

**FACES** OF  
**MIGRATION**



**Ambrela**

**Monitoring report on Agenda 2030  
implementation and migration management  
in Slovakia (2015 – 2019)**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

The monitoring part is worked out as a part of a project named *SDGs and Migration – Multipliers and Journalists Addressing Decision Makers and Citizens in the EU*, financed from the European Commission sources, and it aims to compare the situation and development in the migration area bearing in mind the priorities and goals of the 2030 Agenda. It is focused on the period 2015- 2019, so not on the situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2018, Slovakia chose six national priorities implementing the 2030 Agenda, which should bring the seventeen goals of sustainable development to a national extent. These priorities include:

- education for a decent life
- heading towards informed and environmentally sustainable economics in changing demography and the changing global environment,
- decreasing poverty and social inclusion,
- sustainable dwellings, regions and country in a context of climate change,
- rule of law, democracy and safety,
- good health.<sup>1</sup>

The topic of migration, however, is not mentioned separately among national priorities.

From the year 2015 Slovakia has recorded an unprecedented increase in the number of foreigners<sup>2</sup> and as of 31 December 2019 a total of **143 075 foreigners** living in the Slovak Republic, which is only **2,62%** of the overall population<sup>3</sup>. In absolute numbers, this means that between the years 2015 and 2019 the increase is **58 288** foreigners, predominantly citizens of third countries. This development is caused by the decrease of unemployment in the Slovak Republic (SR) and by the significant lack of workforce in

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1 Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report on Achieved Results in National Priorities for the Implementation of Agenda 2030, September 2020, p. 5, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 23.9.2020.

2 A foreigner is according to § 2 par. 2 of Act no. 404/2011 Coll. of laws on the stay of foreigners and on the amendment of certain laws in the valid and effective wording anyone who is not a citizen of the Slovak Republic. The law further categorizes foreigners as EU citizens and as third-country nationals.

3 According to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, at the end of 2019 there were 5,457,873 inhabitants on the territory of the Slovak Republic, of which 2,665,350 were men and 2,792,523 women. Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Population by sex – Slovak Republic, areas, regions, districts, city, countryside (annually), 2019.

various sectors of the Slovak economy and immigration to Slovakia is thus **significantly economically (labour) motivated**.<sup>4</sup>

**Tab. 1: Amount of foreigners in SR divided into EU citizens and third-country nationals (CTN) 2015- 2018**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>EU citizens</b>	49 526	52 015	54 056	55 883	57 248
<b>TCN</b>	35 261	41 232	50 395	65 381	85 827
<b>Total</b>	<b>84 787</b>	<b>93 247</b>	<b>104 451</b>	<b>121 264</b>	<b>143 075</b>

Source: Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office

**Tab. 2: TOP 5 countries of CTN origin living in SR in 2019**

	As of 31. 12. 2019			
	Total amount of residencies	From this		
		Temporary	Permanent	Tolerated
<b>Ukraine</b>	<b>38 307</b>	33 247	5 058	2
<b>Serbia</b>	<b>16 604</b>	15 784	820	-
<b>Vietnam</b>	<b>5 565</b>	3 732	1 831	2
<b>Russia</b>	<b>5 257</b>	2 821	2 433	3
<b>China</b>	<b>2 709</b>	926	1 783	-

Source: Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office

**Tab. 2a: TOP 5 countries of EU citizens 2019**

Nationality	Amount
<b>Czech Republic</b>	11 379
<b>Hungary</b>	8 872
<b>Romania</b>	7 505
<b>Poland</b>	6 000
<b>Germany</b>	4 534

Source: Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office

<sup>4</sup> Mészárosová, S., Oboňová, S., Annual Report on Migration and Asylum in the Slovak Republic in 2018, Report of the National Contact Point of the European Migration Network in the Slovak Republic, April 2019, Bratislava, p. 22 et seq., ISBN: 978-80-89506-86-6.

## II. MONITORING PART

### 1. Social integration of migrants

#### 1.1 Social integration of migrants in cities

Migration is a relatively new phenomenon for Slovak cities to which they have not paid attention for a very long time. Cities do not have strategies for integrating and working with migrants living in their territories, do not communicate in multilingualism, do not map migrant communities and their needs, and have no specific measures taken concerning migrants.

Foreigners do not have enough information about the organization of municipalities and about their rights and obligations, there is a lack of building awareness of citizenship and local activism concerning foreigners. As part of the KapaCITY project<sup>5</sup>, which helps to set selected integration policies for selected cities, mapping reports have been produced which provide a picture of the degree of social inclusion and integration of migrants in these cities<sup>6</sup> and the region<sup>7</sup> and propose several recommendations to improve the situation.

##### 1.1.1 Recommendations

Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities are one of the goals of the 2030 Agenda (Goal 11). Slovakia's national priority in this area is "Sustainable settlements, regions and the landscape in the context of climate change", while the measures focus mainly on solving environmental and climate problems. The topic of migration is not elaborated in this part of the national priorities<sup>8</sup>. No attention is paid to the integration of migrants at the local level, which would result in improved coexistence and enable the

5 Project KapaCITY, available here: [<https://www.hrl.sk/sk/co-robime/projekty/aktualne-projekty/kapacity-podpora-integracie-cudzincov-na-lokalnej-urovni->], cit. 15.9.2020.

6 Kadlečíková, J., CVEK, Foreigners in Bratislava, October 2018, available here: [<http://cvek.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Integracia-cudzincov-v-Bratislave.pdf>]; Chudžíková, Alena H., Centre for ethnicity and culture research, Space for everyone. Foreigners and their possibilities of integration in the city Trnava Trnava (short version), December 2018, available here: [<http://cvek.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Integracia-cudzincov-v-Trnave.pdf>]; Kriglerová, Elena G., Centre for ethnicity and culture research, Banská Bystrica – city for all? Foreigners and the role of self-government in their integration Banská Bystrica. Analysis of strategic documents and qualitative research, December 2018, available here: [<http://cvek.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Integracia-cudzincov-v-Banskej-Bystrici.pdf>], cit. 15.9.2020.

7 Luptáková, Z., Medlová, K., Integration of foreigners in Košice self-governing region. Analysis of strategic documents and qualitative research (short version), December 2018, available here: [<http://cvek.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Integracia-cudzincov-v-KSK.pdf>], cit. 15.9.2020.

8 Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report on Achieved Results in National Priorities for the Implementation of 2030 Agenda, September 2020, p. 36, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 19.11.2020.

development of the potential of every inhabitant of the city. This is a relatively new topic for Slovakia, but today there are regions where foreigners are an everyday part of everyday life (Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Košice). These regions and gradually other areas of Slovakia need to build their capacities to enable inclusiveness. An example of good practice is the Košice self-governing region, which has prepared a separate document on the integration of foreigners – the Roadmap of Managed Migration in the Košice Region<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, we suggest:

- **strengthen the capacities of local self-governments for the local integration of migrants,**
- **at the level of self-governments adopt strategies for the work development with migrants (for example, in the framework of the City's Economic and Social Development Plans),**
- **to improve the awareness of foreigners about self-government and to improve the conditions for their participation at the local level,** thus strengthening their citizenship and inclusion.

## 1.2 Integration of migrants into the national social system

The social security system is one of the tools by which the state contributes to reducing poverty and inequality and promotes the social inclusion and dignity of the individual in the event of a loss of resources due to social risks. Protecting the individual through social security promotes employment, labour productivity and sustainable development. *The integration policy of the Slovak Republic* declares its emphasis on the support of economic and social integration and, as the mainstay of social protection of foreigners, emphasizes the observance of human rights and the principle of equal treatment and proposes several measures to achieve the set goals<sup>10</sup>. In the *Strategy for the Job Mobility of Foreigners*, the Government of the Slovak Republic, as one of its goals and starting points, sets the emphasis on preserving the rights of foreigners, while preventing unequal status and social dumping<sup>11</sup>.

The social security system in the Slovak Republic consists of social insurance, state social support and social assistance, and in general, the system is accessible to foreigners with legal residence under the same conditions as Slovak citizens. In practice, drawing unemployment benefits is problematic for those foreigners who have been granted temporary residence for employment purposes, as the unemployment situation can lead to the loss of a residence permit and subsequent inability to draw a benefit (not paid abroad), and also in the case of benefits in material need, the drawing of which may lead to the loss of the residence permit.

The conditions for entering the pension insurance system and for fulfilling the entitlement **are the same for citizens as well as for third-country nationals** (ie the basis is the long-term participation – 15 years of pension insurance and reaching retirement age). **These benefits can be paid abroad.**

9 Košice self-governing region, digital representation, available here: [[https://dz2fe.vucke.sk/Home/ZasadnutiaDetailBod?id\\_session=109&id\\_node=2728](https://dz2fe.vucke.sk/Home/ZasadnutiaDetailBod?id_session=109&id_node=2728)], cit. 19.11.2020.

10 Integration policy of the Slovak Republic, part 6. Employment and social protection, adopted by Government Resolution no. 45 on January 29, 2014, available here: [<https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/uvod/informacie-cudzinci/integracna-politika.pdf>], cit. 15.9.2020.

11 Strategy of job mobility of foreigners in the Slovak Republic, adopted by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 473 of 10 October 2018, p. 4, available here: [<https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/uvod/informacie-cudzinci/strategia.pdf>], cit. 15.9.2020.

**The position of asylum seekers and persons with subsidiary protection in old age, who do not have the opportunity to meet the condition of long-term participation in the pension system,** is unresolved. Ultimately, these people can only be dependent on material need benefits and related contributions<sup>12</sup>, which can lead to their poverty. Taxpayers, including foreigners, can also claim a **tax bonus** – provided if such a taxpayer supports a child living in the same household.

