



Information gathering template prepared for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all.

## Slovak Republic

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**2021**

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## Introduction

The template for the Profiles was a survey designed to collect information from countries in order to collect structured information to be used as the basis for the GEM Regional Report analysis work.

The survey respondents were specifically requested to not focus exclusively on children with disabilities, but include information on all of the groups considered to be vulnerable to exclusion or at risk of being marginalised, stereotyped or subject to discrimination, including for reasons such as gender, location, poverty, ethnicity, language, beliefs and religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity expression.

The overall goal for the Profile was that the information provided in relation to each country identifies:

1. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for the implementation of inclusion in education policies;
2. the ways in which countries monitor inclusion and exclusion in education (at individual and system levels);
3. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for supporting inclusion in education created by sectors other than education and arrangements needed to co-ordinate work among government sectors, tiers of government and with other stakeholders to overcome overlapping dimensions of exclusion;
4. key policy solutions that are being implemented and key drivers of policy change.

The Profile begins with background information on the people completing the template.

The next section provides a short descriptive overview of the country's system of inclusive education.

This is followed by main sections presenting quantitative and qualitative data linked to each of the seven themes for the report:

1. laws and policies;
2. governance and finance;
3. data;
4. curricula, learning materials and assessment;
5. teachers and support personnel;
6. schools;
7. communities, parents and students.

Each section begins with a key guiding question (marked in italic text) that frames the overall information provided. This is followed by the specific questions on the main issues for the topic that should be answered.

Sections 1 and 2 focus on information relating to legislation and policies.

Section 3 focuses upon available data and the aims and procedures for data collection.

Sections 4 to 7 focus on information relating to policies and policy implementation in practice.

The information provided focuses on compulsory education (i.e. potentially -pre-primary, primary and lower secondary, and possibly upper secondary education). Only specific issues related to inclusion in early childhood education and post-compulsory education were considered when necessary.

## Survey reply and respondents

The following country representatives have contributed to and validated this profile:

Mária Tekelová, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of The Slovak Republic, Representative Board member for the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education

The main challenge for the preparation of the profile was:

Lack of available information in certain areas such as data and school infrastructure and policy on the involvement of the civil society (NGO's, community involvement).

The 5 most informative sources on inclusion in education (academic papers, policy reviews, evaluation studies etc.) for the country published since 2015:

1. [Eurydice](#)
2. [European Agency national overviews](#)
3. [Country Policy review and Analysis, Slovakia country Report](#)
4. The National Programme for the Development of Education "[Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia](#)" for years 2019 – 2027, adopted by Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic on 27 June 2018 under number 302/2018

## Country system overview

**(i) Provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative of the country's compulsory educational system. Specifically, provide information about:**

**a. the different types of schools, institutions and educational provision within the system and the age range / ISCED levels of learners they cater for**

Compulsory schooling lasts ten years and pupils complete it by finishing the first year of upper-secondary education.

Education in all types of schools (ISCED 0-3) takes place in compliance with state educational programmes, which defines the compulsory content. State educational programmes are published by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (Ministerstvo školstva, vedy, výskumu a športu SR).

Public schools provide primary and secondary education free of charge. Higher education is free for full-time students as well, providing that they do not exceed the standard length of study. Private and church schools may charge for education provided.

Stages of the educational system explained:

Pre-primary education (ISCED 0.2) is the first stage of the education system. Kindergartens (materské školy) for children between ages of three and six provide pre-primary education.

Primary and lower secondary education are a 9 yearlong single structure system (primary education lasts 4 years, lower secondary education lasts 5 years). Primary and lower secondary education takes place at primary schools (základné školy), where children start to fulfil their compulsory school attendance at the age of six.

- stage - grades 1-4 (ISCED 1) and
- stage - grades 5-9 (ISCED 2).

Secondary schools provide general or vocational type of higher secondary education (ISCED 3). Upper secondary education has a starting age at 15 and its organisation structure divides into general, vocational and art education.

Four, five or eight-year Gymnasia (gymnázia) (age of 11- 18) provide general upper secondary education. In addition to upper secondary vocational education, secondary vocational schools (stredné odborné školy) also provides educational programmes of post-secondary education and tertiary professional education. Studies at secondary

vocational schools lasts from two to five years. Conservatories (konzervatória), which are a specific type of school providing lower and upper secondary education as well as tertiary professional education within art education.

Higher education has three levels - Bachelor, Master and PhD study programmes – fully within the competence of universities (univerzity) and higher education institutions (vysoké školy) (ISCED 6-8).

