, the primary tasks of which are to search, monitor and analyse any information, suggestions and speeches on the Internet and on social networking sites related to the given area. An important work activity is the gathering, analysing and use of information obtained from Slovak security services and foreign security forces, including Europol, Interpol and other relevant public authorities in the SR, focusing on obtaining information on executors, carriers or supporters of extremism in the territory of the SR and also active cooperation with non-governmental organizations dealing with extremism.

40. The hate crime is contained in the Slovak legal order in the provision of Section 140 (e) of the CC defining a specific motive and meaning committing a hate crime against a group of persons or an individual for their actual or presumed belonging to a race, nation, nationality, ethnic group, for their actual or presumed origin, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, political beliefs, or religion. It includes all crimes motivated by hatred of any social group. Committing a crime on a specific motive entails the use of a higher penalty for offenders. The extremist screening centre NCU deals with the monitoring of committing these crimes in the media and especially on the Internet. The information and suggestions for criminal prosecution are sent to the relevant NCU executive units throughout the SR.

41. Another effective measure to prevent and combat hate speech is the conclusion of a memorandum between the NCU and the NGO Digital Intelligence in September 2018. *More information is provided in the Annex, Point B.*

42. At present, the task of the Evaluation of the Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance for 2016 – 2018 “To prepare an input analysis on the issue of racism and xenophobia in the conditions of the SR with a proposal for recommendations for public policies” is to be fulfilled. The basis for the preparation of the input analysis is the Analysis of the Application Practice of the provisions of the CC and the CPC concerning the fight against extremism. The sources of the analysis were publicly available sources on the issue of extremism, racially, ethnically and religiously motivated crime, statistics of the PF, analytical reports prepared at the Presidium of the PF, the General Prosecutor's Office of the SR, as well as findings from realized focus groups. This analysis has been endorsed by the Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance. The outputs of the analysis were the basis for the elaboration of legislative material to change the CC and Act No. 301/2005 Coll. of the CPC, as amended.

43. With effect from 1 January 2017, the Ministry of Justice undertook a comprehensive reform of legislation and institutional arrangements for the prosecution of hate crimes, which are referred to in the Slovak legal order as crimes of extremism.

44. This reform has brought more effective investigation into the crimes of extremism by entrusting the task of investigating these crimes to a specialized unit of the National Criminal Agency with nationwide competence. The establishment of a nationwide jurisdiction for the prosecution of extremist crimes entailed entrusting the agenda of the Special Prosecutor's Office, as well as the transfer of competence to discuss these crimes from district courts to the Specialized Criminal Court. In order to ensure the quality of the performance of these specialized bodies, TAHCLE (for investigators) and PAHCT (for special prosecutors and judges) training sessions were also conducted in cooperation with ODIHR. At the same time, for the purpose of effective combating extremism, the Ministry of Justice established a new expert branch for forensic experts called Social and Human Sciences, which is divided into two branches – political extremism and religious extremism. Experts in this field help ensure efficient and qualified recognition of elements of extremism and hate motives.

45. A special motive which makes the use of a higher penalty, including a special hate motive pursuant to Section 140 (e), includes hatred against a group of persons or an individual for their actual or presumed belonging to a race, nation, nationality, ethnic group, their actual or presumed origin, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, political belief, or religion. Any crime committed by a special motive pursuant to Section 140 (e) is considered a crime of extremism.



46. The reform has also made changes to the criminality of establishing a movement aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms (until now only the support and promotion of such a movement has been penalized), as well as a change to the definition of extremist material, whereas, for criminal offences such as the production, possession or distribution of such materials, the intention to spread hatred, violence or unjustifiably different treatment is no longer required.

47. Especially in the field of public hate speech, the crime of inciting to national, racial or ethnic hatred has been redefined (Section 424), which includes public incitement to violence or hatred against a person or group of persons for their actual or suspected membership of a race, nation, nationality, ethnic group, for their actual or suspected origin, skin colour, sexual orientation, religion or because they are unreligious, or publicly incited to restricting their rights and freedoms. Public incitement also means incitement to hatred through the media or social networks on the Internet.

48. The definition of the crime of apartheid and discrimination against a group of persons (Section 424a) was introduced into the CC, which ensured the compliance of the CC with the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

49. In the period under review, the application practice of the Act on Criminal Liability of Legal Persons has had a positive effect. The law introduced direct criminal liability in the SR relating to legal persons who commit crimes, including crimes of extremism.

50. The prosecution and investigation of crimes of extremism is carried out in accordance with the relevant legal standards of the SR, especially in accordance with the CC and CPC. Detection and investigation of crimes of extremism committed with a special motive pursuant to Section 140 (e) of the CC is performed by NCU, which has deployed investigators within the whole SR at individual NCU exposures (Bratislava, West, Central and East). This police unit also ensures, within its scope of competence, the collection of statistics of crimes of extremism, which are summarized annually in the NCA activity information for the relevant calendar year. The collection of statistical data is also provided by the Police Information Systems Administration Department. The PF does not have statistics on the number of convictions and/or compensation granted to victims.

51. On September 3, 2019, Milan Mazurek, a former member of the National Council of the SR for the political party Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia, was lawfully sentenced, on the basis of a decision of the Supreme Court of the SR, for defamatory statements to Roma people presented in live radio broadcasting. M. Mazurek was indicted for an offence of defamation of a nation, race and belief (Section 423 of the CC) in a single act concurrent with an offence of incitement, defamation and threats to persons for their race, nation, nationality, skin colour, ethnic group or family origin (Section 424a of the CC effective until 31 December 2016). The Supreme Court of the SR upheld the decision of the Court of First Instance and tightened the fine imposed in the amount of EUR 10,000. No proper remedy is available against this decision of the Supreme Court of the SR. Pursuant to Article 81a (f) of the Constitution on the day this judgement came into force, Mazurek's mandate as a member of the National Council of the SR ceased to exist. This case was closely followed by the media, which regularly brought information related to it. Some media have also launched various campaigns or published articles on hate crimes, hoaxes and misinformation to Roma, which appear mainly on social networks. Similarly monitored by the media is the case of the killing of a citizen of the Philippines, Henry Acorda, who was brutally attacked in May 2018 by a Slovak citizen,

Juraj H., who was under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Henry Acorda died several days after the attack due to injuries. Juraj H. confessed and regretted committing the crime. As a second instance court, the Bratislava Regional Court ruled on appeals against the decision of the Bratislava I District Court and in its judgement of 17 September 2019 sentenced Juraj H. to an unconditional prison sentence of 9 years. It also ordered the convicted person to undergo alcohol rehab program and to compensate Henry Acorda's mother for the non-material loss of EUR 50,000. Racial motivation has also been suspected in connection with the killing of Henry Acorda, but according to available information, the racial motive of the crime has not been proven. However, even this suspicion in connection with the attack in the centre of the capital has sparked a wide public debate on racially motivated crimes and extremism.

52. The tasks of the Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance for 2016 – 2018 are fulfilled. The regularly announced Call of the Government Council for the Prevention of Crime and the Call of the Ministry of Interior for submission of applications for grants in the area of crime prevention, which also support projects concerning the topic of combating extremism.

*More information is provided in the Annex, Point C.*

53. The Ministry of Culture of the SR (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministry of Culture”) has established a stable financial instrument to support projects in the field of culture, which also help raise public awareness in the given area – subsidy programme Culture of Disadvantaged Groups. Through this subsidy programme, cultural activities of persons with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups are supported, including cultural activities of these persons and groups, including the promotion of equal opportunities, integration into society, prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, discrimination, racism, xenophobia and extremism, promoting education for tolerance, strengthening social and family cohesion and developing intercultural dialogue. Since 2017, the amount of EUR 980,000 has been redistributed annually under this grant programme, representing an increase of 161.12% compared to the period of 2014 – 2016 (in 2014 – 2016 the amount of EUR 375,300 was redistributed annually under the Culture for Disadvantaged Groups subsidy programme).

54. On 1 July 2017, Act No. 138/2017 Coll. on the Fund for the Support of Culture of National Minorities, as amended, came into effect. The competence to allocate subsidies in this area was thus transferred from the Office of the Government of the SR to this new public institution independent of the central state administration bodies, represented by experts from all national minorities. The main purpose of the Fund is to preserve, express, protect and develop the identity of cultural values of national minorities, to bring up and educate on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and to develop and promote intercultural dialogue and understanding between Slovak nationals and nationals belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups through the provision of funds to support their cultural and scientific activities in the form of grants or scholarships.

55. In the course of their activities, organizations within the remit of the Cultural Heritage Section of the Ministry of Culture carry out presentation, educational and publication activities related to the prevention of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and extremism.

*More information is provided in the Annex, Point D.*

56. In its Resolution of 10 September 2019, the National Council of the SR recalled restrictions on freedom of religion or belief in Slovakia in the 20th century, especially the

persecution of Jews during the Slovak State and the persecution of Christian churches during the decades of the communist regime. At the same time, it expressed solidarity to all persecuted for their religion or belief and condemned all forms of discrimination and violence against different groups of the population for their religion or belief. Out of the total number of members of the National Council of the SR of 150, up to 146 voted, with 145 voting in favour and one abstaining.

57. The moral commitment to those who became victims of repression and violence due to the failure of one generation of politicians was reminded by the Slovak Prime Minister Peter Pellegrini on the Memorial Day of the Victims of the Holocaust and Racial Violence on 9 September 2019. He urged all decent people not to allow history to be repeated in this form.

58. On 28 November 2018, the National Council of the SR adopted a working definition of anti-Semitism, which was adopted in May 2016 by IHRA – the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. This definition was adopted on 13 December 2018 by the advisory body of the Government of the SR – the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality. The definition in question can thus be used in formulating and implementing the policies of the Government of the SR, especially as a tool of education and training for the purpose of timely and effective identification of manifestations of anti-Semitism.

59. On 5 – 6 February 2019, the International Conference on the fight against anti-Semitism in the OSCE region was held in Bratislava on the occasion of commemorating the International Holocaust Remembrance Day (27 January). The event was organized by the Slovak Presidency of the OSCE in consultation with the ODIHR. The conference focused on specific areas of responsibility of states, institutions and individuals in the fight against anti-Semitism in the OSCE area. In his address, the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR recalled the story of Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler, who escaped from Auschwitz not only to save themselves, but especially to save others. It is a story of courage, prevention and the value of truth, and must be remembered. The Minister Miroslav Lajčák also pointed to the worrying growth in support for the young generation towards political entities advocating extremist ideologies and historical misinterpretations.

60. The priorities of Slovakia's membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) from 2018 to 2020 include combating all forms of racism, xenophobia and associated intolerance, and promoting religion or belief and religious tolerance. On 5 March 2019, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs organized a discussion table, as part of the HRC Geneva meeting, with the EU Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion and Belief outside the EU, Ján Figel', and representatives of selected countries (Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, Lebanon, the Holy See) and EUDEL. The main leitmotif of the event was the coexistence and interconnection of fundamental freedoms – freedom of expression and freedom of religion – with the phenomenon of religious intolerance. The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and the Museum of Jewish Culture organized an exhibition on the unique life story of David Unreich, a native of Bratislava, a Jewish wrestler and a world champion in heavy weight. In the interwar period, David Unreich made a significant contribution to mitigating the impact of the coming fascism on the Jewish community in Bratislava. As an athlete and a real champion he stood up against Hitler's totalitarianism even after leaving for the USA. The exhibition was held in February 2019 in Bratislava, in March 2019 in Geneva and in October 2019 in New York.

61. Every 2 August, on the occasion of the Roma Holocaust Day, the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma Communities organizes a “commemorative candle” through the social networks, where everyone can participate by lighting a symbolic candle by changing his/her profile photo on the social network to commemorate the victims. All the opinion-forming media, including the information substrate related to the events of the night of 2 to 3 August 1944, at the Auschwitz-Bierkenau concentration camp, when the Nazis killed almost 3,000 Roma and Sinti, take over the information of the Plenipotentiary on the Roma Holocaust. At the same time, the Plenipotentiary also implements this remark as an educational challenge to citizens, pointing out the danger of attempts to transfer concepts of right-wing extremism into the current political and social system. The theme of the Holocaust has long been the subject of informal cooperation with the Museum of Jewish Culture.

62. The Slovak National Museum-Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava annually organizes an international seminar for educators entitled Improving Qualification in Fundamental Rights, Citizenship and Lessons from the Holocaust; International Seminar for Educators was held in cooperation with the International School of Holocaust Studies at the Yad Vashem Memorial in Jerusalem and the Educational Centre of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica (2017, 2018).

63. Museum of the Holocaust in Sereď, which is situated on the premises of the former labour and concentration camp from the time of the World War II participates in educational activities and programmes aimed at preventing manifestations of anti-Semitism, racism, extremism and radicalization in society. The museum cooperated with the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR (hereinafter referred to as “Ministry of Education”) on the topic of Prevention of Manifestations of Extremism and Education for Democratic Citizenship. The result of the meeting was to extend the history lessons by 1 lesson since September 2017. Against this backdrop, the Holocaust Museum Educational Centre in Sereď provides educational and training events for schools, educators and the general public and plays an important role in the educational process in which it implements programmes for pupils and students. The museum also created a 3D visualization application of the Sereď labour and concentration camp.

64. As part of the museum pedagogy, the Museum also offers educational programmes for elementary schools (Jewish Bratislava, Jewish calendar holidays, Library of Rescued Memories) and secondary schools (Library of Rescued Memories) and cooperates with the Methodological and Educational Centre in Trnava to create accredited educational programmes for pedagogues from all over Slovakia.