### 1.2.1 Recommendations

The 2030 Agenda aims to establish appropriate social protection systems at the state level for all, including those who need it most, and to extend their reach to the majority of the poor and vulnerable<sup>13</sup> by 2030. Therefore, we propose that the state start to monitor the situation of migrants in Slovakia more specifically, and we recommend:

- **thoroughly map the economic and social contribution of migrants and persons born abroad to social security systems,**
- **resolve the pension situation of beneficiaries of international protection so that they are entitled to a pension without fulfilling the condition of long-term participation if they enter the scheme only at an older age.**

## 1.3 The extent of migrant poverty in SR

Slovakia has long been one of the countries with the lowest poverty rates, the percentage of the population at risk of poverty or social exclusion is the third-lowest in the EU-27 and represents 16.3% (2018) compared to the EU average of 21.6% (2018)<sup>14</sup>. Population groups that are significantly more at risk of social exclusion include children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, people from marginalized Roma communities, single parents, multi-family families and people with disabilities, the homeless, but also women – due to pay inequality<sup>15</sup>. The available indicators, studies and strategies **do not take a closer look at the situation of migrants and refugees in Slovakia and the extent of their risk of poverty and social exclusion**<sup>16</sup>. From practical experience, we can assume that the most at risk of poverty and social exclusion are **persons with international protection**, persons with tolerated residence or tolerance and persons in undocumented status (“illegal migrants”)<sup>17</sup>.

**Persons with international protection** are at risk of poverty mainly due to the lack of a national integration program for persons with international protection and the general **lack of affordable**

12 These are the protective benefit, the activation benefit, the dependent child benefit, the housing benefit.

13 Goal 1.3., available here: [<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal1>], cit. 18.11.2020.

14 Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report On the Results Achieved In the Implementation of National Priorities of the 2030 Agenda, September 2020, p. 30, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 23.9.2020.

15 European Commission, Report On the Country For the Year 2020 – Slovakia, In Brussels 26. 2. 2020, „Poverty and Social Exclusion”, p. 37 et seq., available here: [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SK/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020SC0524&from=EN>], cit. 20.9.2020.

16 See for example Ministry of labour, social affairs and family, Report on the social situation in Slovakia for the year 2019, Bratislava 2020.

17 Some official documents in SR still use the term „illegal migrants“



**housing.** A high risk of poverty and social exclusion can also be expected in the case of **persons with tolerated residence, stay and in the case of undocumented migrants.** Since this has to do with persons, whose residence status is on the verge of legality, or who are moving illegally, they are particularly vulnerable to precarious employment, exploitation and ill-treatment. A large proportion of migrants with tolerated residence and tolerance cannot work. However, the state does not have information or analysis about the life and needs of this group of migrants, and these are on the fringes of society's interest.

### 1.3.1 Recommendations

One of the global goals of the 2030 Agenda, which is also the national goal of the Slovak Republic<sup>18</sup>, is to end poverty everywhere and in all its forms. To fulfil this goal, we must also monitor the level of risk of poverty and social exclusion in the case of migrants and persons with international protection living in Slovakia. We, therefore, recommend:

- **examine the level of risk of poverty and social exclusion to migrants and beneficiaries of international protection living in Slovakia, introduce monitoring of relevant indicators with emphasis on the situation of migrant women, including the situation of dependency on a guarantor, and propose appropriate measures to improve the situation,**
- **introduce a state integration program for persons with international protection and effective measures to address the availability of housing for these persons,**
- **there are currently no support schemes or programs for people with tolerated residence and retention, and in the case of undocumented migrants, and their situation is not examined. We, therefore, propose to review their situation and make recommendations to improve the situation of these people.**

## 1.4 Access to health care

Migrants living in Slovakia are either part of the compulsory public health insurance or have taken out commercial health insurance. Health insurance is required when granting permanent or temporary residence in the Slovak Republic. A large proportion of migrants, including asylum seekers, are involved in the public health insurance system. Outside the system **are persons who have been granted subsidiary protection and asylum seekers**, for whom the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic<sup>19</sup> pays payments to doctors directly. In addition to the system and reliance on commercial health insurance, there are also family members who have a temporary residence for family reunification and do not work in the first twelve months, resp. do not do business. In many cases, these are women who are thus repeatedly exposed to disadvantage and are dependent on often expensive commercial insurance. Persons with tolerated residence, tolerance and irregular migrants are not subject to compulsory public health

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report On the Results Achieved In the Implementation of National Priorities of the Agenda 2030, September 2020, p. 5, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 13.11.2020.

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, Provision of Health Care To Persons With Subsidiary Protection, available here: [<http://new.aslsr.sk/aktualita/?articleId=mz-sr-poskytovanie-zdravotnej-starostlivosti-osobam-s-doplnkovou-ochranou>], cit. 23.8.2020.

insurance, they only have commercial insurance available under certain conditions, which can make it significantly more difficult for them to access health care, as they are generally in a difficult situation.

### 1.4.1 Recommendations

In the case of migrants living in Slovakia, the situation in the field of health insurance is relatively satisfactory and most migrants living here are part of the public health system. However, it is necessary to focus on those groups of migrants who are not currently part of public health insurance, which prevents them from receiving the necessary health care. We therefore recommend:

- **to include aliens with subsidiary protection, asylum seekers, persons with tolerated residence and persons remaining in the compulsory public health insurance system,**
- **to include in the system of compulsory public health insurance persons with temporary residence for family reunification for the first twelve months after the granting of residence, resp. until they start working or doing business.**

## 1.5 Educating migrants

Education for a dignified life is also a national priority for Slovakia within the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The basic goals include:

- increase the quality of education and strengthen the social status of teachers in the context of international comparison, global megatrends and the application of the principles of the knowledge society,
- strengthen the principle of inclusiveness in the education system, ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils/students, regardless of their social status, health status or nationality/ethnicity, with an emphasis on increasing opportunities for positive social mobility,
- create conditions for the availability of good job opportunities in the open labour market for all groups of the population,
- overcoming structural inequalities between labour supply and labour market demand, increasing labour market preparedness for current as well as future labour market needs and ensuring sufficient opportunities for individual lifelong learning,
- to promote social conditions in which the phenomenon known as the 'brain drain' is not essential<sup>20</sup>.

The progress report on national priorities notes in this section that in recent years Slovakia has become an attractive environment for the arrival of foreign employees, who are important for the country's economy<sup>21</sup> due to labour shortages. Migrants have access to education under the same conditions as citizens

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<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report On the Results Achieved In the Implementation of National Priorities of the 2030 Agenda, September 2020, p. 15 et seq., available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 19.11.2020.

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report On the Results Achieved In the Implementation of National Priorities of the 2030 Agenda, September 2020, p. 20, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 19.11.2020.

of the Slovak Republic, including compulsory school attendance. Children of foreigners have access to kindergartens, primary, secondary (including special) and university studies under the same conditions as Slovak citizens. Evidence from practise shows that the shortcomings lie mainly in the acquisition of Slovak in schools, especially in terms of the lack of guidelines, school supplies or time allowances for the acquisition of Slovak<sup>22</sup>. Migrants, as well as citizens of the Slovak Republic, face problems with the availability of kindergartens<sup>23</sup>. In the case of asylum seekers and persons with international protection, Slovak language acquisition courses are organized (in residential asylum facilities for asylum seekers, at the place of residence for persons with international protection), which are provided by non-governmental organizations and are reimbursed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. EU. Other migrants attend commercial Slovak language courses provided by various institutions, in some cases, Slovak language courses are provided free of charge by NGOs. However, migrants have long complained about the low availability and poor flexibility of these courses. In this context, the League for Human Rights proposes to improve the process of acquiring the state language for children and adults, to introduce additional Slovak language courses for pupils and students<sup>24</sup>.

### 1.5.1 Recommendations

The national priority in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is also Education for a Decent Life, including strengthening the principle of inclusiveness in the education system.<sup>25</sup> However, the topic of children of foreigners or the education of adult foreigners is not specifically addressed. In this area, regarding the education of foreigners, including children, it is necessary to improve the conditions for learning the Slovak language as a foreign language, both in the context of school attendance, but also in the case of adult education. We, therefore, recommend:

- **strengthen the process of learning Slovak for pupils and students from abroad at the school level, including the capacity of teachers, the possibility of using assistants during teaching and increasing the capacity to improve the process of learning Slovak for pupils and students,**
- **invest in accessible and flexible Slovak language courses for foreigners in Slovakia, consider supporting local governments in organizing courses.**

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22 Kurotova, A., The Children of Foreigners in Slovakia Need Our Help, available here: [<https://dennikn.sk/blog/1368543/deti-cudzincov-na-slovensku-potrebuju-nasu-pomoc/>], cit. 22.9.2020.

23 That makes sense, The lack of capacity in kindergartens is a long-term problem, available here: [<https://analyza.todarozum.sk/docs/19072315430002hok0/>], cit. 23.09.2020.

24 League for Human Rights, Analysis of the Situation and Recommendations Concerning the Setting of Asylum, Migration and Integration Policy in the Slovak Republic, June 2020, p. 50 et seq., available here: [[https://www.hrl.sk/assets/files/obsah/199-Analyza\\_ju%CC%81n%202020.pdf](https://www.hrl.sk/assets/files/obsah/199-Analyza_ju%CC%81n%202020.pdf)]

25 Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report On Achieved Results In National Priorities For the Implementation of 2030 Agenda, September 2020, p. 17, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 13.11.2020.