Adult education provides a possibility to supplement, extend and enhance one's obtained education, re-qualify or satisfy one's interests (universities of the third age, language education). It takes place in further education institutions, schools and non-school institutions.

Home education has been possible in Slovakia since 2008, when a new Education act allowed education of pupils at home under the term 'individual education'. Home education is allowed to first level primary school pupils (ISCED 1).

b. the different authorities responsible for different types of provision etc.

The public administration in education is guaranteed by both the state administration and territorial self-governance, which is executed by municipalities and higher territorial units. The Ministry of Education co-operates with central bodies of state administration and other bodies and organisations. The State School Inspection is the body of the state administration in education that exercises state control over the level of pedagogical management and the level of education. Evaluation of the quality of education, research, development, artistic and other creative activity of higher education institutions is under the remit of the Accreditation Commission.

The central body of state administration in education is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, which develops educational aims, curricula and methods for education.

Local administration is the responsibility of municipalities, which provide most pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary education in Slovakia. Schools for upper secondary education are in the founding competence of self-governments at regional level (i.e. 8 self-governing regional units in Slovakia), which are responsible for them.

c. any major external support programmes provided in the past 5 years e.g. bilateral - GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) and USAID; or multi-lateral e.g. UNICEF, European Union, ADB (Asian Development Bank).

- "School open to everyone" ESF: The "School open to everyone" project team has designed a new educational model that promotes the inclusion of children from marginalised Roma communities. The model has been trialed in seven of the Slovak Republic's less-developed regions. The project aims to ensure that everyone has access to good quality education, by training teachers, assistants and other educational professionals

- “Educating teachers to include marginalised Roma communities” ESF: Nationwide, ‘Educating teachers to include marginalised Roma communities’ offers nine accredited programmes for primary schools with more than 20% of students coming from less favourable environments.
- "More successful at primary school " ESF: with the allocation of EUR 50 million from ESF will continue to be implemented. "More successful at primary school" call aiming to support inclusion of education in the form of creation of new job positions for pedagogical assistants, teacher assistants and an inclusive team, 215 contracts totalling EUR 19 million were approved as of January 2018.
- “Increasing the quality of primary and secondary education with the use of electronic testing” From 2013 to 2015, ESF co-funded the project, “Increasing the quality of primary and secondary education with the use of electronic testing” to prepare the conditions for electronic assessment, with a total budget allocation of EUR 28 220 000 (NÚCEM, 2018[488]). The National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (NÚCEM) set four main objectives: 1) improving the quality of education in primary and secondary schools using e-testing; 2) developing a nationwide electronic database of tasks and tests; 3) developing a more effective comparison of schools’ results in the regions; and 4) supporting the expert potential of teachers (NÚCEM, 2015[489]).

“Support for pre-primary education of children from marginalised Roma communities” (PRojekt Inklúzie v Materských školách - PRIM) JULY 2018: The main objective is to increase kindergarten attendance by children from marginalised Roma communities by creating an inclusive environment (establishing inclusive teams involving additional teachers and professional staff) and working with families whose children are not yet attending kindergartens. The project is open to 150 municipalities until 31 October 2020. It is implemented by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities

Erasmus+ K2 project “Innovation of Romani language didactics for inclusive education of pupils from a disadvantaged environment” – Cooperation in the field of innovation and exchange of best practices, Strategic partnerships in vocational education and training. The project partners are the Nansen Fredssenter/Nansen Centre for Peace and Dialogue, based in Lillehammer, and the Seminar of Romani Studies (Department of Central European Studies, Faculty of Arts) at Charles University, Prague. The aim of the project is to promote and develop education in the Romani language as one of the main tools of applying the inclusive method in primary and secondary schools with pupils from Roma communities. The project reflects the latest trends in inclusive education from abroad, especially from the Czech Republic and Norway.