65. The educational centre of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica (hereinafter referred to as the “SNU Museum”) has launched a pilot programme “Learning in the Museum – Education in the Subject of Regional History” since the beginning of the 2016/2017 school year. Teaching is carried out for pupils of the eighth year of elementary schools as a supplementary subject, which should extend their knowledge of selected problems of the history of the 20th century applied especially to the city of Banská Bystrica and the adjacent region. Teaching is combined with experiential learning, exposure work and interactive activities. In addition to gaining an overview of the history of the region, the lessons are also aimed at strengthening and supporting the education for tolerance, especially needed among young people, understanding the elements of extremism and racial discrimination in society.

66. In the period under review, the SNU Museum continued to carry out continuous education of teachers within the accredited educational programmes of Ethnic Purges, Genocides, Racial Intolerance in History for History, Ethics, Society and Civics Teachers, bringing not only new expert knowledge in the area of the solution of the Jewish question in Slovakia from 1939 to 1945, the solution of the Jewish question in Europe during World War II, the persecution of the Roma in Slovakia, but also reflecting on the modern manifestations of racism, neo-Nazism and xenophobia; and the Resistance and the Slovak National Uprising from 1939 to 1945 in Slovakia for history teachers. In 2018, the SNU Museum, in cooperation with the Lidice Memorial, the Terezín Memorial and the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in Prague, organized the second year of the international student conference War Through the Eyes of Young People (13 – 14 June 2018), which was aimed at commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic. In the period under review, the Museum also organized lectures and educational programmes and organized competitions for children and youth aimed at developing literacy, which in the framework of extracurricular activities consolidate acquired knowledge and help identify negative phenomena in society (especially anti-Semitism, extremism, xenophobia) from a historical perspective, e.g. competitions, educational programmes, lectures connected with the screening of films from the museum archive and a permanent exhibition, travelling exhibitions, etc., (e.g. Suitcase Number ..., Slovak National Uprising Through My Eyes, Heydrichiada and The Returns of Lidice Children).

67. The date of 29 August 2019 is an important day for the SR – it celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising during which in the second half of 2019, a series of commemorative events on the uprising of the Slovak domestic resistance against the occupation units of the World War II is held, under the patronage of the Slovak Prime Minister, throughout the territory of the SR. The Resolution of the Government of the SR No. 140 of 27 March 2019 approved the proposal for organizational and financial arrangements to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising. The total amount of funds for the celebrations is EUR 3,438,492.66. *More information is provided in the Annex, Point E.*

68. In November 2018, the Slovak National Gallery received the Eugen Barkanay Plaque for 2018 for the long-term spread and protection of Jewish culture.

*More information is provided in the Annex, Point F.*

69. Within the role of the Action Plan for Non-Discrimination of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020, especially activities Supporting projects aimed at building a multiethnic and multicultural society with an emphasis on Roma culture, the Ministry of Culture supported 107 projects in 2017 and 116 projects in 2018; and in the first round in 2019, 15 projects were supported. In 2017, the Office of the Government of the SR supported 85 projects as part of the mentioned activity. As part of the next role of the Action Plan for Non-Discrimination of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020 by supporting Roma culture and identity through memory and cultural institutions and a subsidy policy aimed at promoting identity, language and culture, the Ministry of Culture implemented and supported 26 projects in 2017 and 43 projects in 2018. In 2017, the Office of the Government of the SR supported 139 projects within the above task and the Fund for the Support of National Minorities Culture supported 184 projects worth EUR 1,461,598 in 2018.

70. In the framework of the Public Opinion Action Plan of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020, a meeting of the Working Group for Working with Public Opinion was held in 2018 at the level of the press departments of ministries. Again, in the framework of the

above-mentioned Action Plan, preparations were made in 2018 for a nationwide educational campaign in the area of eradication of prejudices and the building of relations between the majority and the Roma population. Since 2018, the OPRC has been publishing a document entitled “Good News from the Regions” aimed specifically at municipalities, community workers, but also the public, whose content is to promote good practice. Specific issues have been published on land consolidation issues, teacher assistants and personal bankruptcy, i.e. areas equalizing the conditions of access to housing, education and financial integrity of the Roma. A special form of the campaign is also the publicly accessible profile of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma Communities on the Facebook social network, through which he/she respects the Roma, raises awareness of diversity and promotes the implemented anti-discrimination measures. The strategy action plan also includes the implementation of training and sensitization of professional groups in the area of communication skills to promote an inclusive approach to working with Roma.

71. In 2018, the Ministry of Education trained 1,419 teaching staff and, in 2018, the OPRC trained 603 persons as part of its lecture activities, while also focusing on the specific Vlach community. In cooperation with Radio and Television of Slovakia (RTVS), OPRC organized two seminars for young new Roma reporters and editors in 2018. Based on these activities, another Roma journalist and 6 new external RTVS collaborators were admitted to RTVS in 2018, who openly claim to be Roma. In 2018, the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for the Roma Communities carried out 78 outgoing business trips to the MRC urban settlements with outputs on the spot for the media. In the medial space, in 2017 the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma Communities supported 7 examples of good practice in RTVS broadcasting and 15 examples in 2018. Simultaneously, in 2017 and 2018, the Ministry of Culture supported 7 projects aimed at eliminating multiple discrimination. In 2017 – 2018, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR (hereinafter referred to as the “Ministry of Labour”) supported 3 projects aimed at reducing gender inequalities in the private and public life of Roma with the number of participants reached 1,000. 20 elementary schools and three faculties of education participated in the project.

72. The pastoral activities of registered churches and religious societies in MRC contribute to preventing and suppressing racist hate speech in relation to the Roma, improving relations between the majority and minority populations, eradication of prejudices as well as the qualitatively higher living standards of the Roma marginalized communities. The results of the pastoral work of the Roma are presented in the publication, which is the output of the project Research of Social Inclusion of the Roma by Religious Way (SIRONA 2010) of the Institute of Ethnology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences: “God Among Barriers. Social inclusion of the Roma by religious way<sup>5</sup>. *More information is provided in the Annex, Point G.*

### **Unfair treatment and excessive use of force**

73. Until 31 January 2019, the Control and Inspection Service Section served as a specialized department of the Ministry of Interior in the field of control within the competence of the Ministry of Interior and the Inspection Service of the PF. In terms of management ties, it was directly subordinated to the Minister of Interior. On 1 February 2019, the Act No. 6/2019 Coll. came into effect, which established the Office of the Inspection Service (hereinafter

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<sup>5</sup> Tatiana Podolinská, Tomáš Hrustič, God Among Barriers / Social Inclusion of Roma by Religious Way (SIRONA 2010), ÚEt SAV, 2010.  
[http://www.uet.sav.sk/files/socialna\\_inkluzia\\_romov\\_nabozenskou\\_cestou.pdf](http://www.uet.sav.sk/files/socialna_inkluzia_romov_nabozenskou_cestou.pdf)

referred to as the “Inspection Office”) and replaced the Control and Inspection Service Section of the Ministry of Interior.

74. The Office of Inspection Service, Control and Inspection Service Section, of the Ministry of Interior had a decisive role in the fight against crime of the PF members, which has thoroughly investigated all suspected offences committed by members of the PF, regardless of gender, race or ethnic origin of the victims. It paid due attention to submissions directed against members of the PF, especially when such member performs a service or action against all persons irrespective of gender, race, skin colour, language, faith and religion, political or other mentality, national or social origin, belonging to a nationality or ethnic group, property, family or other status. Submissions are thoroughly reviewed and investigated, and a possible racial motive is ascertained on a mandatory basis, with each submission decided by law. In this context, the Control and Inspection Service Section did not separately register statistical data or special records on the number and nature of reported crimes motivated by racial intolerance, prosecutions, convictions and punishments imposed on perpetrators, nor does the Inspection Office register them.

75. The Control Section planned its foreign activities at a bilateral and multilateral level. The common denominator of these activities was the acquisition, exchange and deepening of knowledge and procedures in the field of prevention and fight against crime committed by the PF members. It was a member of EPAC (European Partners for the Fight against Corruption), which supports various preventive tools to improve anti-corruption measures within and outside Europe. This membership as well as other partnership relations resulted in meetings, respectively, communication on the exchange of experience, cooperation and coordination of activities to clarify police crime.

76. The Control Section ensured the performance of lectures and lecturing activities at secondary technical schools of the PF and at the PFA focusing on the evaluation of police crime. Within the Accreditation Commission, expert assessments related to the teaching and education programme at police secondary vocational schools were prepared.

77. The Inspection Service was competent to detect and investigate offences of police officers or former police officers if the offence was committed for the duration of the service as well as in cases when a policeman was suspected of committing an offence and the offence was committed before his/her service began.

78. Supervision of compliance with the legality in connection with the activity of the inspection service in criminal proceedings was performed by the locally competent prosecutor's office in accordance with Section 230 of the CPC before the prosecution as well as in the preparatory proceedings.

79. The Inspection Office is a unit within the competence of the Ministry of Interior, organizationally divided into inspection, control and organizational departments. In its activities, the Inspection Office is governed by the Constitution, constitutional laws, laws, other generally binding legal regulations and international treaties by which the SR is bound. The Inspection Office is managed by the Director who is responsible to the Government of the SR for the performance of his/her duties.

80. The Inspection Office is a special part of the PF with competence for the entire territory of the SR for detecting, investigating and summary investigations of criminal offences of members of the armed security corps, namely members of the PF and members of the Prison

and Judicial Guard Corps, and from 1 January 2020 also customs offences, other than those committed in respect of infringements of customs or value added tax rules on importation and excise duties.

81. The Police Force Act stipulates that in investigations and summary investigations a PF member in matters he/she investigates is procedurally independent and is bound only by the Constitution, constitutional laws, laws, other generally binding legal regulations, international treaties by which the SR is bound, and within the scope laid down in the CPC also by instructions and orders of the prosecutor and the court.

82. After the adoption of the Act No. 6/2019 Coll., Act No. 153/2001 Coll. on the Public Prosecutor's Office, as amended, was amended, stipulating that the observance of legality in preparatory proceedings in investigations conducted by the Inspection Service Office is obligatory performed by prosecutors of the Regional Prosecutor's Office and the Office of Special Prosecutor's Office. Prior to the commencement of criminal prosecution and in pre-trial proceedings, the Prosecutor performs supervision according to the CPC. Every issued decision of the police investigator, respectively, an authorized police member of the Inspection Office in the matter itself is reviewed by the relevant prosecutor's office. In carrying out such supervision, the Prosecutor is entitled, for example, to give binding instructions on the procedure pursuant to Section 197 of the CPC, investigations and summary investigations of crimes, and to set deadlines for their execution; to request files, documents, materials and reports on the state of proceedings in cases in which prosecution has been initiated in order to ascertain whether the policeman has initiated the prosecution and proceeds properly; to take part in the execution of acts, personally to carry out a single act or even an entire investigation or a summary investigation and to take a decision on any matter; return the matter to complete an investigation or a summary investigation with instructions and set a deadline for their completion; annul an unlawful or unjustified decision of the police officer, which he/she may replace with his/her own decisions; take the case from a policeman and take action so that the case is instructed by another policeman or policemen, take action so that the summary investigation is carried out by the policeman referred to in Section 10 par. 8 (a) or (c) of the CPC, make provision for the investigation or summary investigation of an offence of a member of the armed security corps to be carried out by the police officer referred to in Section 10 par. 8 (a) of the CPC, while the prosecutor shall seek the opinion of the Director of the Inspection Office before taking the measure.

83. The Control and Inspection Service Section of the Ministry of Interior prepared an annual report on the criminal activity of police officers as an informative material for the Government of the SR and subsequently published it in electronic form on the Ministry of Interior website. The activities in connection with the processing and publication of the report on criminal activities of the police officers were transferred to the Inspection Office competence. The report analyses crimes committed by police officers and compares them to the crimes committed in the prior year. The Crime Report for 2019 will analyse offences of both the police officers and the members of the Prison and Judicial Guard Corps. The report also includes data on investigations into the submissions of detained, arrested and accused persons for injuries that they believe were caused by police officers<sup>6</sup>. The incorporation of this issue into the report emerged as one of the measures in response to the report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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<sup>6</sup> The report on criminal activity of the police officers is published on the intranet site of the Ministry of Interior at the following address: <http://www.minv.sk/?ministerstvo-vnutra>



(CPT) and was reflected in the role by the Government Resolution No. 650 of 2 December 2015, point A.1.

### **Special measures**

84. A special tool in the field of Roma integration in the enforcement of the Anti-Discrimination Act is the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020 and its Action Plans for the Areas of Housing, Education, Health, Employment, Non-Discrimination and Financial Inclusion containing tasks for individual central state bodies to ensure the right to equal treatment and non-discrimination. The measures of the Action Plan for the Non-Discrimination Strategy for 2017 – 2019 itself are covered by resources totalling EUR 51,378,945.45, of which EUR 36,482,786.98 from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). One of the partial objectives of this Action Plan is to ensure effective protection of the Roma against discrimination.

85. In 2018, the amount of EUR 1,622,541 was used to carry out the tasks of this Action Plan. Under the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration, in the Action Plan for Non-Discrimination 28 measures were envisaged for 2018, of which 11 were fulfilled and 13 measures are still in progress. A special intervention measure also under the Anti-Discrimination Act in the system of the above-mentioned strategy funded from the ESIF and the state budget is the Operational Programme Human Resources (hereinafter referred to as the “OP HR”) (Priority Axis 5 Integration of MRC and Priority Axis 6 Technical Facilities in Municipalities with the Presence of MRC) in which disadvantages of MRC projects were funded with the amount of EUR 33,709,607.04 in 2018. A specific form of effective enforcement of the Anti-Discrimination Act and other acts containing the principle of equal treatment is the implementation of four national projects of the OPRC.