## 1.6 Migrants and refugees in social life

Migrants are still a neglected group of the population in Slovakia in terms of the degree of their integration into the social life of the country. In many areas, we lack up-to-date and detailed data and information on the lives, needs and challenges they face.

The only available research that examined migrants' attitudes and experiences of various forms of violence and their perceptions of their inclusion is from 2013<sup>26</sup>. Researchers found that 43% of migrants experienced milder forms of violence in public, at home or work, and 61% of migrants have experienced physical assault in public, motivated by their differences, with more frequent experiences being reported by migrants from the African and Muslim communities. Only 32% of migrants from the Asian community feel accepted in Slovakia (a total of 56% of migrants). Only 38% of migrants think that they have the same opportunities as Slovak citizens<sup>27</sup>. Several surveys show that Slovak public opinion is very unfavourable towards migrants. The latest survey of the Gallup Institute in 2019 showed that Slovakia is one of the least tolerant countries among migrants.<sup>28</sup> Research by the Milan Šimečka Foundation revealed that 47.3% of respondents do not know a single foreigner living in Slovakia and closer contact is at least in terms of social distance acceptable in the case of contact with Muslims from Saudi Arabia, while the rate of social distance against Muslims has grown significantly.<sup>29</sup>

### 1.6.1 Recommendations

Public opinion and public attitudes towards migrants significantly influence the social inclusion of migrants. It is therefore important to implement policies and measures that provide the public with objective and sufficient information and that enable migrants themselves to take an active part in public life. We, therefore, recommend the following measures:

- **to continuously ascertain the attitudes of migrants in Slovakia towards integration, experience and interaction with the majority, as well as the level of perceived security in Slovakia and the threat of violence,**
- **implement campaigns against racism, xenophobia and discrimination to eliminate the social marginalization of migrants,**
- **provide anti-racism, xenophobia and discrimination programs targeting migrants at the school level.**

26 IOM International Organization for Migration, Experiences of Migrants in Slovakia with Violence.

27 Blažek, M., Andrášová, S., Paulenová, N., Experiences of Migrants in Slovakia with Violence, IOM International Organization for Migration 2013, 5. Experiences of migrants with violence – perception, ties and support, p. 116 et seq., available here: [<https://www.iom.sk/sk/aktivita/integracia-migrantov/18-aktivita/integracia-migrantov/uskutocnili-sme-integracia-migrantov/147-vyskum-priciny-formy-a-dosledky-nasilia-na-statnych-prislusnikoch-tretich-krajin-v-sr.html>], cit. 23.9.2020.

28 Denník N (daily), available here: [<https://dennikn.sk/minuta/2051673/>], published on 23.9.2020, 14:42, cit. 23.9.2020.

29 Rapoš Božič, I., Foreigners living in Slovakia, to what extent do we distance ourselves from them?, published 19.9.2020, available here: [<https://www.fjuzn.sk/spolocnost/cudzinci-zijuci-na-slovensku-do-akej-miery-sa-od-nich-distancujeme>], cit. 25.9.2020.

## 2. Economic and political integration of migrants

### 2.1 Employing migrants

Employment is the most frequently used purpose for which third-country nationals come to Slovakia.

**Tab. 3: Number of TCN employees in the Slovak Republic in 2015 – 2019 (data are in December for each year)**

	As of 31. 12. 2019	As of 31. 12. 2018	As of 31. 12. 2017	As of 31. 12. 2016	As of 31. 12. 2015
<b>Number of TCN employees with work permit</b>	28 578	17 064	8 937	3 685	3 033
<b>Number of TCN employees with info card</b>	17 606	15 787	12 815	7 351	3 076
<b>Total</b>	<b>46 184</b>	<b>32 851</b>	<b>21 752</b>	<b>11 036</b>	<b>6 109</b>

Source: Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and the Family

The total number of foreigners (TCN and EU citizens) employed on the territory of SR was as of 31. 12. 2019 **78 298 persons**.<sup>30</sup> Most employees came from **Ukraine (22,932)**, followed by **Serbian citizens (13,335)**. In terms of education, employees from both Ukraine and Serbia are mostly **people with lower education**.

As part of the measures introduced by the Foreigners' Job Mobility Strategy, employers are unable to employ foreigners more quickly in jobs where the main reason for not filling them is low wages.<sup>31</sup> This measure is intended to prevent employers from using cheaper labour for migrant workers.

Statistics on irregular migration have a long-term declining trend, and statistics on illegal employment also show that the number of people found in illegal employment is significantly lower than the number of people working legally. Illegally employed foreigners worked mainly in the sectors of industry

<sup>30</sup> Centre For Labour, Social Affairs and Labour, Employment Of Foreigners On the Territory Of Slovak Republic 2019, December, available here: [[https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/buxus/generate\\_page.php?page\\_id=876278](https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/buxus/generate_page.php?page_id=876278) ], cit. 20.9.2020.

<sup>31</sup> Centre For Labour, Social Affairs and Labour, List Of Occupations With Lack Of Work Force, available here: [[https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/sluzby-zamestnanosti/zamestnavanie-cudzincov/zoznam-zamestnani-s-nedostatkom-pracovnej-sily.html?page\\_id=806803](https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/sluzby-zamestnanosti/zamestnavanie-cudzincov/zoznam-zamestnani-s-nedostatkom-pracovnej-sily.html?page_id=806803)]

and construction and administrative and support services<sup>32</sup>. Violation of the labour rights of migrant workers is an underestimated and at the same time very frequent phenomenon in Slovakia<sup>33</sup>.

Regarding trafficking in human beings, according to the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Slovakia is mainly the country of origin of victims of trafficking in human beings. In 2019, only one victim of trafficking was identified, a minor from Afghanistan. The Ministry admits that Slovakia can be a place of transit of foreign victims<sup>34</sup>. In 2019, the League for Human Rights reported the case of 45 foreign men from Moldova and Ukraine, whom it considers possible victims of human trafficking, and issued a legal opinion on the case<sup>35</sup>.

## 2.2 Migrant entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the third most frequent reason for granting temporary residence to foreigners. The number of foreigners – entrepreneurs with a temporary residence permit for business purposes almost tripled between 2015 and 2019, from 3,625 persons to 11,856 persons (Table 4).

**Tab. 4: Number of third-country nationals with a temporary residence permit for business purposes 2015 – 2019**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of TCN	3 625	4 879	6 112	8 062	11 856

Source: Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office

Other categories of foreigners, whose primary purpose of stay is different, or a foreigner – the entrepreneur does not have to stay in Slovakia at all, also have the opportunity to do business. According to available data, more than half of temporary stays for business purposes make up since 2015 citizens of Ukraine, followed by citizens of Vietnam, China, Korea and Macedonia. The number of entrepreneurs – citizens of Serbia<sup>36</sup> – also grew dynamically. Of all small and medium-sized enterprises, the share of those with foreign ownership is up to **5.2%**, which is 30,827 entities, and this number is growing steadily (between 2008 and 2019, this is a total growth of 2.3 pp)<sup>37</sup>. The most common problems faced by

32 National Labour Inspectorate, Annex to the informative report on the search for and fight against illegal work and illegal employment in 2019, Table no. 3, available here: [<https://www.ip.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Pr%C3%ADloha-za-rok-2019.pdf>], cit. 29.9.2020.

33 Chudžíková H, A., Bargerová, Z., Victims of labour exploitation or “illegal migrants”? Protection of labour rights of Ukrainian workers in Slovakia, CVEK – Center for Research on Ethnicity and Culture, 2018, Introduction, p. 3, available here: [[http://cvek.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/WEB\\_SK.pdf](http://cvek.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/WEB_SK.pdf)]

34 Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Situation in the field of trafficking in human beings in Slovakia, available here: [<https://www.minv.sk/?obchodovanie-s-ludmi-a-slovenska-republika>], cit. 2.10.2020.

35 League for Human Rights, “The Trafficking in Human Beings Case”, available here: [<https://www.hrl.sk/sk/o-nas/aktuality/pripad-obchodovania-s-ludmi>], cit. 2.10.2020.

36 Slovak Business Agency, Analysis of Business Conditions and Employment of Foreigners in Slovakia, SBA, Bratislava 2019, p. 60, available here: [[http://www.sbagency.sk/sites/default/files/analiza\\_podmienok\\_podnikania\\_a\\_zamestnavania\\_cudzincov\\_na\\_slovensku.pdf](http://www.sbagency.sk/sites/default/files/analiza_podmienok_podnikania_a_zamestnavania_cudzincov_na_slovensku.pdf)], cit. 29.9.2020.

37 Slovak Business Agency, Small and Medium Business in Figures in 2019, SBA, Bratislava 2020, p. 18

foreigners – entrepreneurs in Slovakia are the language barrier, complexity and opacity of legislation, including tax legislation, excessive and disproportionate bureaucracy, disproportionate tax burden, reluctance and absence of assistance from public authorities bordering on discrimination and excessive controls. While most of these problems also concern entrepreneurs – Slovak citizens, some barriers – language, the complexity of obtaining temporary residence and perceived discrimination by state authorities – are specifically faced by entrepreneurs from the ranks of third-country nationals<sup>38</sup>.

## 2.3 Political participation of migrants

Legislation regulating the political rights of migrants is set favourably in terms of the possibility of influencing events at the local level in Slovakia. In municipal elections, in addition to citizens of the Slovak Republic, adult EU citizens with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic, as well as adult third-country nationals who have been granted one of the types of permanent residence in Slovakia, also have active and passive voting rights<sup>39</sup>.