**(ii) Are there specific features of the compulsory education system that impact on inclusion that should be kept in mind when reading the country response?**

Area	Yes/No	Description of the feature
Early tracking of learners into a particular educational pathway	Yes	<p>Upon reaching the age of three years, the child is recommended for one of the forms of pre-school institutional education either in a special or mainstream kindergarten. Special kindergartens admit children according to their type of disability. In mainstream kindergartens, children with disabilities may be educated in special classes or in mainstream classes.</p> <p>Considering that many children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are, at the beginning of compulsory schooling, put into special schools and special classes for pupils with intellectual disabilities, based on their diagnosis of cognitive ability and degree of development, a new provision (section 2 of § 107) has been put into Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act). This provision prohibits enrolling a child whose development is lagging behind due to an insufficiently stimulating family and community environment, in a special school or special class for pupils with intellectual disabilities. Under this provision to eliminate this practice, the guidelines on the procedure of centres in assessing the conditions for education of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds were issued.</p> <p>Each special school focuses on the education of pupils by type of disability. In many special schools, a special-pedagogical counselling centre is also set up. There are also centres of special pedagogical counselling that are not at a special school. These centres perform the same function as centres at special</p>

		<p>schools. Private centres of special pedagogical counselling are established separately.</p> <p>To reduce the outflow of students from the mainstream education (tracking), students will only be accepted to five-year bilingual secondary schools after they complete the ninth grade at the primary school. Now these students are accepted after they complete the eighth grade at the primary school, also other successful pupils leave school for 8-year high school after the fifth year of schooling, which weakens inclusive approach in education.</p>
'Double-shift' patterns to the school day (i.e. learners attend for either a morning or afternoon session)	Yes	In Slovakia, there are also municipalities that have less capacity than the number of pupils and therefore part of the pupils have lessons in the morning and the other part in the afternoon.
Grade retention	Yes	<p>If the learner is not ready for school attendance from the point of view of their cognitive development, they can start the preparatory class, or the head teacher can postpone school attendance until the next year based on the results of the related examinations. The learner must enrol in the first grade by the age of eight at the latest.</p> <p>Unsuccessful pupil has to repeat the respective grade. A pupil who fails while fulfilling compulsory school attendance can usually repeat a grade once. A grade is also repeated by the pupil who was not assessed for serious, usually health reasons, nor after a substitute date.</p>
Multiple languages of instruction	Yes	Children and pupils from national minorities and ethnic groups are guaranteed a right both to learn the state language and to be educated in their own language. Deaf children and pupils

		<p>are guaranteed a right for education in sign language for the deaf.</p> <p>As of September 2019, the new Act on pedagogical and professional employees (SK) became effective. Amongst other things, it includes the following point: obligation to speak the language of a national minority as a prerequisite for teaching subjects in the language of the national minority.</p>
Policies on access to compulsory education in local schools	Yes	<p>A director of a mainstream primary school, who includes a pupil according to their place of residence, cannot refuse to enrol a pupil to school. The lack of capacity of the school could be the only reason. This situation must be resolved by the founder of the school and state; a pupil is provided with a transport allowance to another school. (§ 20 section 5, 6 and § 29 section 10 of Act No. 245/2008 on education and training (Education Act), § 8 section 6 and 7 of Act No. 596/2003 on state administration in education and school self-government and on change and supplements of some acts as amended by subsequent provisions). In case the education in this school is not for the benefit of the child, the school head may propose to change the integrated education to education in a special class or special school, if there is a written approval of the state administration body in education and experts from the counselling centre. If the child's parent disagrees with the change, the court resolves the discrepancy</p>
Counselling centres/special schools	Yes	<p>The centre for special educational counselling, which is generally established as a part of special school through experienced special pedagogues who are employed in the centre and carry out special- pedagogical diagnosis, co-operate on the development of an individual education plan for a pupil with special educational needs and provide teachers in</p>

		<p>mainstream schools with professional advice on their education (Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training (the Education Act). There are also centres of special pedagogical counselling that are not at a special school. These centres perform the same function as centres at special schools. Private centres of special pedagogical counselling are established separately.</p> <p>All pupils with SEN need to have identified their special educational needs officially and based on diagnostics done in the counselling centre that is in the system of education sector. Medical diagnostics is also required for most types of health disability/disorder.</p>
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**(iii) In the country's system which groups are considered to be vulnerable to exclusion from education? Who has identified these groups as being vulnerable to exclusion?**

The National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2004-2006 (NAP/inclusion), Slovak Republic mentions several groups who are vulnerable to exclusion. These include:

- Young people aged 16-24 (or 15-29) primarily those with a low degree of education or leaving schools not providing an education corresponding to the needs of the labour market;
- The Roma communities
- Disabled people
- Migrants

The national reform programme 2019 has a special focus on students from socially disadvantages background as well as students from Roma communities.

**(iv) Please provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative overview of the historical development of inclusion of vulnerable groups in education in the country.**

In November 1989, the communist regime came to end and the entire society, including education, started the process of transformation. The principles of democratization and humanization stipulated in the amendment No. 171/1990 of the Law Code on the system of primary and secondary schools, as amended by subsequent provisions,

created suitable starting points for differentiation and decentralization of our educational system, including the new content of education, corresponding to the needs of the end of 20th century.