86. Through the Ministry of Labour, the state supervises compliance with the Act on Social Services, as amended, and generally binding legal regulations in the provision of social services and the manner of their implementation, especially in terms of respecting the fundamental human rights and freedoms. In addition to the above-mentioned activities, the Ministry of Labour also took all necessary measures for effective implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Act. For the purposes of social inclusion of also MRC under Priority Axis No. 4 of the OP HR for the programming period 2014 – 2020, the funds totalling EUR 368,671,978 were allocated. In order to ensure effective implementation of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020, the Ministry of Labour implements two national projects – Field Social Work in Municipalities I. and Support of Selected Social Services of Crisis Intervention at Community Level that began to be implemented in 2016. 261 field social workers and 247 field workers were employed through the National project (hereinafter referred to as the “NP”) Field Social Work in Municipalities I. (2016 – 2019) with a total allocation of EUR 29,340,353. A total of 387 jobs were created in the national project Support of Selected Social Services of Crisis Intervention at Community Level with a total allocation of EUR 20,915,000. Community Centres, Low-Threshold Day Centres and Low-Threshold Social Services for Children and Families Involved in NP Support of Selected Social Services of Crisis Intervention at Community Level carried out activities related to the theme "Principle of equal treatment and possibilities of the protection of clients from different forms of discrimination". These activities are of a preventive and enlightenment nature (talks and discussions on racist violence, racism, Nazism, the Holocaust and socially unacceptable ideologies) and a nature of prevention, conflict resolution in the family and community, focusing on domestic violence, gender equality and equal opportunities, bullying, prevention of fraud and violence against seniors and people with disabilities.

87. In particular, in the NP Field Social Work and Field Work in Municipalities with the presence of MRC, funded with the amount of EUR 26,511,131, interventions were carried out for 41,604 Roma, with 155 Roma employed in the project out of 485 employees. Also in the National Project Community Centres in Towns and Municipalities with the presence of MRC – Phase I., funded with the amount of EUR 18,688,722, 173 workers in 58 community centres provided services, interventions and support to 11,010 Roma. So far, 44 Roma have been employed in the project and 277 programmes have also been implemented to improve the financial literacy of the Roma.

88. The prohibition of discrimination and the principle of equal treatment are not only laid down in the Anti-Discrimination Act itself, but also in a number of other regulations. At the same time, measures from European solidarity assistance sources are implemented in accordance with the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020. The SR has adopted several acts that have actually improved the protection of the rights of residents of MRC urban settlements.

89. Between 2017 and 2019, the Acts on Subsidies for Housing Development and on Social Housing and on the State Fund for Housing Development were amended. The possibility of providing support of the purchase of land conditioning on the construction and use of rented flats has been extended, while simultaneously providing support of the purchase of a rental flat; the amount of support of the purchase of a rental flat was increased to EUR 90,000, and the support of the purchase of land in the amount of EUR 12,000 per rental flat was provided for. At the same time, in the case of the purchase of a rental flat, it provided for the possibility of support up to 100% of the purchase price for the applicant, which is a municipality, self-governing region or non-profit making organization if a building is located in a municipality of a district with low employment rate. At the same time, by amending Decree No. 284/2013 Coll., on the amount of provided support from the State Housing Development Fund, on general conditions for providing support and on the content of the application, by Decree No. 283/2017 Coll. and Decree No. 361/2018 Coll. in the case of rental flats, where the applicant is a municipality, higher territorial unit or non-profit-making organization, a loan of 80% of the purchase price may be granted with the interest rate of 1%, and in the case of the least developed district with the interest of 0%. At the same time, the exclusive position of newlyweds was regulated. These adjustments provided municipalities, towns and non-profit-making organizations with more favourable conditions in fulfilling their functions or missions, in securing standard flats or social housing flats, including in the possibility of obtaining 100% financing of rental flats, also in the manner of a combination of public funds through grants and loans. In the area of access to the labour market, the Act on Social Economy and Social Enterprises (No. 112/2018 Coll.) was enacted in 2018 which also included the provision of housing, administration, maintenance and renewal of the housing stock among the supported socially beneficial services.

90. Another tool to ensure adequate housing is the call Improved Forms of Housing for Municipalities with the presence of MRC using Elements of Provisional Housing with an EU and state budget allocation of EUR 50,294,117.65. The OPRC is also implementing the NP Support of Land Settlement in MRC, in which 157 municipalities are involved. The allocated amount of the call from the state budget and ESIF funds for supporting processes of ownership relations settlement amounts to EUR 3,094,000 / the contractually determined amount of EUR 2,372,313.00. In order to implement this project, Act No. 330/1991 Coll. on land consolidation, land ownership arrangements, land offices, land fund and land associations was amended by Act No. 153/2017 Coll., which allowed land consolidation, if it is necessary for the arrangement of ownership and use conditions for land under settlements of marginalized population groups.

Similarly, with the aim of ensuring the settlement of land under these dwellings, Decree No. 213/2017 Coll. was adopted, amending Decree of the Ministry of Justice No. 492/2004 Coll. on the determination of the general value of property, as amended, which regulated the determination of the value of lands located under settlements of marginalised population groups. Another instrument for ensuring the availability of housing for the middle income group of the Roma is the call for financial instruments the OP HR in the amount of EUR 13,571,195.00 monitoring growth in the number of Roma households with access to improved housing conditions and increased employment rate of MRC within social economy entities in areas with the presence of MRC. So far, the beneficiary in the project Financial Instrument implemented under Priority Axis 6 of the OP HR in the programming period 2014 – 2020 is the company Slovak Investment Holding, as.

91. In 2018, a subsidy was provided pursuant to Act No. 443/2010 Coll. on subsidies for housing development and social housing, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 443/2010 Coll.”) in the amount of EUR 26,344,360, which supported the acquisition of 1,385 rental flats intended for social housing. Out of this number, 7 municipalities with MRC were granted a subsidy for the purchase of 142 rental flats for the purpose of social housing in a total amount of EUR 3,081,720.

92. Legislative developments have provided a higher level of protection. At the same time, flats owned by municipalities and towns are excluded from the regulatory scope of Act No. 98/2014 Coll. on short-term rental of flats, thus SR implemented the General Comment No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions, as the Act provides a lower level of protection for the tenant of an flat than the CC. Likewise, in the Act on Bankruptcy and Restructuring No. 7/2005 Coll., as amended, there are several protective measures against forced evictions, including procedures for voluntary auctions and seizures by vacating properties, inter alia, Section 166d regulates the unassailable value of a dwelling which is not subject to bankruptcy, in Section 167o the conditions for the monetizing of a dwelling are strictly regulated and in Section 167r the possibility of the debtor's relative to purchase such dwelling from the bankruptcy estate are regulated. Also, the Execution Code No. 233/1995 Coll. has protective elements specified for executions by the selling of real estate or for executions by vacating a property or flat.

93. For municipal flats in the SR, the price regulation of the lease is stipulated by measures of the Ministry of Finance of the SR. The Execution Code in Section 63 para. 3 lays down strict conditions (exceptionality) of execution proceedings in which the obliged party has reported a permanent or temporary place of residence, after approval by the court, for multiple execution proceedings in which claims exceeding EUR 2,000.00 are being recovered. The obliged party has the right to lodge an appeal to be ruled upon by the judge in execution proceedings involving the vacating of property or the vacating of a flat. In justified and precisely specified cases of termination of a flat lease, the CC regulates the obligation to provide housing compensation, i.e. flat, substitute accommodation and shelter. The rent in state and municipal flats is regulated by measures of the Ministry of Finance of the SR so that the amount of rent reflects the social aspect, especially in the case of social housing. Act No. 417/2013 Coll. on assistance in material need regulates the housing allowance for persons in material need.

94. In 2015, the Ministry of Education already made fundamental legislative changes in 2015. The amendment of Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on education and training (the Education Act) stipulated that a pupil whose special educational needs derive exclusively from his/her development in a socially disadvantaged environment cannot be admitted to a special class or a special primary school and the explicitly stipulated inclusion of these pupils in classes with other pupils in the 'normal classroom'. Subsequently, the allowance for a pupil from a socially

disadvantaged environment was adjusted to meet the purpose, i.e. requirements to ensure conditions, content, forms, methods and approaches in education and training, which are necessary to develop the pupil's abilities or personality and to achieve adequate education and appropriate social inclusion. As a result of the legislative change, the number of pupils in special primary schools decreased, in the school year 2016/2017 there were 15,101 pupils, in the school year 2017/2018 there were 14,744 pupils and in the school year 2018/2019 there were 14,239 pupils. We also record reduced numbers in special classes of primary schools. In the school year 2016/2017 there were 6,397 pupils, in the school year 2017/2018 there were 6,186 pupils and in the school year 2018/2019 there were 6,154 pupils.

95. Amendments to Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on Funding of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Facilities, as amended, with effect from 1 September 2017, amended Section 4e para. 7 to which part of the Education Act was transferred regarding the provision of a contribution to improve the conditions for education and training of pupils from socially disadvantaged environment (hereinafter referred to as "SDE"). At the same time, Section 9f of the transitional provision provided: For the purposes of providing a contribution to improve the conditions for education and training of pupils from SDE, in the period from 1 September 2017 to 31 December 2019 such pupil is also considered as a pupil from SDE who is a member of a household in which members receive assistance in material need and the legal guardian of the pupil proves this fact to the headmaster of their primary school. This contribution goes beyond the standard norm for a student.

96. The founder of a primary school in which more than 85 pupils from the SDE are educated is obliged to use at least 50% of the total contribution to improve the conditions for education and training of pupils from SDE for primary school at the teacher's assistant's staff costs for pupils from SDE or social teacher.

97. As education is one of the tools to escape from concentrated and generational poverty, the strategy pays particular attention to this area. In the framework of the National Project of OPRC Support of Pre-primary Education of Children from MRC I, 104 municipalities participated until August 2019, there are already 280 employees working in the educational process (teacher's assistants, professional pedagogical staff, coordinators of work with family) of which 70 employees are from the MRC environment. The target number of children involved in the project is 4,000.

98. Another combination measure in the area of support of pupils of Roma nationals/MRC members in the roles of the strategy includes the tools of Act No. 544/2010 Coll. on subsidies within the competence of the Ministry of Labour, as amended. Under this generally binding regulation, the Ministry of Labour provides grants to support education to meet the educational obligations of a child at risk of social exclusion and grants to support education at the dietary habits of a child at risk of social exclusion. In 2017, both grant titles received a transfer from the state budget to the beneficiary in the amount of EUR 10,250,779.00, providing support for 2,136 children.

99. As another measure of the Strategy, the numbers of pedagogical staff in kindergartens continued to increase in 2017, the share of qualified pedagogical assistants in kindergartens attended by MRC children out of the total number of pedagogical assistants in kindergartens is 57%. Activities of involving children/pupils in the all-day education system also continued in 2017, with 13,170 pupils being educated in this system. The Strategy also set out the role of continuing education for teachers and teaching assistants using the Roma language as a supportive language for teaching. In 2017, 190 pedagogical staff went through this training,

focused on the use of the Roma language in the educational process; this number increased to 1,199 participants in 2018. In 2018, the number of Roma pupils involved in the full-day educational process in secondary schools reached 19,143.

100. As of 1 September 2018, 2,449 full-time Roma pupils and 182 part-time Roma pupils were newly admitted for lower secondary vocational education, i.e. a total of 2,631 pupils. The number of graduates for the school year in full-time form was 757 and in part-time form 113, i.e. a total of 870 graduates. Also in 2018, a contribution of EUR 6,172,400 was granted to pupils/Roma with special educational needs resulting from an environment of concentrated poverty. The number of specialised employees – special pedagogues and psychologists, was increased in 2018 to 1,951.46 in schools focused on MRCs, which are utilised within inclusive education teams. In 2018, 180 schools and 19,143 Roma pupils living in the MRCs were involved in projects aimed at improving the educational outcomes of MRC/SDE pupils, school cooperation and transfer of good practice. A total of 217 additional graduates completed the continuing education for teachers focused on specific educational and instructional needs and improving educational outcomes for pupils from MRC/SDE in 2019. In 2018, another 189 graduates completed a similar programme, expanded to include work with families of pupils from MRC/SDE. In 2018, 3,347 MRC/SDE pupils were provided with information and counselling services in their choice of profession, 6,240 job seekers from the MRC were provided with financial support, and 2,219 Roma were retrained.

101. In the call aimed at Providing mentoring and tutoring support for MRC pupils with an emphasis on successful completion of primary school and a smooth transition to secondary school, until the end of 2018, projects with a total contribution amount (EU and SR budget) of EUR 4,216,163.32 were supported so far.

102. With the Government Resolution No. 302 of 27 June 2018, the National Programme for the Development of Education and Training for 2018 – 2027 (hereinafter referred to as "NPDET") was adopted as well as the Action Plan No. 1, which provides for the legislative and economic provision of compulsory completion of the last year of pre-primary education, with a specific aim of eliminating the disadvantage of children from MRC when enrolling in primary schools and a consequent risk of incorrect inclusion outside the mainstream.

103. An important measure of the Strategy was the fulfilment of the objective to introduce compulsory pre-primary education for MRC pupils. The NPDET provided for the introduction of a comprehensive entitlement to pre-primary education for children from the age of 4 years, practicable from 2021. The Act 209/2019 Coll., which amended the Education Act, introduces compulsory and free pre-primary education for children from the age of 5 years with effect from 1 January 2021. This is one of the fundamental steps that will help improve pupils' performance in international testing, while helping to educate children from MRC and from SDE. The greatest benefit for children from SDE will be the compulsory participation in pre-primary education in developing their communication skills, because of their more natural socialization, the gradual elimination of deficits in controlling cultural and social conventions, and also in developing the skills needed to manage independence.