MIPEX 2015 evaluates Slovakia in the category “Political participation” by only sixteen points out of a hundred, which means that the conditions for political participation of foreigners in the country are “generally unfavourable”<sup>40</sup>. According to the index, the practical exercise of the right to vote is hampered by migrants’ inability to be a member of a political party, to establish political parties and also by the absence of a permanent approach to the development of integration policies in the country<sup>41</sup>.

Research shows that only a small part of the population perceives the presence of foreigners in the Slovak public space, most are perceived in sports, the least in politics.<sup>42</sup>

One of the measures proposed by the Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic was the consideration of the establishment of a Special Committee for the Rights of Foreigners of the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality. The Committee was not established, but at its 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 15 October 2015, the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality approved the establishment of a working group for refugees and migrants under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic<sup>43</sup>. The head of the working group was entrusted to the State Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic and its members are representatives from various ministries, including the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Slovak

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38 Slovak Business Agency, *Analysis of Business Conditions and Employment of Foreigners in Slovakia*, SBA, Bratislava 2019, 3.5 Barriers to Business of Foreigners in Slovakia, p. 65 et seq., Available here: [[http://www.sbagency.sk/sites/default/files/analyza\\_podmienok\\_podnikania\\_a\\_zamestnavania\\_cudzincov\\_na\\_slovensku.pdf](http://www.sbagency.sk/sites/default/files/analyza_podmienok_podnikania_a_zamestnavania_cudzincov_na_slovensku.pdf)], cit. 29.9.2020,

39 See Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, *Elections to the Municipal Self-Government Bodies 2018*, available here: [<https://www.minv.sk/?volby-oso2018>], cit. 29.9.2020, or The Slovak Spectator, *FAQ: How can foreigners vote in municipal elections in Slovakia?*, available here: [<https://spectator.sme.sk/c/20906990/faq-how-can-foreigners-vote-in-municipal-elections-in-slovakia.html#q1>], published on 5 September 2018.

40 MIPEX: *Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015*, available here: [<https://www.mipex.eu/slovakia>], cit. 29.9.2020.

41 Ibid.

42 Rapoš Božič, I., *Foreigners living in Slovakia – to what extent do we distance ourselves from them?*, published 19.9.2020, available here: [<https://www.fjuzn.sk/spolocnost/cudzinci-zijuci-na-slovensku-do-akej-miery-sa-od-nich-distancujeme>], cit. 20.9.2020.

43 Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality, 22<sup>nd</sup> session on 15 October 2015, available here: [<https://www.radavladyp.gov.sk/22-rokovanie-rady/>], cit. 13.11.2020.

Republic. The first meeting of the working group took place on 13 July 2016<sup>44</sup>. No further information on the activities of this working group or its composition is known. The Committee on the Rights of Aliens was not established as an advisory body with the involvement of aliens. Migrants are not formally invited to create any conceptual materials at the state or local level.

At the civic level, some civic associations and initiatives are either directly established by persons born outside the Slovak Republic, or which also include migrants, but these are mainly devoted to the cultural life of migrants in Slovakia or help their members (Association of Afghans in Slovakia, Union of Vietnamese Women in Slovakia, Islamic Foundation, etc.).

## 2.4 Acquiring citizenship

Slovakia is one of the countries with the lowest annual increase in naturalized citizens. According to Eurostat data, in 201 Slovakia in 2018 had the seventh-lowest naturalisation rate within the EU 27.<sup>45</sup>

Official data sent by the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic on the number of persons granted citizenship of the Slovak Republic (including minor children whose parents chose citizenship) show that the number of persons granted citizenship has increased since 2015, most citizenships was awarded in 2015. Among third-country nationals, it was most often people from Ukraine, Serbia and Vietnam. The numbers of men and women who have acquired citizenship are relatively balanced.

**Tab. 5: Number of persons granted citizenship of the Slovak Republic, 2015 – 2019**

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number	525	611	814	1 071	913

Source: Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

MIPEX 2015 evaluates Slovakia in its approach to citizenship by twenty-five points out of a hundred, ie as “a bit unfavourable”. The reason is “the lowest and least fair rate of naturalization in Europe, which keeps a large number of people from outside the EU in relative uncertainty with potentially negative effects on their integration”<sup>46</sup>.

The Public Defender of Rights criticizes the method of verifying the command of the Slovak language and considers it to conflict with the principles of good public administration, in particular the principle of equality, the principle of impartiality and the principle of legal certainty. Standardized tests at a specific level should be introduced and applied to all applicants for citizenship<sup>47</sup>.

44 Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic: Summary Report on the Status of Fulfillment of Objectives and Measures of the Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic for 2017, Material Number UV-16135/2018, p. 35, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/22888/1>], cit. 13.11.2020.

45 Eurostat: File: Naturalisation rate (acquisition of citizenship per 100 resident foreigners), 2018.png, available here: [[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Naturalisation\\_rate\\_\(acquisition\\_of\\_citizenship\\_per\\_100\\_resident\\_foreigners\)\\_2018.png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Naturalisation_rate_(acquisition_of_citizenship_per_100_resident_foreigners)_2018.png)], cit. 30.9.2020.

46 Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015, Slovakia, „Conclusions and Recommendations“, available here: [<http://mipex.eu/slovakia>], cit. 30.9.2020.

47 Office of the Public Defender of Rights, the Law on Citizenship needs to be changed. Press release, available here: [[https://www.vop.gov.sk/files/2020\\_04\\_TS\\_VOP\\_MV\\_SR\\_zmena\\_pravnej\\_upravy\\_o\\_statnom\\_obcianskve.pdf](https://www.vop.gov.sk/files/2020_04_TS_VOP_MV_SR_zmena_pravnej_upravy_o_statnom_obcianskve.pdf)], cit. 30.9.2020.



## 2.5 Recommendations

The proposed recommendations in this area follow the achievement of the goal no. 8 – to promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and Objective no. 16 – to promote a peaceful and inclusive society for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all and build effective, transparent and inclusive institutions at all levels. In the Slovak context, the national priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda are the measures – “Towards a knowledge and environmentally sustainable economy in a demographic change and a changing global environment” and “Rule of law, democracy and security”<sup>48</sup>. However, the topic of foreigners is not directly mentioned in them. Therefore, concerning the economic, social and political participation and inclusion of migrants, we propose to introduce the following measures:

- **improve the employment protection of migrants, including protection against non-standard forms of work and abuse, and strengthen the protection and legal status of migrants who are victims of labour exploitation and abuse for illegal work and employment, monitor the situation of trafficking in human beings concerning foreign victims for whom Slovakia is a destination or transit country and take appropriate measures to improve the detection of this activity,**
- **improve the conditions for entrepreneurship and innovation concerning foreign migrants, remove the barriers they encounter,**
- **to improve the language skills of civil servants in the field of the first contact with migrants,**
- **strengthen the political participation of migrants at the municipal level, including membership of political parties,**
- **invite migrant representatives to consultation processes on the preparation and evaluation of migration and integration strategy papers at the national and local level,**
- **introduce standardized tests to verify the command of the Slovak language, as well as standardized tests to demonstrate general knowledge of Slovakia, including module tests, recommended teaching materials and courses.**

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<sup>48</sup> Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Report on Achieved Results in National Priorities for the Implementation of 2030 Agenda, September 2020, p. 5, available here: [<https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/25258/1>], cit. 13.11.2020.

## 3. Regulations to the arrival of migrants to Slovakia from third countries

### 3.1 Acquisition and management of workforce

According to the European Commission, Slovakia is currently facing long-term challenges in the areas of population ageing, climate change and digital transformation.<sup>49</sup> The Productivity Report of Slovakia identifies the so-called “Brain drain”, ie the long-term departure of qualified people abroad, as one of the obstacles to the country’s competitiveness and sustainable development.<sup>50</sup> Facilitating the arrival of staff from third countries and increasing efforts to attract “talent” are identified as one of the tools to help meet these challenges<sup>51</sup>. The long-term job mobility strategy proposes several measures to facilitate the arrival of foreign workers<sup>52</sup>. So far, short-term measures have been implemented.

### 3.2 Family reunification

Family reunification is also an important part of the immigration process.

A temporary stay with the aim of family reunification allows the reunification of:

- family members of third-country nationals who have been granted temporary residence in the Slovak Republic, or
- to the spouse of a third-country national with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic.<sup>53</sup>

Permanent residence allows the arrival of third-country nationals who are a spouse or dependent relative in the direct rank of a Slovak citizen or a minor child or a dependent child of a third-country national with permanent residence<sup>54</sup>. Slovakia **does not provide the possibility of family reunification to unmarried couples or LGBTI couples (including if one of the partners is a Slovak citizen)**, except for the institution of a family member of an EU citizen, which is covered by EU legislation.

In terms of the number of permitted permanent and temporary stays that allow family reunification, it is clear that the institute of family reunification is an important tool for the immigration of third-country nationals to Slovakia (see Table 6).

49 European Commission, Country Report 2020 – Slovakia, Brussels, 26 February 2020, SWD (2020) 524 final, p. 4, available here: [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SK/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020SC0524&from=EN>], cit. 14.9.2020.

50 National Council for Productivity of the Slovak Republic and Institute for Strategies and Analyzes, Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Report on Productivity and Competitiveness of Slovakia, 2019.

51 Strategy of Economic Policy of the Slovak Republic Until 2030, p. 15.

52 Strategy of Job Mobility of Foreigners in the Slovak Republic, 2018, p. 34 et seq.

53 § 27 et seq. of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners.