Until 1990, the administration of education was centrally executed. Act No. 542/1990 of the Law Code on State Administration in Education and School Self-Government replaced the previous Act and created a branch system of administration as amended by the subsequent provisions, conditions for pluralistic development of the education system, and conditions for strengthening schools' autonomy.

The Amendment to Act No. 542/1990 of the Law Code on State Administration in Education and School Self-Government set the new competencies of decision-making which operate within the system – municipalities, self-governance regions, school self-government bodies, state bodies which ensure the professional and methodological management, head teachers and heads of school establishments.

The Slovak Republic adopted its new Education Act in 2008. The Education Act resulted from the 'National Education and Training Program for the next 15 to 20 years' approved in 2001. Besides determining the whole pre-primary, primary and secondary schooling system, the Slovak Education Act complexly addressed the issue of educating students with disabilities and/or SEN. According to the Education Act (2008), a learner with special educational needs (SEN) is a learner that has been diagnosed with SEN by the educational counselling and prevention centre. The Education Act does not use the term 'inclusive education' as such. However, it sets out 'equality of access to education, taking into account the educational needs of an individual' and emphasises the 'prohibition of all forms of discrimination, particularly segregation'. The current Education Act gives pupils with SEN the right to education in mainstream education through school integration.

Slovakia is committed to several international conventions with the challenge of directing the education system towards inclusive education, such as the Salamanca Statement, the Lisbon Strategy, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education. Slovakia is obliged to address the issue of inclusive education and of inclusive society.

The Government of the Slovak Republic is current working on several programmes where inclusive education and education in general is a priority.

In 2016, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the Government Programme for 2016–2020, in which a significant part is dedicated to education and in 2018 The National Programme for the Development of Education "[Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia](#)" for years 2019 – 2027, adopted by Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic on 27 June 2018 under number 302/2018.

Also the '[National Programme for the development of living conditions of persons with disabilities for the years 2014–2020](#)' approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 25 of 15 January 2014. It is an open document with measures for individual fields, including education. Its implementation is reviewed every two years and the taken measures are updated (Part 4.7 Education).

Within recent years the Slovak Republic have additionally ratified The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it is published in the legal framework under no. 317/2010 Coll. (Codex). Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – no. 318/2010 Coll.

## Section 1: Laws and Policies

What is the framework of legislation, policy and guidelines for supporting the development of an inclusive education system?

### 1.1. Have international/UN conventions/declarations to protect the rights of groups who are potentially vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion been integrated into national and/or regional law?

Convention/declaration on	Law	Comments
Child rights (Convention on the Rights of the Child, CRC)	Act no. 104/1991 Coll.	<p>The Convention entered into force on 6 February 1991 jointly for the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (prior to their division into the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic) by its notification in the Collection of Laws under no. <a href="#">104/1991 Coll.</a> The Slovak Republic ratified and validated the Convention after independence on 28 May 1993. The principles of the Convention are applied, for example, in the Act on Social-Legal Protection of Children and Social Curatorship No. 305/2005 of Coll., Family Code No. 36/2005 of Coll., school laws, Act on Health Care No. 576/2004 of Coll., Civil Code, Criminal Code and, above all, the Children's Commissioner Act, adopted by the Slovak Parliament on 25th June 2015.</p> <p>The Slovak Constitution guaranteed fundamental rights and liberties; political, economic, social and cultural rights; the rights of national minorities and other ethnic groups; and the right to judicial and legal protections. It also guaranteed the right to life - even that of an unborn child.</p>

Disability (UNCPRD)	Act no. 317/2010 Coll.  Act no: 318/2010 Coll.	The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, after its ratification, is published in the legal framework under no. 317/2010 Coll. (Codex)  Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – no. 318/2010 Coll.
Gender (Convention on discrimination against women CEDAW)	Ratified 28 May 1993	The Convention has become a leading document when implementing gender equality in different areas of public and private life in in the Slovak republic. To date, 3 reports were submitted to CEDAW; the initial report in 1996, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th report in 2007 and the 5th and 6th periodic report in 2014.
Ethnicity or language (UN Declaration on Rights of persons belonging to National, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities)		The Slovak Republic was part of a common state with the Czech Republic in the preparation of the "UN Declaration on Rights". On 1 January 1993 the Slovak Republic was declared an independent state. The new state has taken over and confirmed the validity of all previously signed international treaties, but without the UN Declaration of Rights, which was not accepted by the common state. However, Slovakia in 2004 passed a comprehensive anti-discrimination law (Act No. 365/2004 of 20 May 2004 on equal treatment in certain areas and protection against discrimination, amending certain other laws (Anti-discrimination Act), also based on UN Declaration of Rights and applicable in legislation.
CERD(Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination)	Ratified 28 May 1993	The initial Antidiscrimination Act introduced the possibility, inter alia, of adopting temporary special measures (para. 8 (8)) to compensate for the disadvantages linked with racial or ethnic origin. This provision was included on the basis of