104. In accordance with the above-mentioned strategy within the School Open to All project, since 1 February 2016, 133 schools have been supported in implementing the inclusive education model, involving 50 kindergartens. 19,145 pupils with special educational needs, 5,430 children and 2,212 pedagogical and specialized staff were involved in the model. The project was financed with a total amount of EUR 29,882,756.00. Within the project, inclusive teams were established to support a significant improvement in communication and cooperation

with parents of children and pupils from the SDE/MRC. In 2017, the educational programme Cooperation of Educational Staff and Specialized Employees in the System of Inclusive Support of Children and Pupils was accredited within this project, whose target group are also teachers and pedagogical assistants of kindergartens. Training in this programme started in December 2017 with 137 participants. In 2018, 1,199 pedagogical and specialized staff were involved in the training programme.

105. From 2016 to 2018, following the call *More Successful in Primary School*, with an allocation of EUR 50,000,000, inclusive education processes were implemented, as well as supported inclusive teams at schools by increasing the number of teacher's assistants or specialist staff as required by the school. 478 schools were involved in the project. The priority of the project was to reduce and prevent early school leaving and to promote access to high-quality pre-school, primary and secondary education, including formal, informal and mainstream education forms, for reintegration into education and training. The specific objective was to increase inclusiveness and equal access to high-quality education and to improve the outcomes and competences of children and pupils.

106. In 2018, the call *More Successful in Primary School II* was announced as a continuation of the successful call of the same name, which supported 478 primary school projects aimed at creating new jobs for pedagogical assistants, teacher's assistants for pupils with disabilities or inclusive teams. The indicative amount of EU funding earmarked for this call is EUR 9.5 million, of which EUR 9 million for less developed regions and EUR 0,5 million for more developed region.

107. Out of the individual other projects implemented in accordance with the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020 to improve the status of members of the MRC urban settlements, with which the provisions of the Anti-Discrimination Act are also implemented, the access to drinking water improved by 33.30% for these inhabitants, housing conditions by remediation of illegal dumps by 25.35%, and for whom housing conditions through stairways improved by 27.99%.

108. The call focused on the construction, modernization and reconstruction of community centres, also in interaction with the national project Community Centres in Towns and Municipalities with the presence of MRC – Phase I, provided funds in the amount of EUR 15,310,088.69 – 60 approved applications. This call is complementary to the national project Community Centres in Towns and Municipalities with the presence of MRC – Phase I. Another call, focusing on the construction of new community centres, their reconstruction and rebuilding in municipalities with the presence of MRC, is complementary to the national project in the private sector. The amount of the allocation from the ESIF and state budget funds is EUR 17,666,688.41. In the framework of this call, 58 applications were approved with the amount of allocation from the ESIF and state budget funds amounting to EUR 12,957,876.85. As of August 2019, 112 projects worth EUR 26,877,272.31 were contracted.

109. The call focused on “Promoting access to drinking water in separated and segregated MRC environments by means of water supply, wells and surface water treatment plants”, with an allocation of the ESIF and state budget funds of EUR 17,882,352.94. The contracted applications as of August 2019 amount to EUR 2,820,240.90. In the call focused on “Construction or completion of the system of separated collection and municipal waste disposal, Implementation of remediation of illegal dumps, including the elimination of adverse impacts of illegal dumps”, with an allocated amount of public ESIF funds and the state budget of EUR 17,882,352.94, as of August 2019, 131 projects worth EUR 16,498,563.55 were

contracted. Contract in the field of financial instruments under OP HR with the beneficiary – the company Slovenský investičný holding, a. s., in Priority Axis 6 – Technical Facilities in Municipalities with the Presence of MRC, in a total allocated amount of ESIF public funds and the state budget of EUR 13,571,195.00 contains activities focused on the social economy and housing.

110. This number of calls is also completed by other calls also within the OP HR directed simultaneously at both the majority population and the Roma, but also another National Project of OPRC Support of Settlement of Lands in MRC.

111. The other activities focused on reducing poverty within the Strategy also include the national projects Healthy Communities 2A and 3A. In the first project funded with a total amount of EUR 11,295,885, 254 Roma were placed in jobs, and the project in the field of health education and access to health care provided support for 11,348 Roma. In the year as of August, a total of nearly EUR 6 million was invested in the field of health as part of the national project.

112. In June 2019, a new call aimed at supporting the completion of the basic technical infrastructure was announced, Technical equipment in municipalities with the presence of MRC, in an allocated amount (EU and state budget) of EUR 11,305,882.35, focused on the construction of local roads, public lighting, emergency lanes and bridging local flows in urban settlements of MRC.

113. The call Support of social enterprises in Priority Axis 6 is currently being prepared to increase the employment of the Roma. Technical equipment in municipalities with the presence of MRC with an allocated amount of EU funds of EUR 13,500,000. The call Housing Assistance is being prepared under Priority Axis 5 Integration of MRC with the aim of improving the housing conditions of Roma in an allocated amount of EU funds of EUR 6,000,000. A new call is also under preparation to ensure better access to drinking water in Priority Axis 6. Technical equipment in municipalities with the presence of MRC in an allocated amount of EUR 14,000,000.

114. Local civil order services are also implemented to prevent the use of force. The civic element of the protection of public order, property, civic coexistence and especially the assumption of responsibility for the protection of public order by the Roma themselves are accentuated. The project was created in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior as an intermediary body of the OP HR and the OPRC, preferentially intended for MRC members with the secondary effect of increasing employment. The first call was announced on 24 May 2017, financed from the OP HR, Priority Axis 5. Integration of MRC, the title Support of the comprehensive provision of local civil order service in municipalities with the presence of MRC. The indicative amount of funds from the European Union – European Social Fund was set at EUR 10,000,000 in the first phase, and later the process of increasing these funds to the amount of the allocation (EU and state budget) of EUR 19,223,529 took place, thus increasing the number of municipalities and towns, where local civil order services operate, to 147.

115. The above-mentioned instrument is a means of eliminating the escalation of situations in the field of public order and conflict situations, which would establish the reasons for the deployment of forces of the PF in the regulation of Act No. 171/1993 Coll., on the Police Force, as amended, while the above civic services also represent a new important communication channel between the community and PF. This institute has so far fully proved itself. On 31 August 2018, another call Support of the comprehensive provision of local civil order service in municipalities with the presence of MRC was announced, in an allocated amount of EUR

17,882,352.94. A total of 232 applicants/municipalities submitted a grant application for the inclusion of these local civic services, of which 212 were approved. Due to the gradual contracting of projects from this last call, after the launch of the second part, these patrols will operate in 250 municipalities and towns with urban MRC settlements.

116. The development and implementation of the National Strategy for Roma Integration by 2020 continued. New Action Plans on Education, Employment, Health, Housing and a New Action Plan on Financial Inclusion, Non-Discrimination and Approaches to the Majority Society – Roma Integration Initiative through Communication – were adopted in 2017. In 2019, the updated Action Plans of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020 for 2019 – 2020 for Education, Employment, Health, Housing and Financial Inclusion were approved. The OPRC submits every year a report on the fulfilment of individual tasks contained in the Strategy.

117. As part of the creation of a stable source of funding for the Action Plans on Non-Discrimination and Approaches to the Majority Society – Roma Integration Initiative through Communication, a total of EUR 51,336,042.44 by 2020 (state budget and EU funds) was budgeted in 2017. A total of EUR 215,002,906.19 was budgeted for the new Action Plans for Education, Employment, Health, Housing and Financial Inclusion for 2018 – 2019 (this figure does not include any expiring resources from the previous Action Plans). By 2020, a total of EUR 392,633,541.50 has been budgeted for all the above-mentioned Action Plans of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020.

118. The Strategy of the SR, including individual action plans, were created in a participatory manner from the beginning in accordance with the adopted resolutions of the Government of the SR for the creation of public policies, strategies and civil society participation. In addition to the advisory bodies of the Plenipotentiary, in particular the Advisory Commission of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma Communities for the preparation of revision and update of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020, regional consultation platforms were established. As part of a separate call in 2016 – 2017, the OPRC project “Support of Active Participation and Consultation Processes in the Area of Implementation and Monitoring of Roma Integration and Roma Youth Policies in Slovakia” was supported. In 2018, the EU grant within the framework of the creation of common, regional platforms strengthened the position of Roma youth, women and children as active participants in the process of inclusion, increasing their share in the implementation of the measure of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020. OPRC is a holder of the accredited training programme “training of trainers for work with youth in MRC”.

### **Political participation of ethnic minorities**

119. At present, the most important mechanism for the participation of persons belonging to national minorities is the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups as a permanent advisory body of the Slovak Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as the “Council”) for issues concerning national minorities and ethnic groups and their members, and for the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The Chairman of the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups is the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for National Minorities. The Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups shall act as a consultative body on the participation of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in decision-making on matters concerning them. It provides incentives to the Council to increase the level of



support, protection and respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities in accordance with the Constitution, international obligations of the SR and laws and other generally binding legal regulations; it participates in drawing up reports for the control mechanisms of international treaties on human rights and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, in particular the Convention and the Charter. It also elaborates for the Council proposals for partial and system measures to improve the respect for the rights of national minorities in the SR, elaborates for the Council proposals for opinions and resolutions on bills, generally binding legal regulations and internal legal regulations, as well as governmental, departmental and other non-legislative measures that may have an impact on the protection or respect for the rights of national minorities; a representative of the Committee presents proposals for resolutions at the Council meeting; in the field of national minority rights, it cooperates with ministries and other central state administration bodies, municipalities, higher territorial units, local state authorities, non-governmental non-profit making organizations, scientific workplaces and academic institutions, and once every two years it draws up the evaluation report on the promotion of national minority cultures, the status of national education and the use of national minority languages.

120. Thirteen national minorities are represented in the Committee. In accordance with the status change in 2018, 23 members representing 13 national minorities and 9 members representing the relevant state administration bodies have the right to vote. The most significant change in this context, which strengthened the rights of national minorities in the field of participation, was a change in the Committee voting system. This change respected the multiple demands made by larger national minorities and allowed each member of the Chamber, which is made up of representatives of the Committee for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, to have the right to vote. Among the ten still invited members of the Committee without voting rights are the Public Defender of Rights, a representative of the Committee of the National Council of the SR for Human Rights and National Minorities, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality for Civil Society, Director of the Fund for the Support of National Minorities Culture, Executive Director of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, a representative of RTVS, two experts demonstrably working in the field of the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities who are engaged in publishing, analytical, educational or other similar activities in the given field, a representative of the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia, a representative of the Union of Towns of Slovakia and a representative of the Association of Self-Governing Regions SK 8.

121. Forms of political participation at national as well as regional and local levels are available to national minorities exclusively through the electoral system and thus through political parties and political movements. As for the representation of national minorities through their members in the legislative power, such representation has been held by national minorities in the National Council of the SR continuously since the establishment of the SR. Detailed information on the results of elections to bodies of self-governing regions and municipal elections in terms of national minorities, as well as an overview of the number of members of national minorities in the National Council of the SR are available in Part II. Rights of persons belonging to national minorities in the field of participation in the settlement of cases concerning them of the Report on the status and rights of persons belonging to national minorities for the period 2017 – 2018.<sup>7</sup> According to the findings stated therein, the

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<sup>7</sup> This report is available on the website of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for National Minorities; [https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7527\\_sprava-o-stavaveni-a-pravach-prpravlus-narodnostnych-mensin-za-obdobie-rokov-2017—2018.pdf](https://www.narodnostnemensiny.gov.sk/data/files/7527_sprava-o-stavaveni-a-pravach-prpravlus-narodnostnych-mensin-za-obdobie-rokov-2017—2018.pdf)

representation of national minorities in the legislative body of the SR has been gradually decreasing. Persons belonging to national minorities get to the Parliament depending on the organization of the public-political life of the given minority. From a demographic point of view, the 5% electoral threshold is unreachable for all national minorities except for Hungarian and Roma. The differentiation of the political scene in the case of the Roma national minority, whose interests are usually represented by several political parties, has so far caused none of them to overcome the electoral threshold in the legislative body.

### **Right to adequate housing**

122. In the SR, the primary responsibility for the acquisition of own housing rests with the citizen. Housing is one of the persistent problems of most low-income households, but also of households entering the housing market for the first time. The interest of the state is to increase the accessibility of housing for its citizens through supporting economic instruments.

123. The Concept of the State Housing Policy by 2020, approved by Government Resolution No. 13 of 7 January 2015, is the state framework document for housing. The aim of the State Housing Policy is to gradually increase the overall level of housing so that housing is accessible to residents and that every household can ensure adequate housing. To achieve this goal, the concept proposes to implement several measures by 2020.

124. The area of increasing the accessibility and quality of housing for Slovak citizens is continually supported by state housing policy instruments in the form of direct and indirect support. The main objective of these instruments is to ensure appropriate conditions for all citizens so that they can obtain adequate housing depending on their possibilities. In the competence of the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the SR (hereinafter referred to as “Ministry of Transport”), a long-term system of support of the acquisition of rental flats intended for social housing is provided through a combination of subsidies pursuant to Act 443/2010 Coll. on subsidies for housing development and on social housing, as amended, and a soft loan from the State Housing Development Fund.