54 § 42 et seq. of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners.

Tab. 6: Temporary and permanent stays of TCN enabling family reunification, 2015 – 2019

Type of residence	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Family unification	4 884	6 111	6 910	7 672	8 965
A family member of an EU citizen	467	636	807	1 017	1 173
A family member of an EU citizen- permanent residence	57	80	105	147	206
Permanent residence for 5 years	3 517	3 012	2 951	2 988	3 191
Permanent residence for unlimited time	3 385	4 775	5 103	5 432	5 710
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 310</b>	<b>14 614</b>	<b>15 876</b>	<b>17 256</b>	<b>19 245</b>

Source: Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office

### 3.3 Immigration of students, scientists and professionals

The effort to attract highly qualified experts (scientists, researchers, innovators) to Slovakia is expressed in almost all strategic documents dealing with managed migration.<sup>55</sup> In reality, however, this goal has not been achieved and, in the case of scientists and researchers, the numbers of immigrants are negligible. The scheme to attract highly qualified migrants, the so-called “Blue card”, which was so little used in Slovakia that it did not even get into the official statistical selection of data, which is published semi-annually in the yearbooks of the Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office.

Tab. 7: Arrival of students, scientists and researchers, 2015 – 2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
TCN (ŠPTK) scientists and researchers	Not available	Not available	Not available	45	57
TCN students	2 349	3 141	3 924	5 102	6 910
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 349</b>	<b>3 141</b>	<b>3 924</b>	<b>5 147</b>	<b>7 047</b>

Source: ÚHCP PPZ

Slovak higher education needs to increase the number of foreign students, because it is currently relatively unattractive for them, to which a rigid migration policy<sup>56</sup> also contributes. It is necessary to create

<sup>55</sup> Strategy of Job Mobility of Foreigners in the Slovak Republic, 2018, Goal of the strategy, available here: [<https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/uvod/informacie-cudzinci/strategia.pdf>], cit. 14.9.2020.

<sup>56</sup> Hall, R. et al. authors, Recommendations for improving education in Slovakia, It gives a reason, 2020, p. 68, available here: [[https://todarozum.sk/admin/files/file\\_879\\_1587651772.pdf](https://todarozum.sk/admin/files/file_879_1587651772.pdf)], cit. 15.9.2020.

institutional strategies for internationalization, the professionalization of foreign departments of universities and a systematic increase in the number of foreign students at Slovak universities in all three levels of study<sup>57</sup>.

### 3.4 International protection, unaccompanied minors

Slovakia is one of the EU countries with the lowest number of asylum seekers, asylum seekers and persons with subsidiary protection.<sup>58</sup>

**Tab. 8: Numbers of asylum applications, granted asylums and granted subsidiary protections in 2015 – 2019 and the number of UM detained in the Slovak Republic**

Number	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Asylum applications</b>	330	146	166	178	232
<b>Granted asylums</b>	8	167	29	5	9
<b>Granted subsidiary protections</b>	41	12	25	37	19
<b>Unaccompanied minors</b>	23	23	25	17	69

Source: Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic: <http://www.minv.sk/?statistiky-20> (applications for asylum, asylum, subsidiary protection) and the Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office (number of unaccompanied minors detained in case of unauthorized crossing of the state border and unauthorized residence)

As part of the system of compulsory redistribution of persons who need international protection (relocation), Slovakia admitted 16 persons from Greece.<sup>59</sup> No persons were admitted under the compulsory resettlement mechanism of the Slovak Republic.<sup>60</sup> In 2015, Slovakia decided to admit 149 persons of Iraqi nationality. At present, Slovakia does not participate in resettlement or relocation programs.<sup>61</sup> Based on an agreement between the Slovak Republic, UNHCR and IOM, Slovakia has been implementing

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> See also, for example, Mészárosová, S., Oboňová, S., Annual Report on Migration and Asylum in the Slovak Republic in 2018, Report of the National Contact Point of the European Migration Network in the Slovak Republic, April 2019, Bratislava, p. 32. Et al, ISBN: 978-80-89506-86-6, available here: [file:///C:/Users/Zuzicka/Downloads/Vyrocná\_správa\_o\_migrácii\_azyle\_za\_rok\_2018\_SK.pdf], cit. 15.9.2020.

<sup>59</sup> European Commission, Relocation: EU Solidarity between Member States, November 2017, available here: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20171114\_relocation\_eu\_solidarity\_between\_member\_states\_en.pdf], cit. 15.9.2020.

<sup>60</sup> European Commission, Resettlement: Ensuring Safe and Legal Access to Protection for Refugees, November 2017, available here: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20171114\_resettlement\_ensuring\_safe\_and\_legal\_access\_to\_protection\_for\_refugees\_en.pdf], cit. 15.9.2020.

<sup>61</sup> See Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Summary Report on the Status of Fulfillment of Tasks, Intentions and Objectives of Migration Policy for 2018, LP / 2019/243 Summary Report on the Status of Fulfillment of Tasks, Intentions and Objectives of Migration Policy for 2018; but also: Behúňová, k., Mészárosová, S., Oboňová, S., Annual Report on Migration and Asylum in the Slovak Republic in 2019, Report of the National Contact Point of the European Migration Network in the Slovak Republic, April 2020, Bratislava, 4.4. Relocation and resettlement programs, p. 48 et seq., ISBN: 978-80-89506-92-7, available here: [https://www.emn.sk/sk/na-stiahnutie-emn/publikacie-emn/itemlist/category/5-vyrocné-spravy-emn], cit. 15.9.2020.

since the Humanitarian transfer program. A total of 1,047 persons were temporarily admitted to Slovakia through this program during the 10 years of operation of the program, of which 1,043 persons were transferred from the territory of the Slovak Republic to the beneficiary country.<sup>62</sup> In 2019, the program was suspended indefinitely.

In response to the Call for Humanity petition, the Government of the Slovak Republic decided that Slovakia would provide scholarships for refugees from Syria to study in the SR.<sup>63</sup> In the academic year 2019/2020, students from these countries (Afghanistan, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Palestine), Sudan and Ethiopia) allocated 24 scholarship places.<sup>64</sup>

Based on the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 568 of 21 October 2015, *The Integration Program for Persons with International Protection* should be established as a systemic solution for the integration of persons with international protection in connection with the Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic, but this has not yet been adopted. The integration needs of persons with international protection are mainly covered by projects of non-governmental organizations financed mainly from the Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration and in Slovakia (AMIF).<sup>65</sup>

### 3.5 Recommendations

The 2030 Agenda is the first document of its kind to integrate migration as an integral part of development policy. However, Slovakia's national priorities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda do not address the topic of migration or support for the arrival of a skilled workforce from abroad. As part of the elimination of inequalities, the goal is no. 10.7. efforts to ensure legal, safe and responsible migration and mobility of people, including the implementation of planned and managed migration policies. In this respect, it can be stated that Slovakia needs to add significantly because despite the existing strategic documents, very little is being done in the field of planned and managed migration and the country is unable to use the benefits of migration to respond to labour, science, research and development needs.

- **We, therefore, recommend introducing mobility schemes for highly qualified migrants, scientists and researchers, including speeding up and facilitating immigration procedures for these categories of migrants, with particular emphasis on promoting gender balance.**

With the principle of family reunification, we recommend:

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62 Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, LP / 2019/243 Summary Report on the Status of Fulfillment of Tasks, Intentions and Objectives of Migration Policy for 2018, Annex, Section 2.6.5. International protection, migration and development, available here: [<https://www.slov-lex.sk/legislativne-procesy/-/SK/dokumenty/LP-2019-243>], cit. 15.9.2020.

63 Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 568/2015 of 21 October 2015 on Information on support for the activities of non-governmental organizations in humanitarian and integration support to refugees submitted by the initiators of the Call to Humanity petition.

64 EMN, Annual Report on Migration and Asylum for 2019, 12.1. Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, p. 82, available here: [<https://www.emn.sk/sk/na-st-stiahnutie-emn/publikacie-emn/itemlist/category/5-vyročne-spravy-emn>], cit. 15.9.2020.

65 Marginal, Asylum seekers and persons granted international protection in Slovakia. V4NIEM: Visegrad Countries National Integration Evaluation Mechanism Report 2017, Integration of Persons Granted with International Protection in 2017, available here: [<https://marginal.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/REPORT-SK-sk-V8.pdf>], cit. 9/15/2020

- **Enable the use of the institute of family reunification, permanent residence and permanent residence for an indefinite period, even in the case of mixed unmarried couples, and eliminate discrimination against LGBTI couples. To support the integration process, we recommend allowing free entry to the labour market in the event of a temporary stay for the purpose of family reunification immediately upon arrival in Slovakia.**

In the case of persons entitled to international protection, Slovakia does less than most other EU member states<sup>66</sup>. Therefore, we propose:

- **draw up a resettlement scheme and address the improvement of public opinion and the integration process of asylum seekers and persons with subsidiary protection,**
- **create a state integration program for persons with international protection and put it into practice,**
- **participate in shared responsibility and solidarity programs within the EU and, given their untapped capacity, help the EU countries most affected by the arrival of asylum seekers by taking part of these people into their territory.**

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<sup>66</sup> EU countries in 2015-2019 displaced more than 65,000 people in need of international protection; European Commission, Delivering on resettlement, December 2019, available here: [[https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/201912\\_delivering-on-resettlement.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/201912_delivering-on-resettlement.pdf)], cit. 15.9.2020.

## 4. Development cooperation and migration

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### 4.1 Introduction

In the context of development, cooperation migration can be seen as a challenge for sustainable development, which the states and international organisations also seek to address through the development and humanitarian tools.