		article 5 of Directive 2000/43/EC1 empowering the Member States to take “positive action.
CESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Ratified 22 Jun 1999	Act No. 365/2004 Coll. on equal treatment in certain areas and on the protection against discrimination and on amending and supplementing other relevant acts (“Antidiscrimination Act”) was approved by the National Council of the Slovak Republic on 20 May 2004 with effect from 1 July 2004. The Antidiscrimination Act was drafted and adopted on the basis of secondary sources of law of the European Communities with due regard to the fact that equality of all persons before the law and prohibition of discrimination laid down in international legal instruments of the United Nations and in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms are among the key principles of the rule of law and are inextricably engrained in any democratic legal order. Equality before the law is the key premise recognized by all legal systems that adhere to human rights and freedoms.

**1.2. Provide an overview of general education legislation impacting on the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:**

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
<a href="#">The Constitution of the Slovak Republic.</a>	Enacted 1992 (Article 38 + 42)	The Constitution of the Slovak Republic secures the general right to education for each Slovak citizen (Article 42) and guarantees persons with disabilities special assistance in preparation for their profession (Article 38, Section 2)

<a href="#">Education Act.</a>	Enacted Act No. 245/2008	The Education Act: there are no references to Slovakia's policy on inclusive education, the law does not use this term. However, the Education Act sets out 'equality of access to education, taking into account the educational needs of an individual' and emphasises the 'prohibition of all forms of discrimination, particularly segregation.'  It also regulates the school integration of SEN pupils in mainstream schools and classes.
<a href="#">Education Act.</a>	Enacted Act No. 245/2008	On the change and supplement to some acts as amended by subsequent provision define children/pupils with special educational needs, including those with: disabilities; cognitive impairment; hearing impairment; visual impairment; physical impairment; impaired ability in communication; autism; multiple impairment; specific learning difficulties, specific behavioural difficulties, illness and physical weakness; behavioural disorders; social disadvantages; particular gifts and talents.
<a href="#">Education Act.</a>	Enacted Act No. 245/2008	Enables the admission of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream primary and secondary schools (inclusive education). Children/pupils with special educational needs are enrolled in mainstream schools, special schools or special classes.
<a href="#">Education Act.</a>	Enacted Act No. 245/2008	The Education Act sets out 'equality of access to education, taking into account the educational needs of an individual' and emphasises the 'prohibition of all forms of discrimination, particularly segregation.'
<a href="#">Education Act.</a>	Enacted Act No. 245/2008	Secures such a form of education for children with special educational needs, which enables them to achieve the same level of education as their peers. The main aim of education for children with special educational needs is to reach the same level of

		education as their peers and to support social inclusion. The levels of education of children and pupils with special educational needs at special schools are analogous.
The amendment to the Act on Upbringing and Education — <a href="#">the Schools Act</a> .	Enacted Act No. 188/2015	The amendment to the Act on Upbringing and Education — the Schools Act — which prohibits the placement of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds in special schools solely on the basis of their socioeconomic background, adopted in June 2015.
<a href="#">Education Act and the Declaration of Human Rights</a> .	Enacted Act No. 245/2008	Parents have the right to express their opinion on the proposal for integrating their child into the education system. They accept or reject the proposed solutions and recommendations through their signature. Right of the pupil's parent to choose the school for all children / pupils: § 144 para. 245/2008. The pupil's parent expresses his / her informed consent on a form published by the Ministry of Education to educate the pupil with SEN by including him / her in the regular classroom or in a special classroom or special school. Title: <a href="#">PROPOSAL for the education of a child or pupil with special educational needs in kindergarten, primary school, secondary school and special school</a> („NÁVRH na vzdelávanie dieťaťa alebo žiaka so špeciálnymi výchovno-vzdelávacími potrebami v materskej škole, v základnej škole, v strednej škole a v špeciálnej škole“).
<a href="#">School Financing</a>	Enacted Act No. 597/2003	Determines an increase of the budget for a school that educates pupils with health disabilities or gifted pupils, the budget is increased through a coefficient for calculating the budget of the school; the coefficient is higher if special educational needs are more severe. Preference of education in mainstream schools to education in special schools is applied. The Act also provides the