125. In the past period, the Ministry of Transport continued to provide subsidies for the acquisition of rental flats and technical equipment pursuant to Act No. 443/2010 Coll., on subsidies for housing development and on social housing, as amended. Subsidies for the purchase of rental flats are mainly provided to municipalities and towns, while rental flats can have two standards, regular and basic, which is also called the lower standard. It should be noted that the lower standard does not mean a lower quality of housing; rather, it defines some elements in the basic regime so that such housing is significantly more affordable for designated groups of the population in comparison with flats of the regular standard. A subsidy of up to 75% of the purchase costs is therefore granted for this type of construction. The following tables give a more detailed overview of the number of supported flats and related technical equipment, as well as the amounts provided for these purposes between 2016 and 2018.

**Table No. 1**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of rental flats of lower standard</b>	<b>Provided subsidy in EUR</b>
2016	190	4,184,160.00
2017	116	2,465,380.00
2018	150	3,243,550.00

**Table No. 2**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of supported flats</b>	<b>Provided subsidy for construction of related technical equipment in EUR</b>
2016	176	154,470.00
2017	86	160,920.00
2018	135	257,380.00

126. The Intermediate Body for Priority Axis 5 and 6 of the OP HR is currently implementing several measures through projects by means of calls for demand-oriented projects and national projects with the aim of comprehensively improving the living conditions of MRC members. Specifically, it is the provision of local civil order service (Roma patrols), the provision of assistance services in the field of social and community field work, health assistance. The investment measures include the construction and reconstruction of community centres, kindergartens, remediation of illegal dumps and construction of municipal waste collection platforms, construction of wells and drinking water dispensing points. There is an open call for provisional housing with an allocation of EUR 50 million, under which municipalities are preparing provisional housing systems, including the work of housing assistants. In terms of the indicators achieved so far, we can state that currently 21,605 MRC persons have improved housing conditions through the above-mentioned investment projects. Specifically, for example, access to drinking water for 5,481 MRC members has been improved.

127. Regarding the issue of permitting segregation walls by building authorities in the territory of the SR, we state that according to Act No. 50/1976 Coll. on land-use planning and building code (Building Act), as amended, it is possible to permit the construction of fencing in cases where the main building on the land can have an adverse effect on the environment or if it needs to be protected from environmental influences (e.g. protection zones of water resources, energy constructions, etc.), or to prevent the free movement of persons and animals in buildings under construction for safety reasons. Owners of land and buildings build fencing of land and buildings in order to protect their property rights from the entry of unauthorized persons. Such fences cannot be considered as segregation walls. The Building Act does not permit the construction of fencing whose primary objective is to segregate a certain population group. If, in a relevant manner (by a judgement of a civil court), it has been proved that a particular wall or fencing, in contravention of any article of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, has discriminatory or segregating effects in the given territory, based on the final judgement of the court, the building office orders its removal.

128. At present, a new building act is under way in the legislative process, which directly incorporates the obligation of the permitting authority (building authority) in the permitting procedure to ascertain whether construction work do not pursue the segregation of a group of inhabitants on a racial, national or social basis.

129. The problem of the construction of segregation walls, which has occurred in the territory of the SR in the past period and is of a subsiding nature, is not caused solely by insufficient legislation, but it is a society-wide problem while we consider it important to focus on more systematic practical guidance for local governments and to continue working to adopt integration policies and other more targeted instruments as a solution.

130. It can be stated that when setting up programmes financed from ESIF funds in the programming period 2014 – 2020, Slovakia already set up the application of the 3D principle (DESEGREGATION, DEGHETOIZATION AND DESTIGMATIZATION) as one of the basic conditions for drawing funds from public sources.

131. To this end, OPRC issued the Methodological Guideline for the effective application of the principles of desegregation, deghetoization and destigmatization. This Methodological Guideline was issued in accordance with the Strategy of the SR for the Integration of the Roma by 2020. One of the main aims of the Strategy itself, the Methodological Guideline as well as the Operational Programme is to stop the segregation of Roma communities, a significant positive turn in the social inclusion of Roma communities, non-discrimination and change of attitude of the majority population towards the Roma minority. These are also reflected in the individual action plans of the strategy.

132. Given the fact that in the aforementioned Methodological Guideline the elimination of segregation/desegregation is identified as a process resulting in the ending of spatial and social separation or isolation of members of Roma communities and the majority population, it is justified that the procedure of the Government of the SR resulted from the awareness of the basic parameter that involuntary residential segregation, as a result of historical development, cannot be effectively addressed only by measures in the field of state policy in the area of land planning and housing, but this problem requires a comprehensive solution with active involvement of the majority of society and MRC members.

133. Regarding the issue of forced eviction, we state that the legislation currently in force, in particular the Building Act, as amended, permits the ordering of the building to be vacated only in exceptional cases, which are an immediate threat to the life or health of persons using the building in question. In the case of building vacating proceedings, in the case of a building containing flats, the building office is obliged, according to the valid wording of the Building Act, to notify the owner of the building in order to provide the users of the endangered building with housing compensation. Likewise, the Expropriation Act permits the use of the expropriation institute only as an extreme alternative applicable subject to the fulfilment of the statutory conditions. The expropriation procedure stipulates stricter conditions for the purchase of residential buildings, where it is necessary to prove that the expropriation procedure was preceded by an unsuccessful submission of a written proposal for the conclusion of an agreement, including an offer to provide substitute housing.

134. The land-use plan of the municipality comprehensively solves all requirements for spatial arrangement and functional use of the whole territory of the municipality, which also deals with housing areas for Roma communities. The regulations and principles of the land-use plan also address the requirements for their use in these areas and propose the necessary territorial-technical measures.

135. At the same time, pursuant to Act No. 226/2011 Coll., on the provision of subsidies for the processing of land-use planning documentation of municipalities and its implementing decree, for the provision of a subsidy the evaluation criteria favour municipalities in whose territory the MRC is registered according to the Atlas of Roma Communities in Slovakia. In 2019, out of the total number of municipalities that received a subsidy from the Ministry of Transport for the preparation of land-use planning documentation, there are up to 28% of the municipalities in which the above-mentioned Roma community is located.

136. On 19 November 2018, the call for provisional housing with an allocation of EUR 50 million was announced, which aims to improve forms of housing in municipalities with MRC through the construction or refurbishment of multi-dwelling buildings, but in particular through the creation of the provisional housing system that also has to provide persons involved with accompanying social services at each level of housing through a housing assistant. The aim of this social service is precisely to ensure the sustainability of housing for MRC. In addition to the aforementioned call, the implementation of financial instruments envisages announcing a call aimed at providing rental housing as well as supporting self-help housing for MRC.

### **Right to health**

137. Within the currently implemented national project Healthy Communities with an allocation of EUR 11.3 million, the main activity is the implementation, development of health mediation and education in MRC. The main activity aims to improve, through field work of health assistants, the situation of MRC in the field of social determinants of health (i.e. health-related behaviour, material conditions, psycho-social factors, barriers to access to health care, health literacy and structural constraints – e.g. discrimination, racism, low level of education, related legislation). The project introduced a new job position of health education assistant in hospitals (primarily in gynaecology, obstetrics and children's wards). So far, almost 20,000 people from MRC have been affected by the above-mentioned activities of the national project.

138. For the Health Action Plan of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020, implementation costs are estimated at EUR 19,095,284, of which ESIF resources are EUR 16,200,491.40. The Ministry of Health of the SR and the relevant Regional Public Health Authority monitored and evaluated the occurrence of epidemics of selected infectious diseases in areas with low hygiene standards. In 2018, a pilot implementation of a targeted prevention programme aimed at sexual and reproductive health intended for the MRC population was under way. The programme was implemented by 264 employees of the National Project Healthy Communities 2A. The Ministry of Health carried out 10 educational activities on the importance of vaccination. Since 2017, the Pilot Project of Health Promotion Assistants in Hospitals for MRC members has been running as one of the activities of the National Project Healthy Communities 2A in 6 hospitals. This pilot project also includes prevention of cases of ill-treatment in obstetric services. The National Project Healthy Communities in Health Education for MRC members cooperates with 811 doctors, in 2018 the project implemented 39,617 cases of cooperation with doctors and 108,770 cases of direct assistance. As of January 2019, 261 health education assistants were employed through the Healthy Communities projects under the Healthy Regions organization, operating in 271 municipalities in all regions of Slovakia. A special programme for 8 municipalities and towns – Healthy Communities 3A financed with the amount of EUR 303,557 is being implemented in the Bratislava Region. As part of the improvement of health care, the Ministry of Health of the SR has prepared Decree No. 163/2019 Coll. of the Ministry of Health of the SR, supplementing Decree No. 84/2016 Coll. of the Ministry of Health of the SR laying down defining features of individual types of healthcare facilities, as amended by Decree No. 387/2016 Coll., as well as other regulations regulating the emergency medical service.

139. At present, the SR fully implements the ECHR rulings concerning illegal sterilisations. Since 2013, the ECHR has only heard one case concerning sterilization without informed consent, rejecting the ECHR's complaint as manifestly unfounded. The Slovak courts have started to implement the ECHR rulings concerning illegal sterilization and the award of

financial compensation for non-material harm caused by illegal sterilization. In 2016 and 2017, two judgements (of which one has already been finalized) were reported by district courts to award the full amount of non-pecuniary damage claimed to Roma women (EUR 15,096.96 and EUR 16,000) as well as the proceedings costs. They referred to the case-law of the ECHR. However, both cases were cases of sterilisations carried out in 1999. Newer cases have not been reported. We remind that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe considered the general and individual measures taken by the SR in this area to be sufficient and completed the monitoring of the ECHR judgements performance as early as on 2 April 2014 by Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe CM/ResDH(2014)43.

140. Pursuant to Act No. 576/2004 Coll. on health care, services related to the provision of health care, the condition of performing an abortion is written informed consent after prior instruction. Such informed consent shall include the date of its granting and the signature of the woman requesting the abortion or of her legal guardian.

141. Advice prior to informed consent must be provided in the manner prescribed by law and must include information on the purpose, nature, course and consequences of abortion; physical and psychological risks of abortion; the current developmental stage of the embryo or foetus whose development is to be terminated and on her entitlement to obtain a record from the sonographic examination; alternatives to abortion, in particular the possibility to hide her personality in connection with childbirth, child adoption after birth, financial, material or psychological assistance during pregnancy, provided by civil associations, non-profit making organizations, foundations, churches and religious societies.

142. In the case of a minor, the condition of performing an abortion is, in addition to the written informed consent, also the written informed consent of the legal guardian of the minor after prior instruction. Such informed consent shall include the date of its granting and the signature of the legal guardian.

### **Right to education**

143. As part of the planned activities of the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the European Commission, i.e. the ET 2020 Working Group on Promoting Citizenship and Common Values of Freedom, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination through Education, the working meeting Peer learning activities on Identification of challenges and ways of preventing discrimination and segregation in education was held in September 2017. Participants from EU countries have jointly researched, exchanged knowledge and experience and sought a solution for residential segregation, with an emphasis on ensuring equal access to quality education, social inclusion and efforts to combat discrimination in education. The European Commission prepared the output.

144. This area is followed by the NP of the Methodological and Educational Centre (hereinafter referred to as “MEC”) – School open to all (SOA). The allocation for the national project has been determined at EUR 29,882,756. The aim of this project is to support inclusive education and improve the professional competences of pedagogical and specialized staff in ensuring equal access to quality education and improving the outcomes and competences of children and pupils. The NP SOA builds on the results of three previous national projects implemented by the MEC in the last programming period and its uniqueness lies in the creation of an effective model of cooperation of several components of the education system – support and mutual cooperation of teachers and specialized staff of kindergartens and primary schools, including pedagogical assistants, specialized staff of Centre of Pedagogical-Psychological

Counselling and Prevention (hereinafter referred to as “CPPP”), as well as teachers providing informal education of pre-school children outside the education system together with their tutors (parents of these children). In 2017, the educational programme “Cooperation of pedagogical and specialized staff in the system of inclusive support of children and pupils” was accredited within the National Project. In this context, it is important that – in addition to ensuring inclusive education in 130 primary schools and in 50 kindergartens – SOA also includes the developing of local desegregation plans. Currently, the Methodical Handbook for the Prevention and Elimination of the Segregation of Roma Pupils, by authors – Jarmila Lajčáková, Vlado Rafael, Michal Zálešák, Jozef Miškolci, Alica Petrasová, published by OZ eduRoma, is being used to develop a desegregation plan.

145. By adopting the transitional provision in Act No. 596/2003 Coll., on state administration in education and school self-government, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 596/2003 Coll.”), from 1 September 2017 to 31 December 2019, school facilities for educational counselling and prevention are not included in the network of schools and school facilities. The intention of not including educational counselling and prevention facilities in the network of schools and school facilities is to stabilize the network of school counselling facilities. In this period, the Ministry of Education intends to optimize the current network of school facilities for educational counselling and prevention, to strengthen their personnel capacities, to create conditions for their transparent funding and to improve the course of educational counselling through standards. At the same time, in relation to non-state school counselling facilities, reconsider the requirement of the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia to shift the way of financing school counselling facilities from municipalities and towns funds to financing from the state budget and other changes related to their activities.

146. The Ministry of Education also participates in the fulfilment of tasks resulting from the Updated Action Plans of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020 for Education, Non-Discrimination and Access to the Majority Society Initiative of Roma Integration through Communication, whose administrator is OPRC.

147. The Ministry of Education focuses on strict adherence to the Education Act through the inspection activities of the State School Inspectorate (hereinafter referred to as “SSI”).

148. SSI performs the function of state control over the level of pedagogical management, the level of education and training and material and technical conditions, including practical training in schools and school facilities, practical training workplaces and over the level of activities in special educational facilities and school facilities of educational counselling and prevention.

149. Act No. 188/2015 Coll., effective from 1 September 2015, tightened the state's control mechanism over the activities of school facilities for educational counselling and prevention, as well as allowed relevant entities to review diagnostic procedures and proposals for including a child or pupil in a specific form of education and training. It allowed the SSI to consider incorrect conduct of diagnostics as a serious deficiency in the activities of a special school facility or school facility of educational counselling and prevention.