At the same time, however, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also recognizes for the first time the contribution of migration to sustainable development. Migration is a cross-cutting issue that concerns not only objective 10.7 but all sustainable development goals. Ten of the seventeen objectives contain objectives and indicators related to migration or mobility.

In the reporting period 2015 – 2019, the Slovak Republic responded to migration in development cooperation mainly in the context of the refugee crisis and, to a lesser extent, with assistance to internally displaced persons in Ukraine and South Sudan.

Slovak Aid's humanitarian and post-humanitarian projects deal almost exclusively with assistance to refugees (Lebanon), internally displaced persons (Syria, Ukraine, South Sudan) or returnees (Iraq). In terms of development cooperation, the Slovak Republic is mainly involved in Kenya, mainly in the agricultural sector, job creation and labour market training, to contribute to the reduction of rural displacement and urban migration.

Given the above, therefore, the greater part is mainly devoted to interventions related to the refugee crisis in connection with humanitarian aid.

Certain limits for the monitoring report are the fact that there are no aggregated data on this topic (eg number of refugees assisted by the Slovak Republic, total funds spent on migration, etc.), strategic documents do not have set indicators for migration and annual development cooperation reports are migration phenomenon or quantifying how many projects contributed to the solution of migration, with a few exceptions, they practically do not address. It does not contribute to the above that, except for the evaluation of the humanitarian aid system 2016-2018, which partly intervenes in the topic of migration, no evaluations or studies have been carried out on this topic and dialogue in this area between stakeholders is rather technical at the project level.

### 4.2 Context and development in the years 2015 – 2019

Never before has migration played such a big role in the system of Slovak development cooperation, as it has been since the so-called "Refugee crisis". At the same time, it can be stated that probably no other phenomenon affected the development part of the Slovak foreign policy as significantly as the events that began much earlier and fully manifested in Europe in 2015. With the development of the migration crisis, not only the strategic direction of, geographical focus and the emergence of new partnerships. The challenges faced by the development cooperation of the Slovak Republic also changed or came to the fore during this period. Among other things, SAMRS (Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation) created a budget and project cycle for humanitarian projects, and the Slovak Republic

also began to contribute to EU and FRIT trust funds. Contributions to relevant UN agencies and other international organizations active in the field of migration have also increased. The migration crisis has highlighted the need for a closer link between development activities and humanitarian aid. In the autumn of 2015, the migration crisis intensified and tens of thousands of refugees crossed the Schengen border. In Slovakia, representatives of the Call for Humanity, civic sector initiatives and activists, negotiations with the Government of the Slovak Republic on achieving the allocation of funds for humanitarian aid have begun. At the same time, several European and international events, the Council of the EU and V4 meetings took place. The EU-African summit in Valletta on 11-12 November 2015, proved important, under which the EU Trust Fund for Africa was established.

In 2015, however, the development system was not ready, and although NGOs overfunded relatively large sums through public collections and from private sources (only SKCH received about 500,000 euros in church collections) and sent their teams and volunteers to the so-called The Balkan route, the state administration had neither the financial resources nor the rapid process to provide humanitarian subsidies to implementers. The funds were finally provided by the state enterprise TIPOS as a sponsorship gift, while the administration of resources was not carried out through a ministerial agency, but the first subsidy humanitarian projects were handled by the Open Society Foundation. Compared to 2015, when the total ODA was at the level of 78 mils. EUR, there was an increase of 21 mils. EUR to 99 mils. EUR, which represents an increase of approx. 27%, mainly due to an increase in the volume of the Slovak Republic's contributions to tackling migration. In February 2016, the Government of the Slovak Republic undertook to contribute to the Trust Fund for Syria (MADAD) in the amount of 5.3 mils. EUR. At the donors' conference in London, the Slovak Republic promised 600,000 euros and, based on an agreement between the EU and Turkey, also to allocate 10 mils. EUR for the Facility for Refugees in Turkey program. At the summit, which hosted B. Obama to the global refugee crisis, the Slovak Republic undertook to contribute 1.7 mils. EUR 2 million for international organizations and 2 mils. provided to the Trust Fund for Africa. A similar trend continued in 2017 – 2018, while in 2019 there was a significant decrease in financial contributions to address migration, which was caused mainly by a decrease in financial contributions of the Slovak Republic to international organizations and programs dedicated to migration.

### 4.3 Migration and financing<sup>67</sup> of bilateral development cooperation<sup>68</sup>

The table below provides an overview of funds spent on migration-related activities in the period 2016-2019. The first column contains tools or types of financial flows.

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67 <sup>68</sup> These include contributions to EU programs and funds, international organizations, SlovakAid humanitarian and development projects and material humanitarian aid.

68 <sup>69</sup> Scholarships and assistance to refugees in the donor country are not included. In r. In 2016, an additional 30 places were opened for Syrian citizens who were in various refugee camps in neighbouring countries of the Middle East or belonging to the category of internally displaced persons.



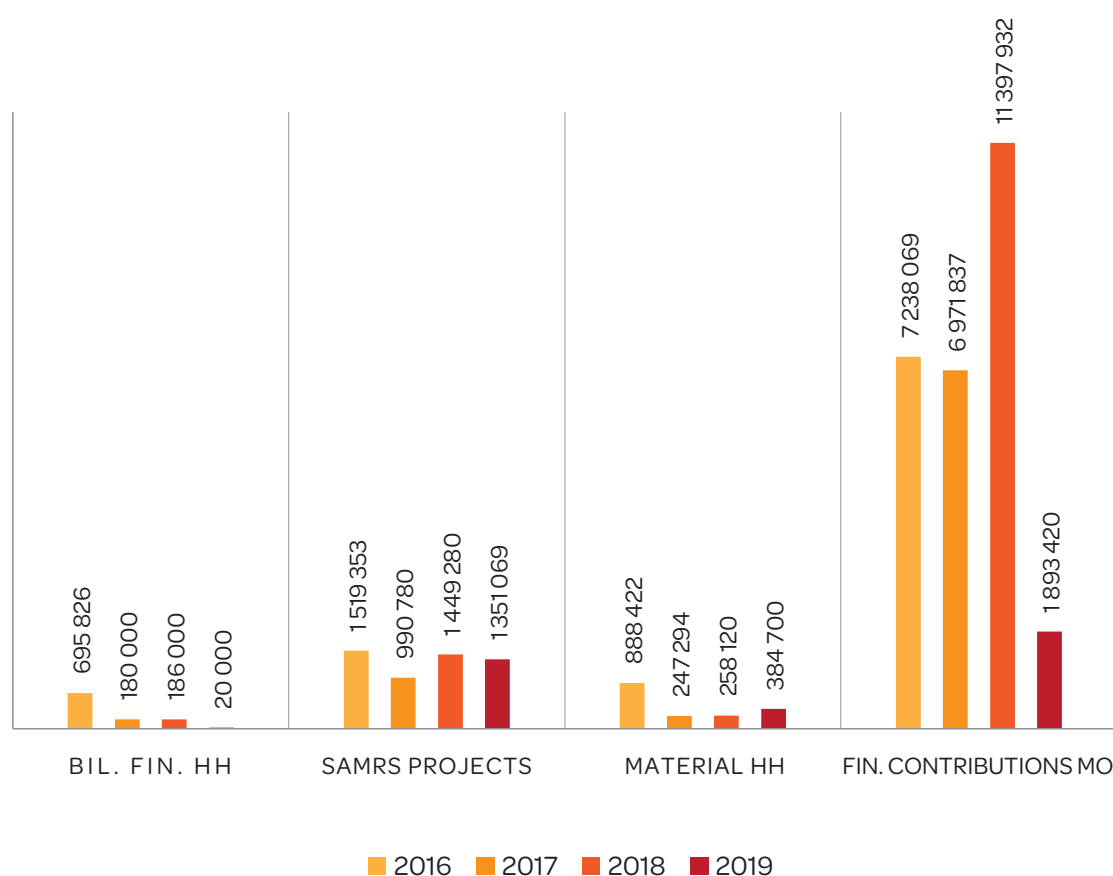
**Table no. 9: Funds spent on bilateral development cooperation concerning migration for the period 2016 – 2019**

	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>SAMRS projects</b>	1 519 353	990 780	1 449 280	1 351 069
<b>Material HH</b>	888 422	247 294	258 120	384 700
<b>Fin. contributions MO</b>	7 238 069	6 971 837	11 397 932	1 893 420
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 341 670</b>	<b>8 391 928</b>	<b>13 291 333</b>	<b>3 649 189</b>
<b>Migration % from BH</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Bilat. Help</b>	19 243 965	25 933 542	28 262 705	19 383 012
<b>ODA total</b>	99 396 979	99 488 926	107 810 945	101 814 671

### Overview of types of financial modalities for migration

It is clear from the chart that financial contributions to international organizations, in particular, have fallen sharply.