		possibility of funding schools from different sources, for example provision of subsidies from the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for schools aimed at supporting education and care for pupils with SEN.
<a href="#">Pedagogical Staff and Professional Staff</a>	Enacted Act No. 317/2009	Enabled the creation of personnel support in schools and in counselling facilities – school psychologists, school special pedagogues, social pedagogues, school speech therapists, curative pedagogues.
<a href="#">Act on pedagogical and professional employees</a>	Enacted Act No. 138/2019	Amongst other things, the new act sets an obligation to speak the language of a national minority as a prerequisite for teaching subjects in the language of the national minority it also defines the categories of pedagogical employees (Act No. 138/2019 Coll. Replaced Act No. 217/2009 Coll.)

**1.3. Provide an overview of education policy or guidelines impacting on inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:**

<b>Name and link</b>	<b>Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)</b>	<b>Description of key content</b>
<a href="#">Procedure of centres of pedagogical and psychological counselling and prevention.</a>	Unknown	Assessing school readiness of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds guideline. [Postup centier pedagogicko-psychologického poradenstva a prevencie pri posudzovaní školskej pripravenosti detí zo sociálne znevýhodneného prostredia – usmernenie]  The guideline is a procedure of the Ministry in accordance with

		§ 130 paragraph 6 of Act no. 245/2008 Coll., Which reads: <i>'The Ministry of Education methodically guides the activities of counselling facilities`.</i>
Representatives of the Government of the Slovak Republic. Introduction of compulsory pre-school education for 5-year old children	Agreed 20 November 2018 – going into effect 1. September 2021	Introduction of compulsory pre-primary education for all 5-year old children.  Compulsory pre-school education will start a year before compulsory school attendance. In order to implement this change, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Sport of the Slovak Republic is preparing amendments to the legislation.
<a href="#">Educational programmes for disabled children in pre-primary education</a>	Enacted May 2017  Disabled children will be educated according to these educational programmes as of the 1st September 2017.	The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic approved educational programmes for disabled children – pre-primary education. The Educational programmes for disabled children in pre-primary education are designed for education of disabled children educated in special kindergartens and special classes in regular kindergartens as well as children individually integrated in regular classes.

**1.4. Please describe any specific plans and strategies designed to support inclusion in education (e.g. national strategy on migrant learners):**

Name and link	Year and status (approved, under preparation etc.)	Description of the focus

<p>The National Programme for the Development of Education "<a href="#">Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia</a>" for years 2019 – 2027</p>	<p>Adopted by Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic on 27 June 2018 under number 302/2018.</p>	<p>Based on the conceptual document '<a href="#">Learning Slovakia</a>', "Reports on the State of Education in Slovakia" discussed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic in 2013 and other relevant documents and materials in the respective area; the concerned area is addressed in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy in the field of education and in line with national needs.</p>
<p><a href="#">National programme for Development of Education and Training for 2018-2027 (SK)</a></p> <p>(Also known as: National Programme of Education Development)</p> <p><a href="#">Action plan for the National programme for Development of Education and training for 2018-2027</a></p>	<p>Approved June 2018 – ongoing</p>	<p>The National Programme for Development of Education and Training aims to provide a long-term concept of education content from pre-primary education, through primary and secondary education to higher education, as well as further education, focusing on personal development and acquirement of relevant knowledge and skills required for being successful on the job market. The strategy's strategic goals include the increase of quality of the education system, greater accessibility to quality education for everyone, and modernisation of the education system in terms of the content, management, funding and evaluation.</p>
<p>Action plan for the National programme</p>	<p>2017</p>	<p>The action plan aims to: Discuss a draft amendment of the act on funding of primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities in the government meeting;</p>