150. SSI cooperates with Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology (hereinafter referred to as “RICPP”) in inspections in counselling facilities in the area of procedures for diagnosing children, i.e. since 2015 they have also been carried out in the presence of specialized staff – psychologist from RICPP or from another counselling facility.

151. The contract concluded between the Ministry of Education and RICPP annually includes tasks focused mainly on the creation of the system of inclusive education under conditions of Slovak education, diagnostics and rediagnostics of children from the SDE in conditions of inclusive education. The contract is available on RICPP website.<sup>8</sup>

152. The provisions of the Education Act guarantee everyone equal access to education and training, taking into account the individual's educational needs and his/her co-responsibility for his/her education in accordance with the principle of equal treatment in education established by anti-discrimination legislation.

153. The amendment to the Act on the financing of schools and school facilities provided better access to education of children from MRC in kindergartens. With effect from 1 January 2018, a contribution shall be granted to partially reimburse the costs of raising and educating children in kindergartens belonging to a network of schools who are one year before compulsory education or who are members of a household whose member is receiving the material need allowance and the child's legal guardian proves this fact to the headmaster of the kindergarten. The group of beneficiaries of the contribution to the education and training of children in kindergartens has been expanded by releasing children's legal guardians from the obligation to contribute partly to the costs. The aim of the legislation was to eliminate problems in the application practice in admitting these children to kindergarten.

154. The NPDET also identifies three cross-cutting priorities aimed at addressing major and topical social and economic problems. One of the cross-cutting priorities is the Integration and Inclusion of MRC and SDE students. The NPDET puts particular emphasis on inclusive education and integration of pupils and students living in extreme poverty in marginalized communities and socially excluded communities (including without limitation Roma), as well as on improving the quality of education and training in relation to these groups. These objectives will be achieved by combining general measures relevant to these groups (e.g. strengthening funding and activities of children's school clubs, introducing compulsory education in kindergartens at least a year before starting primary school, etc.) with specific measures (e.g. promoting the publication of teaching materials in the Roma language, expanding the capacity of kindergartens and primary schools, etc.).

155. The topic Pupils from the SDE in the Implementation Plan of the NPDET also includes 3 measures – A new form of support for children and pupils from the SDE, Support of education and training of pupils from the SDE in secondary schools and Support of the smooth transition of pupils from the SDE from primary to secondary school.

156. By its Resolution No. 25 of 17 January 2019, the Government approved the Updated Action Plans of the Strategy of the SR for Roma Integration by 2020 for 2019 – 2020 for Education, Employment, Health, Housing and Financial Inclusion.

157. Under the Priority Axis 5 of the OP HR, a national project with an allocation of EUR 20 million is being implemented whose aim is to increase the number of children from MRC in kindergartens in selected 150 municipalities with MRC. The NP objectives will be achieved through activities aimed at creating conditions for the participation of MRC children in kindergartens, mainly through the activities of 235 teacher's assistants, 145 specialized staff

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<sup>8</sup> The contract is available on RICPP website: <http://www.vudpap.sk/kontrakty/> or <http://www.minedu.sk/kontrakty-uzatvorene-na-rok-2018/>.



(e.g. special educators), but also work with family, material support and improvement of the educational process.

158. Under Priority Axis 6 of the OP HR, 59 projects in the amount of almost EUR 20 million are currently implemented, aimed at building new and reconstructing existing kindergartens with the aim of increasing the available capacities for children from MRC. The planned project indicator of the capacity of supported kindergarten school infrastructure is 28,669 children in these projects.

### **Refugees and asylum seekers**

159. Minors who are coming accompanied by their parents or close relatives, as well as unaccompanied minors who seek asylum, are included in the group of the so-called vulnerable persons. In the case of a minor accompanied by his/her parent or legal guardian, after having completed quarantine measures in the Humenné detention camp these persons are transferred to a residential camp in Opatovská Nová Ves, which is reserved for vulnerable groups.

160. Employees in asylum facilities of the Ministry of Interior (hereinafter referred to as “asylum facilities”) are properly trained to work with vulnerable groups of persons. Minors are enrolled in the relevant year of primary school according to the level of education and knowledge of the Slovak language ascertained at the latest within three months of the submission of the asylum application. Conditions in asylum facilities are in accordance with international standards. There is free movement of persons in the Opatovská Nová Ves residential camp, and asylum seekers are allowed to leave the camp on the basis of short and long-term permits. Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers are placed in the Centre for Children and Family in Medzilaborce, which falls within the competence of the Ministry of Labour.

161. The integration policy of the SR is devoted to the integration of foreigners into society and the Ministry of Labour is the administrator of the document Integration Policy in the SR. However, the integration policy of the SR is a cross-cutting policy and therefore falls within the material competence of several ministries that are to implement their own measures leading to the effective integration of foreigners in the SR. The results of the implementation of integration policy measures can be found in the so-called Summary Report on the Fulfilment of Objectives and Measures Resulting from the Integration Policy of the SR for 2017 (hereinafter referred to as the “Summary Report”). The Ministry of Labour, through Government Resolution No. 473 of 10 October 2018 on the document Strategy of Labour Mobility of Foreigners in the SR, took over the initiative and committed itself to updating the Integration Policy of the SR (by 2020). The reason is that a) the currently valid Integration Policy of the SR (Government Resolution No. 45 of 29 January 2014) was conceived in a diametrically different socio-economic context; b) the gradual evaluation of the Summary Reports for the relevant years revealed that the vast majority of measures of the Integration Policy of the SR have already been fulfilled. In this context, the Ministry of Labour also fundamentally revised its main web portal. New information is available on the entry and movement, employment, housing and education of foreigners, as well as information 1) for victims of trafficking or illegal employment (with a toll-free number); 2) for women experiencing violence (with a toll-free number).

162. The Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior is responsible only for the integration of persons with international protection granted (granted asylum or subsidiary protection granted). The integration policy of the SR in the competence of the Ministry of Interior is mainly implemented by the following tasks.

163. It verifies the factual correctness of projects of beneficiaries from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), checks the quality of provided services for asylum seekers and persons with subsidiary protection granted as well as for asylum seekers. The inspection ensures compliance with international obligations in the field of asylum as well as the efficiency and quality of the activities carried out. These projects provide care for asylum seekers in the SR by providing additional and accompanying services, legal advice and legal assistance in asylum facilities and comprehensive support of the integration process of persons with granted asylum or subsidiary protection provided in the SR.

164. Active participation and promotion of professional dialogue on the integration of foreigners, in particular third-country nationals who are vulnerable persons, is ensured.

165. Preventive and educational activities are carried out on migration and cultural diversity, especially with a focus on young people, with an emphasis on preventing all forms of violence.

166. The Ministry of Interior cooperates with Ministry of Labour and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family in issuing uniform residence and employment permits for third-country nationals under generally binding regulations governing the residence and employment of foreigners in the territory of the SR.

167. Cooperation with schools, local government and other entities is being developed in order to create suitable conditions for the integration of foreigners with granted international protection. The following activities are carried out under the conditions of the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior: lectures at primary, secondary and police schools on asylum and migration; participation in music festivals and discussions on migration and asylum, bringing relevant information on this topic to the public consciousness, co-participating in the theatre for primary and secondary schools of the New Stage Theatre in Bratislava "Home where is yours?", after which the staff of the Migration Office have a discussion with pupils and students on asylum and migration; working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on an electronic learning module to train teachers on asylum and migration to share this information with pupils.

168. The conditions of detention of third-country nationals (including minors) are stipulated in national legislation in Act No. 404/2011 Coll., on the Residence of Aliens, as amended.

169. Minors are only detained for legal reasons specified in Sections 88 and 88a of the Aliens Residence Act. The migrant status is never a reason for detention of these persons in the processes in the SR. A minor may only be detained with a legal guardian for the necessary time, taking into account only the reasons for detention relating to the minor. Unaccompanied minors (without legal guardian) may not be detained. The organizational unit of the Office of the Border and Alien Police of the Presidium of PF is the detention department for foreigners in Sečovce, which is adapted as a detention facility to accommodate families with children. The conditions in this facility are in full compliance with international standards.

170. The police department deciding on detention of an asylum seeker is obliged, before detaining a person, to examine the imposition of a detention alternative and only if the detention alternative is not imposed can it detain the person. The non-imposition of a detention alternative is possible only in cases where the asylum seeker does not fulfil the conditions of its imposition or if the imposition of a detention alternative would jeopardize the purpose of detention. As a

detention alternative, the police department may impose the residence declaration duty or the duty to deposit a financial guarantee.

171. Access to the education system in regional education (i.e. kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, including special schools) pursuant to Article 27 para. 1 of Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council is ensured under the applicable laws in the SR under the same conditions as to its own nationals.

172. In the legislative, the education of foreigners' children in regional education is provided by the Education Act with effect from 1 September 2008. Foreigners' children who are allowed to stay in the territory of the SR, children of asylum seekers and Slovaks living abroad are provided with education and training, accommodation and boarding in schools according to the Education Act under the same conditions as Slovak citizens. The relating regulation is in Act No. 596/2003 Coll. According to Section 10 para. 12, the education departments of district offices in the registered office of the region, in cooperation with local self-government bodies, organize and finance language courses for foreigners' children authorized to stay in the territory of the SR. Language courses for foreigners' children are financed through conciliation at the request of the founder.

173. In the area of education of foreigners' children, several documents have been elaborated and implemented in school practice. In 2018, a handbook for teachers of foreign pupils “Slovak as a foreign language” was prepared for the needs of school practice at the initiative of the Ministry of Education and the requirements of the MPC practice<sup>9</sup>.

**Table No. 3 - Statistical information on the number of foreign children in individual types of schools in regional education**

Schools	School year 2018/2019 source CVTI SR				
	state	Private	church	Total and of which girls	
Kindergarten	520	226	15	761	337
Primary school	2,072	515	95	2,682	1,328
Spec. kindergarten + primary school	5	0	0	5	2
Spec. primary school+primary school	32	0	0	32	11
Spec. secondary schools	10	0	0	10	2
Grammar school	398	351	60	809	409
Conservatory	39	1	1	41	19

<sup>9</sup> The handbook is available on the MPC website:

<https://mpc-edu.sk/slovenscina-ako-cudzi-jazyk/> / [https://mpc-edu.sk/publikacie\\_vsetky](https://mpc-edu.sk/publikacie_vsetky)

<b>Secondary vocational school</b>	548	126	5	679	265
<b>Total</b>	3,624	1,219	176	5,019	2,373

### **Ratification of other tools**

174. The SR signed the *Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (hereinafter referred to as “OPCAT”) subject to ratification of OPCAT on 14 December 2018. The Ministry of Justice prepares the national legislation necessary for the establishment of the national preventive mechanism and subsequently it will be proceeded to the process of ratification of OPCAT. The SR accepted the commitment to ratify OPCAT also in the framework of the Universal Periodic Review 2019. UPR's commitments were approved by Government Resolution No. 252 of 29 May 2019.

175. On 29 May 2019, Government Resolution No. 252 approved a comprehensive document from the Universal Periodic Review of the SR (Geneva, 27 January 2019) – Recommendations of the SR during the third round of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council. Among 195 recommendations addressed to the SR, there were the addressed recommendations UPR / 4 and UPR / 5 on the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. On the basis of the national expert assessment and at the same time in the context of European Union legislation, the Government of the SR decided that the SR would not ratify the present Convention as the Convention does not distinguish between legal and illegal residence of persons in the country.

### **Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Action Plan**

176. The Ministry of Justice and other ministries of the SR take systemic measures to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. The recommendations set out in these documents are reflected in the strategic documents of the Government of the SR, inter alia, in the Action Plan for the Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination for 2016 – 2019 and other ministries of the SR.

**Annex to the Thirteenth Periodic Report of the Slovak Republic on the Implementation  
of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial  
Discrimination**

***Point A – Implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Act***

1. Some information campaigns of the Ministry of Interior focused on the issues of racial discrimination and extremism:

a) interactive tool Application Sered – authentic presentation of the reality of the Sered Work and Concentration Camp (Launch Sered Holocaust Museum);

b) experiential workshops and discussions – preventive activities with selected groups of victims to the National Project “*Improving Access of Crime Victims to Services and Creation of Contact Points for Victims*” the help is mainly focused on three target groups – elderly persons, victims of hate crimes and extremism and victims of trafficking in human beings<sup>10</sup>; it regularly informs Facebook Prevention of Crime on every discussion on the National Project;

2. Information on the issue includes continuous regular publication, whether on social networks of the Department of Crime Prevention of the Office of the Minister of Interior (Facebook Prevention of Crime and Instagram Prevention of Crime) and the Ministry of Interior, on the official domain of the Ministry of Interior in the section of updated information of the Department or on the front page of the Ministry or in the Ministerial Gazette Ezvesti. This includes sending press releases to the press department, which then informs all the media, and independent communication with media representatives in an effort to make certain activities visible.

3. The ODIHR has prepared training for law enforcement authorities in the fight against hate crimes entitled: “*Judges, prosecutors and training in hate crimes*” attended by the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights employee.

4. In order to improve the detection of unlawful conduct related to racially motivated acts committed in a virtual environment, in 2017 NCU members took part in a training course organized by CSIRT.SK (Computer Security and Incident Response Team). They have also been involved in the EMICVEC (Effective Monitoring, Investigation and Counterfeiting of Violent Extremism in Cyberspace) project, which aims to increase efficiency in monitoring, detecting and clarifying the manifestations of extremism in cyberspace.