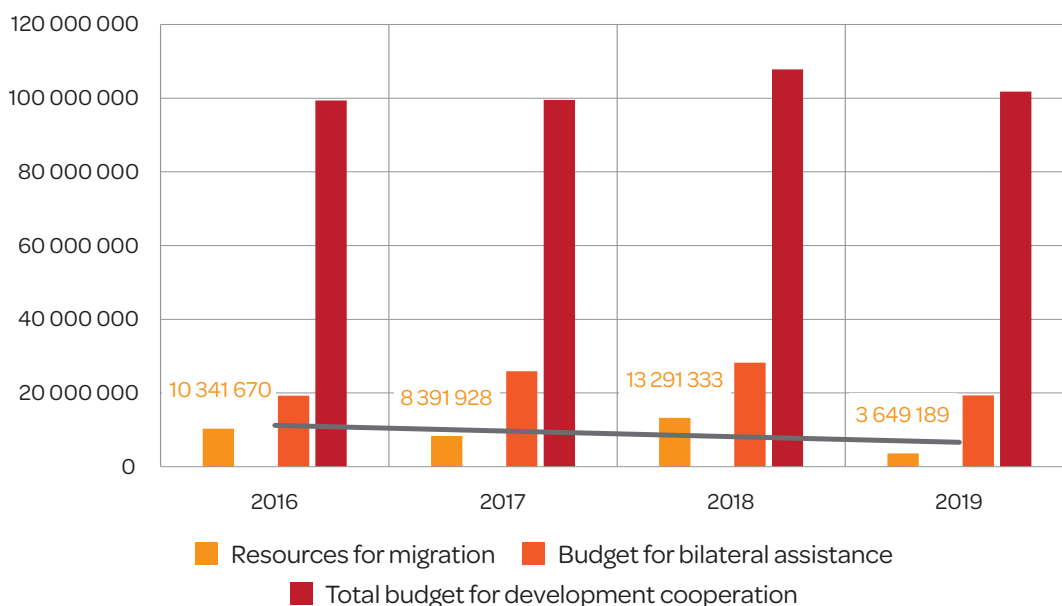
**Graph no. 1: Overview of types of financial instruments by beneficiaries for the period 2016 – 2019**



**Comparison of funds spent on migration under bilateral aid and global aid:**

The graph shows a significant decrease in migration funds in nominal terms as well as a percentage of total aid.

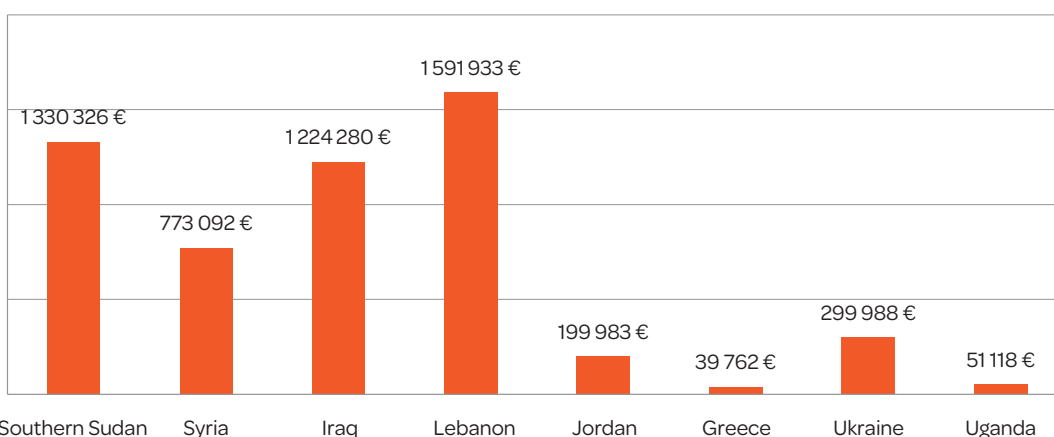
**Graph no. 2: Overview of the development of total funds spent on migration within development cooperation for the period 2016 – 2019**



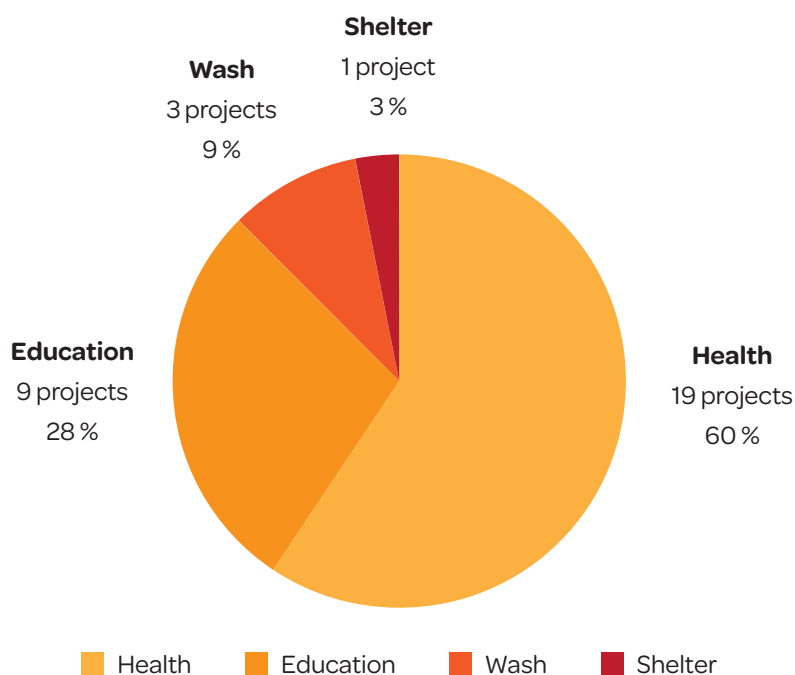
**The amount of SlovakAid projects primarily focused on migration solutions:**

- In 2016: 10, average project budget: 152,000 euros
- In 2017: 5, average project budget: 198,000 euros
- In 2018: 7, the average project budget: 207,000 euros
- In 2019: 9, average project budget: 150,000 euros

**Graph no. 3: Countries to which the Slovak Republic contributes the most within the so-called SlovakAid “migration” projects for the period 2016 – 2019**



Graph no. 4: The so-called SlovakAid “migration” projects in the period 2015 – 2019 by sector



The projects are primarily focused on the health and education sector.

#### 4.4 The Impact of migration on the ODA system

Migration as a phenomenon and within it the refugee crisis had the following signs for the system of Slovak development cooperation:

- It led to one of the greatest manifestations of solidarity of civil society in Slovakia (Call to Humanity and other activities) in humanitarian aid abroad.
- There has been a significant instrumentalisation of ODA towards securitization, i. j. development cooperation is used for non-development objectives, in this case, to reduce/stop migration to Europe (see eg the Libya project).
- It has brought a narrative in which a large number of decision-makers and politicians look at development cooperation through the eyes of migration and not the other way around.
- In 2016, there was a significant increase in total ODA by 23%, t. j. from 78 mils. EUR (2015) to 95.6 mils. to address migration.
- The Slovak Republic has expanded its geographical focus to include a region in which it has never operated before.
- Slovak implementers, including non-governmental organizations, expanded their operations to include the Middle East region, in which they had no previous experience.
- The Slovak Republic embarked on the path of a donor-focused on complex crises and conflicts rather than natural disasters.
- SAMRS has set up a regular project cycle for humanitarian aid and the budget for humanitarian subsidies has been significantly increased.

- Representatives of the Slovak Republic began to use financial contributions as a kind of concession for the rejection of mandatory quotas for the redistribution of migrants, respectively. as an expression of solidarity with the southern states of the EU.
- The complexity of the issue and the local context may mean a risk for the Slovak Republic that some projects supported by the Slovak Republic may significantly contribute to human rights violations.
- The new medium-term development cooperation strategy 2019 – 2023 explicitly states in several places that one of the main goals of the Slovak Republic is to address the causes of migration in countries of origin and transit.
- It turns out that after 2016, the narrative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic towards the Slovak government in the sense of *“increase resources for development cooperation to address the causes of migration in the countries where it occurs”* works more as a defensive argument for not reducing ODA, rather than significantly not at all to systemic reforms or those parts of the system that are directly related to the migration agenda.

## 4.5 Recommendations

1. Reconsider, with a hindsight of five years from the so-called refugee crisis, the possibility of increasing funding to address the causes and consequences of migration in SlovakAid's partner countries, with an emphasis on the Middle East region, and the creation of a development diplomat position in one of these countries.
2. The setting up of indicators linked to the SDGs' migration objectives also needs to be addressed in the strategic documents, and the migration phenomenon should be addressed in the annual development cooperation reports and the number of projects contributed to tackling migration should be addressed.
3. Follow the principles of consistency and predictability in terms of geographical focus and cooperation with partners or in support of specific programs.
4. Spend more resources and other support on activities of spreading enlightenment, global education, combating misinformation and xenophobia in the Slovak Republic, given how the topic of migration is abused and polarizes society. There is a large disparity between high financial contributions to address migration abroad and a very low budget and efforts to work with public opinion in the Slovak Republic.
5. Re-evaluate and cooperate with regard to limited resources with a smaller number of partners and institutions operating in the field of migration to create synergies between different modalities and instruments of the Slovak Republic.
6. Introduce aggregated data (eg to make data available as the total number of beneficiaries whom the Slovak Republic has helped in the context of migration, etc.).
7. Pay attention and set up due diligence and monitoring so that the Slovak Republic minimizes the possibilities when projects supported by it may contribute to human rights violations.
8. Strengthen personnel capacities so that the topic of migration, which is important and topical from an inter-ministerial point of view, is addressed by Slovak expert staff both at headquarters and in the field or on secondment in international organizations.