<p>of education development for 2017</p>		<p>Create educational programmes for pre-primary education of disabled children; Increase statutory salaries of teaching and professional staff in regional education by 6%;</p> <p>Provide funding for higher education institutions' development projects focused on the support of the institutions' internationalisation;</p> <p>Present a proposal for the change of higher education quality assurance system;</p> <p>Create a proposal of a new set of higher education study fields.</p>
<p><a href="#">Updated Action plan for the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Romany Integration up to 2020</a></p>	<p>Approved January 2019 – ongoing</p>	<p>Its main goal in the education area is to reduce the differences between the education level of Romany and the population average by means of improving the access to quality education at all levels for children from marginalized Roma communities.</p>
<p><a href="#">Action Plan for supporting the least developed districts</a></p> <p>Governmental programme</p>	<p>Unknown</p>	<p>Is a binding document approved by the government of the Slovak Republic, aimed at elimination of socio-economic backwardness and reduction of high unemployment rate in the least developed districts. Education is one of the supported areas in the action plan, with the aim to create conditions for access to quality education for all pupils at the place of residence, to increase social inclusion, to improve pupils' learning outcomes throughout their schooling period and for their application at the labour market.</p>
<p>The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic:</p>	<p>Implementation of the pilot project IKATIKA is scheduled from</p>	<p>The IKATIKA project aims to support the integration of digital technology into the education of children from mixed language environment and children from socially disadvantaged environment. The project is designed for children and pupils</p>

Support the integration of digital technology into the education	October to December 2017.	from 30 selected kindergartens and zero grades of primary schools with Ruthenian, Hungarian and Roma language of instruction.
<a href="#">The National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2019</a>	Ongoing	Describes the structural measures planned by the Slovak government to be taken in the next two years. Complex approach to the priorities identification taking into account GDP, as well as other life quality aspects, identified the education, the healthcare system and labour market again as the biggest challenges of the Slovak economy in 2019.
<a href="#">Action Plan for the national Reform programme 2019</a>	Ongoing	Action plan for the National Reform programme of the Slovak Republic 2019 – specific actions to be taken.

### 1.5. Is there a definition of inclusion in education?

✓ No

*The Education Act does not use the term ‘inclusive education’ as such. However, it sets out ‘equality of access to education, taking into account the educational needs of an individual’ and emphasises the ‘prohibition of all forms of discrimination, particularly segregation’.*

### 1.6. Is there a definition of vulnerable groups?

✓ No

The National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2004-2006 (NAP/inclusion), Slovak Republic mentions several groups who are vulnerable to exclusion. These include:

- young people aged 16-24 (or 15-29) primarily those with a low degree of education or leaving schools not providing an education corresponding to the needs of the labour market;
- The Roma communities
- Disabled people
- Migrants

The national reform programme 2019 has a special focus on students from socially disadvantaged background as well as students from Roma communities.

Please see below as well.

### **1.7. Is there a definition of special educational needs?**

✓ Yes

According to the Education Act (2008), a learner with special educational needs (SEN) is a learner that has been diagnosed with SEN by the educational counselling and prevention centre.

Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training (the Education Act) and certain amending acts define children/pupils with special educational needs (SEN), including those with:

- disabilities;
- cognitive impairment;
- hearing impairment;
- visual impairment;
- physical impairment;
- impaired ability in communication;
- autism;
- multiple impairment;
- specific learning difficulties, specific behavioural difficulties, illness and physical weakness;
- behavioural disorders;
- social disadvantages;
- particular gifts and talents.

### **1.8. Please provide information on any future developments planned for inclusion in education.**

Priorities of the Slovak Republic in relation to inclusive education are reflected in the [Government Programme for the years 2016–2020](#).

The National Programme of Education (NPoE), entitled '[Learning Slovakia](#)'

The National Programme for the Development of Education "[Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia](#)" for years 2019 – 2027, adopted by Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic on 27 June 2018 under number 302/2018

National reform programme 2019

- [The National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2019](#) describes the structural measures planned by the Slovak government to be taken in the next two years. Complex approach to the priorities identification taking into account GDP, as well as other life quality aspects, identified the education, the healthcare system and labour market again as the biggest challenges of the Slovak economy in 2019.
- [Action Plan for the national Reform programme 2019](#)

Updated Action plan for the [Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Romany Integration up to 2020](#)

### **1.9. Please provide information on any reports, evaluations and/or reviews of legislation and/or policy relating to inclusion in education, since 2015. This could include official and parallel reports on UNCRPD etc.**

[Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2019, Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Slovakia, E/C.12/SVK/CO/3](#)

[Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 2018, Concluding observations on the combined eleventh and twelfth periodic reports of Slovakia, CERD/C/SVK/11-12](#)

[Human Rights Committee, 2016 Concluding observations on the fourth report of Slovakia, CCPR/C/SVK/4](#)

[Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016, Concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of Slovakia, CRC/C/SVK/3-5](#)

[Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016 Concluding observations on the initial report of Slovakia, CRPD/C/SVK/CO/1](#)