5. The Police Force officers from the PFA, the Police Force secondary vocational school, NCU, the Inspection Service Office and Police Enforcement Police Department attended the Conference on the Identification, Investigation and Prevention of Hate Crimes within Moldova, Slovakia and Ukraine, held on 24 – 25 June 2019 in Odessa. The conference was organized by the Council of Europe in cooperation with the OPRC.

6. In 2018, the Police Enforcement Police Department, in cooperation with the OPRC, ensured a meeting of PF members who deal with Roma and OSCE/ODIHR/CPSRI (*Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues*) representatives, called the OSCE/ODIHR/CPSRI Training

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<sup>10</sup><http://prevenciakriminality.sk/clanok/3-extremizmus/102-srdce-a-paest-nedaj-sa-zviest-alebo-vzdy-mame-moznost-vybrat-si>;

Programme for strengthening the capabilities of the PF working in the Roma and Sinti communities ”.

7. The Department of Public Law realizes the subject Police and Human Rights, which is intended for students of specialized police studies. The content of the course is devoted to the regulation of fundamental rights and freedoms in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “Constitution”), whereas attention is also paid to Article 12 of the Constitution.

8. At the aforementioned department, attention is paid to the prevention of racial discrimination also at the scientific-research level, especially by researching violations of the fundamental rights of the Roma national minority and other national minorities living in the Slovak Republic through the elaboration of concrete projects. The implementation of the project "Protection of Human Rights in Police Activity" is currently being completed.

9. The Department of Public Law is a regular organizer of scientific conferences dealing with the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, including the prevention of discrimination. In 2017, it organized an international scientific conference on "*Police as a guarantor of security*" and subsequently in 2019 an international scientific conference on "*Current Problems Resonating Europe*" (legal-security aspects), which also presented contributions on racial discrimination, in the wider context of human rights protection.

### ***Suppression of hate speech***

#### ***Point B***

10. Mutual cooperation between the participants in the Memorandum of Understanding between the NCU and the non-governmental organization Digital Intelligence is mainly implemented in the following areas:

- a) strengthening cooperation between the state repressive authority and the non-governmental sector on preventing the phenomenon of hate speech in cyberspace;
- b) making the fight against the manifestations of extremism more effective in cyberspace, especially on social networks;
- c) monitoring cyberspace, in particular social networks, in order to detect and address hate speech manifestations which indicate the accomplishment of the elements of the offence of extremism or of the elements of the crime of extremism;
- d) exchanging information on reported cases of extremism in the cyber environment with the aim of its analytical and statistical processing to set up further measures;
- e) cooperation of participants in the Memorandum of Understanding in monitoring exercises of adherence to the so-called Code of Conduct on the occurrence of hate speech in the cyber environment organized by the European Commission;
- f) creating the conditions necessary for the effective management and implementation of activities of joint projects related to addressing the issue of illegal content in the cyber environment;

g) exploiting the results and experience of individual projects related to addressing the issue of illegal content in the cyber environment with their further innovation.

### ***Point C***

11. From a legislative point of view, several changes were made to the criminal codes. Changes to the Criminal Code included new or revised crimes for the establishment, support and promotion of a movement aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms pursuant to Section 421, showing sympathy for a movement aimed at suppressing the fundamental rights and freedoms pursuant to Section 422, producing extremist materials pursuant to Section 422a, disseminating extremist materials pursuant to Section 422b, possession of extremist materials pursuant to Section 422c, denial and approval of the Holocaust, crimes of political regimes and crimes against humanity pursuant to Section 422d, defamation of nation, race and beliefs pursuant to Section 423, incitement to national, racial and ethnic hatred pursuant to Section 424, apartheid and discrimination of a group of persons pursuant to Section 424a and a crime committed on a special motive pursuant to Section 140 (e).

12. The Ministry of Education regularly allocates special-purpose funds to financing development projects:

a) *“Regional and multicultural education of pupils belonging to national minorities”* – priority areas of support are activities that contribute to mutual recognition, multicultural dialogue, eradication of prejudices towards others and support of regional education. Other areas of support are the development of national identity and taking into account specificities of nationalities in the teaching process; activities contributing to the co-existence of children of different national minorities and the majority; activities leading to the recognition of foreign cultures; activities supporting reading literacy of children and pupils of different national minorities; forming a relationship with the history, culture and traditions of the region itself; folk crafts in the region and their legacy for schools; activities developing cooperation with parents and organizations in the region. In 2017, 12 projects amounting to EUR 20,790 were supported, in 2018 10 projects amounting to EUR 15,250 were supported and in 2019 16 projects amounting to EUR 28,000 were approved.

b) *“Support of education of pupils from socially disadvantaged environment in primary schools”* – in 2018 the Ministry of Education modified the call so that the priority area of support would be activities contributing to elimination of undesirable phenomenon, i.e. spatial, organizational, physical and symbolic exclusion or separation of Roma pupils due to their ethnicity (often in combination with social disadvantage) from other pupils. Another area of support was the creation of multicultural classes; the application of new forms and methods of education, in particular towards the promotion of reading literacy in the teaching process; innovation of educational methods focusing on the use of information communication technologies in the teaching process and innovation of didactic means for digital teaching; activities supporting the intercultural environment; activities developing cooperation with parents. In 2017, 23 projects amounting to EUR 49,000 were supported, in 2018 21 projects amounting to EUR 45,243 were supported and in 2019 20 projects amounting to EUR 47,250 were approved.

(c) *“Health and safety in schools”* – support areas were activities and programmes aimed at shaping a healthy lifestyle, protecting physical and mental health, oral and dental health, preventing allergies and respiratory problems, improving the psychosocial climate in schools,

eliminating health harmful effects and prevention of risky behaviour (violence, bullying, truancy, aggression, delinquency, crime, drug addiction, abuse, manifestations of extremism, terrorism, HIV/AIDS, trafficking in human beings), joining the Children's Friendly School programme. In 2017, 20 projects amounting to EUR 35,000 were supported, in 2018 19 projects amounting to EUR 34,948 were supported and in 2019 16 projects amounting to EUR 34,991 were approved.

13. The Minister of Education issued Directive No. 36/2018 to prevent and tackling bullying of children and pupils at schools and school facilities, which came into effect on 1 September 2018.

14. The Ministry of Education within the regional education subsidy Supporting the organizational provision of educational staff in the field of teaching about the Holocaust in primary and secondary schools, provided a grant for a seminar for Slovak teachers entitled Holocaust and its Teaching at Schools that was held on 3 – 10 December 2017 in Yad Vashem, Israel. Yad Vashem provided its premises and leading experts in Holocaust teaching. The civic association EDAH provided Slovak experts in the field of education about the Holocaust, selection of teaching staff and organizational coverage of the event. In 2017, the Ministry of Education provided the EDAH with a subsidy of EUR 10,000 to support the prevention of extremism associated with visiting museums and Holocaust memorial sites.

15. In 2018, subsidies from the Ministry of Education were reimbursed to the civil association EDAH in the amount of EUR 19,810 in order to support the organization of training of pedagogical staff in teaching about the Holocaust in primary and secondary schools and in the amount of EUR 28,500 to support the prevention of extremism associated with visiting museums and Holocaust memorial sites.

16. The Ministry of Education, through the Youth Department, ensures the implementation of the Youth Programmes for 2014 – 2020 and in accordance with Act No. 282/2008 Coll. on the Support of Youth Work, as amended, provides financial support primarily for informal education in youth work and development of youth policy in Slovakia. Youth programmes, whose overall aim is, inter alia, to increase the competences of young people in preparing for their social and working life, empowering them in society and contributing to the fulfilment of the strategic documents adopted at national and European level, are implemented annually by thematic challenges.

17. Since 2017, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights has been regularly participating in events organized by the Museum of the Holocaust in Sered, where they have been sharing knowledge and experience in the field of combating extremism with various actors. Based on the tasks resulting from the Concept of Combating Extremism for the years 2015 – 2019, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights carries out educational activities on the subject of extremism and the Holocaust every year.

18. In 2017, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights implemented 48 educational activities on the topic of extremism, of which 44 were in primary and secondary schools (1,205 participants). Interest in the topic of extremism was expressed by 117 participants, namely from the Regional Directorate of the Police Force of the SR in Nitra, the Department of Criminal Police, the Ministry of Education, and the Centre of Pedagogical-Psychological Counselling and Prevention in Senica. Five educational activities on the theme of the Holocaust (153 participants) were implemented at school level.



19. In 2018, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights implemented 92 educational activities on the topic of extremism, of which 85 were in primary and secondary schools (2,228 participants). The Methodology and Pedagogical Centre in Bratislava and the Centre of Pedagogical-Psychological Counselling and Prevention in Martin, Liptovsky Mikulas, Krupina, Zvolen, Galanta and Nové Mesto nad Váhom also showed interest in the topic of extremism (143 participants in the event). The Slovak National Centre for Human Rights also carried out 25 educational activities in schools focusing on the Holocaust (569 participants).

20. As of 30 April 2019, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights implemented 47 educational activities on the topic of extremism, of which 43 were in primary and secondary schools (1230 participants). The extremist screening centre NCA, the Centre of Pedagogical-Psychological Counselling and Prevention Tvrdošín, Methodological and Educational Centre in Bratislava and the Ministry of Education (54 participants) were also interested in the topic of extremism. At the school level, 8 educational activities on the theme of the Holocaust were carried out (182 participants).

21. In 2017, one of the announced calls was also the call to support the European Union's core values among young people in the context of current social issues and to support activities developing critical thinking and media literacy among young people threatened by radicalism, xenophobia and extremism to shape value attitudes and eliminate hate speech. The call was aimed at supporting projects developing in young people the following:

(a) critical thinking and ability to critically evaluate media information (i.e. to assess the credibility of information on the Internet and on social networks, to adequately perceive reality, to distinguish facts from opinion, to recognize propaganda, to identify hoax and its risks to democracy);

(b) awareness of the impact of mass media on the values, attitudes and behaviour of the individual;

(c) awareness of the responsible and safe use of the Internet and new technologies;

(d) ability to resist all forms of indoctrination, hate speech and intolerance both online and offline;

(e) the ability to make good use of the media while creating value-oriented media content;

(f) creative use of social media with a view to fostering in young people the formation of values, a positive relationship to diversity, respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and respect for human rights (education and training of young people on human rights). In this support, in 2017, a subsidy was approved for 8 civic associations of children and youth in the total amount of EUR 79,694.

22. In 2018, one of the announced calls was also the call to support activities developing critical thinking and media literacy among young people at risk of radicalism, xenophobia and extremism in order to shape value attitudes and eliminate hate speech. In this support, a subsidy to 8 civic associations of children and youth of EUR 66,350 was approved.

23. IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute, an organization directly managed by the Ministry of Education in the school year 2018/2019 verified the pilot project “*School without Hate*”. This is a school self-evaluation. The quality certificate will be awarded to schools whose school climate and decision-making processes at school support: prevention of bullying and

cyberbullying, prevention of hate speech, tolerance and development of intercultural competences, development of social skills, development of competences for democratic culture, involvement of pupils in projects and activities supporting by the principles of democracy and the implementation of human rights, involvement of pupils in public affairs at local level, which promotes social cohesion, cooperation between different youth groups.

24. In 2018, the Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology developed a *Psycho-educational programme to minimize extremist attitudes and expressions of young people*. The aim was to identify the personal characteristics and prerequisites of children and young people inclining to extremist groups, define the key factors that currently influence and support children and young people in inclining to extremist groups and create a proposal for eliminating and preventing extremist attitudes and manifestations in the conduct of children and youth.

#### ***Point D***

25. In the period under review, the Ministry of Culture continued to organize educational seminars for churches and religious societies. Within the framework of systematic lifelong education of employees of registered churches and religious societies, the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Department of Educational Studies of the Pedagogical Faculty of Trnava University organized the Interreligious Dialogue and Migration Crisis (2 April 2018 in Trnava) and Alternative Religiosity in Central Europe (21 February 2019 in Trnava). The aim was to stimulate a professional debate on the current migration crisis in Europe from an interdisciplinary perspective and on the basis of a broad platform of various academic disciplines, state institutions and non-governmental organizations. In this regard, the Trnava University has published the Migration Collections: Religions without borders (2017) and Interfaith Dialogue and Migration Crisis (2018).

26. In 2018, the Ministry of Culture organized, in cooperation with the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, three training sessions (22 October, 8 November and 15 November 2018) for employees of the Ministry of Culture called Education on the importance and contribution of culture of individual national minorities and ethnic groups in order to prevent discrimination, and to strengthen the democratic mechanisms of an open society.

27. The National Educational Centre (hereinafter referred to as “NEC”) in the course of its activities within the meaning of Section 2 par. 2 (f) of Act No. 189/2015 Coll. on cultural-educational activities (informal education in the field of culture and prevention of negative social phenomena) provides education for workers in the field of culture and cultural-educational activities (specialized seminar Prevention of selected socio-pathological phenomena organized twice a year) and publishes the journal Social Prevention. In the period under review, the NEC also organized the seminar entitled Support and Protection of Human Rights in the Field of Culture (13 June 2019 in Košice). In particular, the aim of the seminar was to draw cultural workers' attention to current issues and documents relating to the protection and promotion of human rights, to raise the focus on preventing racism, discrimination, xenophobia, anti-Semitism in civic education activities undertaken by cultural operators and inspire and guide cultural organizations in the realization of events concerning the protection and promotion of human rights, prevention of racism, xenophobia and extremism.

28. In 2018, the NEC published a collection of contributions from the seminar entitled Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (2017) and the methodological document Human Rights in the Activities of Cultural Institutions (2018).