## 5. Migration from the gender perspective

Women make up almost half of international migration, in 2019 there were 47.9% of all migrants<sup>69</sup>. According to Eurostat, the share of women in immigration to the EU in 2011 is 46%.<sup>70</sup>

In Slovakia, however, the official statistics of the Migration Office and the Slovak Border and Foreigner Police Office for individual categories of residence hardly show a breakdown by gender at all. It is clear from Eurostat statistics that in Slovakia, male immigration prevails over female immigration.<sup>71</sup>

According to the Slovak report on the state of gender equality, Slovakia ranks 26th in the EU in terms of gender equality and is one of three EU Member States that did not make progress in the field of gender equality from 2005 to 2015.<sup>72</sup> The report on gender equality does not mention women at all. Equality and prevention of discrimination, as well as specific protection of vulnerable groups of foreigners, including women, are among the principles of the Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic.<sup>73</sup> The job mobility strategy has the long-term goal of initiating measures to prevent multiple discrimination against migrant women.<sup>74</sup>

Older research on the situation of migrant women in Slovakia (2009<sup>75</sup> and 2011<sup>76</sup>) found that in addition to gender inequalities faced by all women in Slovakia, migrant women have to face significantly more than men in other types of barriers to employment – on the one hand, domestic duties, but on the other hand, qualification and language barriers.<sup>77</sup> Migrant women also face violence in public in Slovakia.<sup>78</sup> Khadra Abdile, a Somali refugee in Slovakia, received the prestigious White Crow award in 2016 for speaking publicly about her problems.<sup>79</sup>

69 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UN DESA) – International Migrant Stock 2019. Ten Key Messages, available here: [[https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationStock2019\\_TenKeyFindings.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationStock2019_TenKeyFindings.pdf)], cit. 1.10.2020.

70 Eurostat, Migration and Migrant Population Statistics, available here: [[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration\\_and\\_migrant\\_population\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics)], cit. 1.10.2020.

71 Eurostat, Immigrants by Sex, 2018 (% of all immigrants), available here: [[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/d/d9/Immigrants\\_by\\_sex%2C\\_2018\\_%28%25\\_of\\_all\\_immigrants%29.png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/d/d9/Immigrants_by_sex%2C_2018_%28%25_of_all_immigrants%29.png)], cit. 1.10.2020.

72 Summary Report on the State of Gender Equality in Slovakia in 2018. Gender Equality In the Labour Market. Gender Equality In Numbers, EU Gender-Equality Index, p. 4, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, June 2019, available here: [[https://www.gender.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/SSRR\\_2018-final.pdf](https://www.gender.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/SSRR_2018-final.pdf)], cit. 1.10.2020.

73 Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic, January 20, 2014, "Principles of Integration Policy", available here: [<https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/integracia-cudzincov/dokumenty/vlastny-material-integracna-politika-januar-2014.pdf>], cit. 1.10.2020.

74 Strategy of Job Mobility of Foreigners in Slovak Rep., Long-Term Measures, Information Forums and Local Platforms, Measure no. 23.

75 Filadelfiová, J., Sekulová, M., Migrants between us. Family and gender aspects of integration, Institute for Public Affairs, Bratislava 2009, ISBN: 978-80-89345-25-0.

76 Filadelfiová, J., et al., Migrants on the Slovak labour market: problems and perspectives. Economic aspects of migration and integration of migrants, IVO, 2011, ISBN 978-80-89345-34-2.

77 Filadelfiová, J., et al., Migrants on the Slovak labour market: problems and perspectives. Economic aspects of migration and integration of migrants, 4.11.2. Correction with general gender inequalities – in the labour market and beyond, IVO, 2011, ISBN 978-80-89345-34-2.

78 Topky.sk, Hard life of foreigners in Bratislava. Young Slovaks attack them because of the hijab, children are watching, published 18.9.2018, available here: [<https://www.topky.sk/cl/10/1738837/Tazky-zivot-cudziniiek-v-Bratislave--Mladi-Slovaci-na-nich-utocia-kvoli-hidzabu--deti-sa-prizeraju>], cit. 1.10.2020.

79 Cuprik, R., Women Who Got To Know Slovak Hate, SME, published Nov. 17. 2016, available here: [<https://domov.sme.sk/c/20385987/zeny-ktore-spoznali-slovensku-nenavist.html>], cit. 1.10.2020

The Slovak immigration system is not favourably set for the specific needs of migrant women and supports the state of dependence on the guarantor of residence. Migrant women in Slovakia do not yet have their organizations that would draw more attention to their position and the problems they face, or promote and support their social, civic and political involvement. An exception is the Union of Vietnamese Women in Slovakia, which was founded in 2009.<sup>80</sup> The Union aims to help Vietnamese women integrate into society.<sup>81</sup>

## 5.1 Recommendations

The topic of gender aspects of immigration in Slovakia and the position of female migrants and refugees, their needs, expectations and experiences are on the fringes of interest. Society and policymakers must start paying attention to the gender aspects of immigration of migrant and refugee women in Slovakia and take measures to improve their position.

We, therefore, recommend:

- **regularly collect, analyze and evaluate information on the position and experience of migrant women and refugees in Slovakia, including the information on their position on the labour market, information on the immigration process and gender barriers in the process of immigration, integration and citizenship,**
- **use gender-sensitive language in all migration-related material,**
- **adopt gender-sensitive policies concerning foreign women and refugees and introduce specific support services for migrant women, including language and orientation courses designed and available for women, especially women with small children, and take measures to support migrant women and refugees, including their economic independence, social, cultural, civic and political involvement,**
- **to enable persons who obtain a residence permit for family reunification to have access to the labour market without restriction immediately upon arrival in Slovakia.**

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<sup>80</sup> Registry of civic associations, available here: [<http://ives.minv.sk/rez/registre/pages/detailoz.aspx?id=196965>], cit. 1.10.2020.

<sup>81</sup> Sudor, K., Vietnamka: Recognition as a minority, SME, July 29, 2014, available here: <https://domov.sme.sk/c/7307003/vietnamka-pomohlo-by-nam-uznanie-za-mensinu.html>], cit. 1.10.2020.

## III. CONCLUSION

The immigration of foreigners from third countries is increasing significantly in Slovakia, which is caused by low unemployment and the need for labour in almost every sector of the country's economy. For Slovakia, however, this topic remains relatively controversial, with public opinion, which, according to surveys, is significantly negative towards migrants<sup>82</sup>. Public opinion and the availability of objective information are thus some of the biggest challenges facing Slovak society concerning migrants. Achieving the goals of Agenda 2030 or Slovakia's national priorities, especially in the field of social inclusion, education and economic sustainability, will not be possible without each country including its migrants who live in its territory. However, Slovakia has done very little in this so far and does not monitor the situation of migrants in its progress reports. At the very edge of interest is gender equality of migrant women, this topic does not seem to exist in Slovakia. From the gender-insensitive language in all strategic documents, the absence of the division into men and women in official residence statistics to the practical problems that migrant women face. Migrant women are thus invisible to Slovak society and public authorities, and in practice, no measures are taken to achieve gender equality in this area.

In the field of development cooperation, it is clear that the phenomenon of migration will continue to play an important role in the EU's immediate neighbourhood in the future. The Slovak Republic must be able not only to contribute more financially to the solution of migration as a responsible member of the EU but also to significantly improve and streamline the system of development cooperation following the recommendations above. It will be necessary for the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the coordinator of development cooperation, to review the current strategy, sectoral, geographical focus, current partnerships, as well as the nexus between development cooperation, humanitarian aid and security.

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82 For example Rapoš Božič, I., Cudzinci žijúci na Slovensku – do akej miery sa od nich dištancujeme?, publikované 19.9.2020, dostupné tu: [<https://www.fjuzn.sk/spolocnost/cudzinci-zijuci-na-slovensku-do-akej-miery-sa-od-nich-distancujeme>], cit. 20.9.2020.

# ANNEXES

## List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IVO	Public Questions Institute
MBS	Unaccompanied minors
MEKOMIC	Inter-departmental expert commission for the area of labour migration and integration of foreigners
MPSVR SR	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic
MV SR	Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic
MÚ	Migration Office
MZVEZ SR	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
OBSE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SD EÚ	Court of Justice of the European Union
SR	Slovak Republic
ŠPTK	Third-country nationals
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UoZ	Jobseeker
ÚHCP PPZ	Border and Foreigner Police Office of the Presidium of the Police Force
VOP	Public Defender of Rights
VPM	Job vacancy



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1. Border and Foreigner Police Office PPZ, Statistical Survey of Legal and Illegal Migration in the Slovak Republic in 2015, available here: [[http://www.minv.sk/swift\\_data/source/policia/hranicna\\_a\\_cudzinecka\\_policia/rocenky/rok\\_2015/2015-rocenka-UHCP-SK.pdf](http://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/policia/hranicna_a_cudzinecka_policia/rocenky/rok_2015/2015-rocenka-UHCP-SK.pdf)]
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4. Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Press Department, Response to Info Request, number KM-TO-2020 / 005964-008 of 1 October 2020
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<sup>83</sup> Due to the absence of aggregated data in chapter no. 4 all tables and graphs were created by the author.

## Abstract

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ŠTEVULOVÁ, Zuzana, KABA, Daniel:

[Report for the Country], AMBRELA – Platform of Development Organizations, 2020

The report addresses the situation of male and female migrants in the Slovak Republic during the period 2015 to 2019. It contains data from publicly available sources. The report analyzes the situation of international immigration to Slovakia, including international protection, social inclusion of migrants, safe and legal routes of arrival in Slovakia, gender aspects and economic and political participation of migrants in terms of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

The report also analyzes the phenomenon of migration and refugees in the development cooperation of the Slovak Republic and also contains recommendations for better achievement of global development goals in selected areas.

**Keywords:** migrants, migration, Agenda 2030, social inclusion, international protection, asylum, subsidiary protection, SDGs, development, development cooperation, humanitarian aid



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