29. NEC as a professional guarantor in the period under review participated in the organization of the art and literary competition Colour World – Coloriskeri luma, which is intended for pupils of primary schools, primary art schools, children from orphanages, leisure centres and community centres in Slovakia. The promoter and organizer of this national advancement competition is the civic association Roma House – Romano kher, its co-organizers are the Ministry of Education, NEC and the civic association Chartikano from Dunajská Lužná. Coloriskeri luma is a two-stage nationwide advancement visual art and art competition that brings together Roma children and children from the majority society to improve communication between the majority and the Roma national minority by identifying and promoting Roma culture and history, in particular acquainting competitors with traditional Roma crafts and to support children's art skills and literary work of the contestants.

30. An important and sustainable tool for the protection of the cultural rights of persons belonging to national minorities is the system of specialized museums within the Slovak National Museum (organizations established by the Ministry of Culture). These are collecting institutions focused on the history and culture of national minorities living in Slovakia (Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia 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 Slovakia in Martin, Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov, Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava). These museums are specialized documentation, scientific-research and methodical workplaces that systematically search, acquire, preserve and professionally process material and spiritual documents on the history, culture, traditions of ethnic members in the territory of present-day Slovakia and present the results of their activities to the public through publishing and educational activities, exhibitions and cultural events aimed at presenting the public with a rich cultural heritage.

### ***Point E***

31. In the exposition of the Slovak national museum – Museum of Jewish Culture of the Museum of the Holocaust in Sereď, they launched a service of a video guide that will provide the deaf with an interpretation in sign language. The Video Guide for the Deaf translates not only the interpretation of the guide in the museum, but also, for example, the testimonies of the survivors, which are linked to individual exposures. The museum opens up to a wider number of visitors. The deaf can just tap the tablet to the QR code and the video guide will start. They can also use their own phones and other devices that are equipped with a code reader. The video guide was made accessible by the museum in cooperation with the Trnava Association of the Hearing Impaired. In addition to the permanent exhibition, the museum has offered several exhibitions to the public, such as: Sobibor (30 November 2018 – 25 January 2019), Dance cosmopolitan Alica Pastorová – Flachová (7 December 2018 – 15 March 2019), VEDEM – magazine of the Terezín ghetto boys (29 March – 24 May 2019), Testimonies of survivors (31 May – 5 August 2019), Genocide of the Roma during the World War II (9 August – 18 October 2019).

32. The Slovak National Uprising Museum also organized lectures and educational programmes and organized competitions for children and youth aimed at developing literacy, which in the framework of extracurricular activities consolidate acquired knowledge and help

identify negative phenomena in society (especially anti-Semitism, extremism, xenophobia) from a historical perspective, e.g. competitions, educational programmes, lectures connected with the screening of films from the museum archive and a permanent exhibition, travelling exhibitions, etc. (e.g. Suitcase Number ..., Slovak National Uprising Through My Eyes, Heydrichiada and The Returns of Lidice Children).

33. In 2018, the Slovak National Uprising Museum, in cooperation with the Lidice Memorial, the Terezín Memorial and the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in Prague, organized the second year of the international student conference War Through the Eyes of Young People (13 – 14 June 2018), which was aimed at commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic.

***Activities organized by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (or with the participation of the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic) on the 75th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising***

34. Opening of the exhibition on 11 July 2019 *Army in Uprising – Slovak National Uprising 1944* in the presence of the Minister of Culture on the premises of the Hall of the Ministry of Culture in Bratislava. The exhibition project was organized by the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica, the Military History Institute and the Ministry of Culture.

35. Opening of the exhibition *Slovak National Uprising in culture and art – Tribute to the Uprising and the Three Artists / Orest Dubay, Vincent Hložník, Ladislav Snopek* on 6 August 2019 on the premises of the Hall of the Ministry of Culture. The exhibition project Club of Fine Artists and Theoreticians in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters and Matica Slovenská.

36. On 29 August 2019, Slovakia celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising with its spectacular national celebrations in Banská Bystrica; the memory and legacy of the heroes of the most important event of our modern history. The celebrations were prepared by the Office of the Government of the SR, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Defence, the town of Banská Bystrica and the Slovak National Uprising Museum.

37. On 9 September 2019, the Minister of Culture honoured the victims of the Holocaust and racial violence by a reverent act at the Fish Square in Bratislava. She expressed the conviction that it was a moral duty for each of us to prevent everything that would disrespect man, human dignity and freedom of religion.

38. Opening of the exhibition *Army in the Uprising – Slovak National Uprising 1944* on the premises of the National Museum in Vítkov in Prague on 20 September 2019.

***Point F***

39. In cooperation with the Slovak Society for the Study of Religions at the Slovak Academy of Sciences, the University Library in Bratislava conducted in 2016 – 2018 a lecture series Religions under scrutiny designed for the general public and aimed at identifying cultural and religious diversity, which is the cornerstone of preventing intolerance and hatred of otherness.

40. Since 2017, the State Scientific Library in Košice, in cooperation with the non-profit organization Centre for Religious and Historical Studies (CEREHIS) has been conducting a lecture series Religions under Magnifying Glass.

41. The State Scientific Library in Prešov presents the results of the project Documentation and Information Centre of Roma Culture through its website. It is an information portfolio aimed at disseminating information on Roma culture, which aims to gather comprehensive information on Roma culture, history, language, traditions and other areas of the Roma community life in one place, while presenting a new perspective on Roma culture as part of Europe's cultural heritage.

42. Organizations in the founding competence of the Arts Section of the Ministry of Culture, in accordance with the main subject of its activity, develop artistic activities that significantly and in an accessible form contribute to the formation of human personality. The events are aimed at children, young people and especially the adult public regardless of religion or belief, belonging to a nationality or ethnic group, age, disability and the like. To achieve their goals, organizations use several forms of events, be it publicly available presentations of the works of art of individual organizations, or various cultural and educational events, each of which has its meaning and justification.

43. Every year the Slovak National Theatre – theatre dramaturgy focuses on productions or thematic projects aimed at highlighting the consequences of racism, crime, social intolerance or various forms of violence. The target group is not only adults, but also children and youth, for whom it also performs moderated performances. Through the optics of the interpretation of these works, the ethical messages contained in them become a clear and appealing means of education.

44. The New Stage Theatre as part of the Young New Stage project introduced in 2018 a performance HOME (where is yours?), which is intended for pupils of the second level of elementary schools and secondary school students. It is thematically focused on strengthening the theme of patriotism, positive attitude to home and country. The theme of the production is also to accept otherness in any form and calls for the elimination of xenophobia, racism and intolerance in our behaviour. After the performance there are active discussions with the viewers, which are realized in cooperation with the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior.

45. Among the many productions in the repertoire of the Slovak National Theatre, we should mention, for example, a production based on Joseph Roth's prose *Project 2018* (premiered on 10 November 2018), the play *Above Our Power* by Bjornstjerne Bjornson (premiered on 31 May 2018) or the opera production *Sadko* (premiered on 26 and 28 January 2018).

46. At the end of 2016, Slovak national theatre Drama launched the Theatre Against Extremism project. The first production was *Natálka*, a play about a Roma family that was attacked by extremists. The production went to Slovak schools throughout the Slovak Republic. From February to October 2017, it completed 24 type trips (grammar schools, business schools, secondary vocational schools) in Pezinok, Púchov, Hlohovec, Bátovce, Bratislava (seven times in total), Banská Bystrica, Spišská Nová Ves, Košice, Rimavská Sobota, Fiľakovo and Námestovo. The audience was made up of 1,200 pupils. The Slovak national theatre Drama has also presented the production *Natálka* to the public in its Blue Salon or in the House of Culture in Rimavská Sobota and Banská Bystrica. Each production was followed by a discussion of

extremism with students and experts from the civic association Living Memory. In 2018, the Slovak national theatre Drama presented the performance *Natálka* in Nová Cvernovka for 260 secondary school pupils, followed by a discussion. Slovak national theatre also cooperated with the non-profit-making organization Equity in announcing the results of the nationwide multi-genre competition on equality and equivalence called I am ab-NORM-ally fair, which was held under the auspices of the Public Defender of Rights Jana Dubovcová. The main theme of the competition is the slogan: One NORM for all may not always be fair. The Slovak national theatre provided space for the award ceremony.

47. The Slovak national theatre Drama also cooperated with the association Living Memory on the project *In Democracy you can improve your chances, not in a totalitarian society!* Actors of the Slovak national theatre Drama, together with historians, attended lectures and discussions at secondary schools of the Bratislava self-governing region and discussed the totalitarianism of fascism, Nazism and communism, and on lack of freedom and freedom.

48. During the years 2017 and 2018, the Košice State Theatre premiered performances on the subject, such as the ballet staging of *Anna Frank's Diary*, the dramatic staging *Sara Salkházi* by Kamil Žiška, the play *Reunification of Korea* by Joel Pommerat, which is not about politics but about differences in our relationships and about finding a way to ourselves, complications of mutual misunderstandings that may hinder our unification. The ballet ensemble has staged the production *THE HOME COUNTRY* by Ondrej Šoth and Zuzana Mistríková. Against the background of the relationship of two young people, the topic of eradication of prejudice, tolerance, acceptance of new opinions opens up.

49. The New Stage Theatre continued its production of PUNK ROCK, which premiered in 2017. The performance of the play by the contemporary British playwright Simon Stephens has the themes of harmonious coexistence of ethnically and religiously diverse groups of young people meeting in European civilized countries, emphasizing and appealing for their natural integration into a functioning society, accepting their diversity and exceptionality. With their dramatic form and stage-attractive elaboration, these themes come directly under the skin of the young viewer aged 14 to 20, i.e. the target group of the production. At the end of each performance, young and adult audiences have the opportunity to discuss with experienced professionals (psychologists) for any long period of time on the topics that analyse the causes of animosity and social intolerance.

50. BIBIANA – International House of the Arts for Children – a specifically oriented institution that supports the development of various kinds of professional art for children and young people. In its activities, it uses non-traditional means in exhibition and programme projects to stimulate interest, the need for education, as well as an understanding of some important society-wide themes, such as children's rights, but also getting to know the culture of minorities living in Slovakia, tolerance towards minority groups, including handicapped children into society and the like. In 2017, it organized the exhibition Migration in cooperation with the International Centre for the Picture Book in Society ICPBS, UK. The exhibition drew attention to the fate of thousands of children and their families who, due to the threat of totalitarian regime, violence and poverty, are forced to migrate to safer places in the world.

51. In the framework of the 14th year of the *National Design Award* competition, the Slovak Design Centre was able to apply for awards in the category Design with Value Added. With this competition category, the organizers specially acknowledged the design whose important feature is the social or environmental function and which promotes the ideas of sustainability

and responsibility of designers, manufacturers and clients. In the framework of the event the project was presented by the civil association the Slovak Fashion Council, implemented in cooperation with the informal voluntary association *Domov na mame*. It is a project of ergonomic baby carriers that deals with the current refugee theme and, in addition to helping refugee mothers, gives work to people in need who sew the carriers (disabled people, Roma, homeless people, tailors without work, asylum seekers and the like).

52. In 2017 and 2018, the Literary Information Centre cooperated with the civic association Pars Artem to disseminate and stimulate reading in children and youth in Roma communities. It participated in the organization of several trips to Roma communities, especially in the east of Slovakia, and established readers' clubs (such as Palikarev) in these communities, it regularly carries out collections of books for these clubs and also involves members of these clubs in its programme at the Bibliothek and in other occasions.

53. In the repertoire of the State Opera Banská Bystrica there are several opera and operetta works that have encoded in their librettos the solution of ethnic issues in relation to xenophobia, racial intolerance or the presentation of ethnicity in the way “we and the others”. Many of these works uncover the contexts of other cultures and aim to create a positive picture of them in the audience.

54. The Slovak Philharmonic – musical art has an international dimension, which is fully used by the Slovak Philharmonic. It takes into account a wide range of national and racial diversity in its dramaturgy and selection of guest artists. The Slovak Philharmonic invites guest conductors and soloists during the whole artistic season to cooperate with artistic ensembles (Orchestra Slovak Philharmonic, Slovak Philharmonic Choir, Slovak Chamber Orchestra).

55. Music Centre – a professional workplace for music, is the organizer of music-educational programmes. It offers programmes that comply with the current school curriculum and, in cooperation with the Association of Music Teachers of Slovakia and the State Pedagogical Institute, guarantees the professional-pedagogical and artistic level of music-educational programmes (all accredited). Music Centre's music-educational programmes contribute to the conscious listening to music, providing children with an experience and enriching the offer of high-quality music education programmes. The Music Centre also organizes these events in nationally mixed regions and Roma settlements.

### ***Point G***

56. On 20 September 2019, the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia organized an international conference entitled "Pastoral Work with the Roma and its Contribution to Society", presenting selected projects of pastoral work of the Catholic Church in Slovakia supplemented and supported by scientific research and the view of scientists from the Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

57. In September 2019, the 3rd nationwide meeting of experts involved in the pastoral work of the Roma associated in the SAVORE platform took place to discuss problems in the pastoral work of the Roma and to jointly prepare a long-term strategy of pastoral work with the Roma in Slovakia.

58. The F6 Art Centre, founded by the Greek Catholic Archbishopric of Prešov, publishes videos on Roma-Slovak friendships on the Youtube channel, which contribute to building a

positive image of the Roma, eradicating negative prejudices about the Roma and suppressing hate speech. Video is available at the following link.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMeuQ\\_htCW4&list=PLbceUMtGz6ehM6hFCYJ-ZCbYZJzk-iv9I&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMeuQ_htCW4&list=PLbceUMtGz6ehM6hFCYJ-ZCbYZJzk-iv9I&index=1))