## **1.10. What are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to laws and policies in the country?**

### **1.10.1. Challenges**

The European Commission's Education and Training Monitor 2019 has a special focus on teachers. In general the teaching profession is unattractive in Slovakia. According to the 2018 OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), the proportion of Slovak teachers who think that the teaching profession is valued in society is the lowest in the EU — 4.5% v 17.7% at EU level. Initial teacher training lacks sufficient quantity and quality of practice, preparation for teaching students with special needs and applying an individualized approach.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child states that Roma children continue to be the victims of de facto segregation in the State party's school system, with over 50 per cent being taught in Roma-only classes or attending classes in separate school pavilions, often providing inferior education.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is concerned by the high proportion of children with disabilities being educated in special schools and regrets the lack of reasonable accommodation for children with disabilities within mainstream education.

According to the European Semester country Report on Slovakia, the enrolment in early childhood education and care remains very low. Less than 2 % of children under the age of 3 are in formal childcare, compared to the EU average of 33 % as highlighted by the Social Scoreboard. This is mostly driven by generous maternity\* leave conditions and also the insufficient availability of childcare services ( \* parental allowance is granted to one of the child's parents during their parental leave until the child's third year of age is completed, or the sixth year if the child is disabled).

### **1.10.2. Opportunities**

Structural funds (ESF)

National support programmes:

- Updated Action plan for the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Romany Integration up to 2020
- National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2019
- The National Programme of Education (NPOE), entitled '[Learning Slovakia](#)'
- National programme for Development of Education and Training for 2018-2027 (SK)
- The National Programme for the Development of Education "Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia" for years 2019 – 2027

## Section 2: Governance and Finance

How far are inclusive principles underpinning policies at national and local levels effectively supported by governance and financing mechanisms?

### 1.11. Is there formal collaboration across ministries on inclusion in education?

✓ Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes/No	Description: what mechanism, who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	No	The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic is the central body of the state administration of the Slovak Republic for primary, secondary and higher education, educational facilities, lifelong learning, science and for the state's support for sports and young people.
Identification of needs / referral for services	Yes	The proposal to admit children/pupils with special educational needs into the system of special education in special schools and special classes or education within mainstream schools (inclusive education) elaborates a special pedagogical and psychological counselling centre in the education sector in cooperation with doctors. In some cases, the social affairs and family sector is also involved.
Data sharing	No	Data on children / pupils / students with SEN are not directly shared between the health, education and social affairs sectors.
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	The Education Act defines that the quality of education and training is monitored and evaluated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school or school facility,</li> <li>• <a href="#">State School Inspection</a></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ministry of Health of the SR (SK)</a>, concerning the professional part of the preparation of education for health care programmes at secondary healthcare schools,</li> <li>• <a href="#">National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements</a> (under the control of the Ministry of Education)</li> </ul>
Quality assurance and accountability	Yes	<p>The Education Act defines that the quality of education and training is monitored and evaluated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school or school facility,</li> <li>• <a href="#">State School Inspection</a>,</li> <li>• <a href="#">Ministry of Health of the SR (SK)</a>, concerning the professional part of the preparation of education for health care programmes at secondary healthcare schools,</li> <li>• <a href="#">National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements</a> (under the control of the Ministry of Education)</li> </ul> <p>Evaluation of the quality of education, research, development, artistic and other creative activity of higher education institutions is under the remit of the Accreditation Commission</p>

### 1.12. Are there shared responsibilities between central and local governments on inclusion in education?

✓ Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes/No	Description: who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	Yes	<p>The public administration in education is guaranteed by both the State administration and territorial self-governance, which is executed by municipalities and higher territorial units (Act No. 596/2003 on state administration in education and school self-government and on change and supplements of some acts as amended by subsequent provisions).</p> <p>The central body of state administration in education is the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, which develops educational aims, curricula and methods for education. Local</p>

		<p>administration is the responsibility of municipalities, which provide most pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary education in Slovakia. Public schools provide education free of charge.</p> <p>State educational programme represents a hierarchically highest state document on education and is prepared by the Ministry; it interprets the main principles and targets of the state educational policy, defines levels of education, graduate's profile, educational standards, guidelines for education and training of pupils with special educational needs, framework teaching plans, organisational requirements, compulsory provision of staff, equipment and space, Health and Safety at Work guidelines, guidelines for creating school educational programme.</p> <p>The school educational programme is the fundamental school document, according to which education and training take place at a given school. It must be created in compliance with the current legislation and appropriate State educational programme. It states the school's vision, goals, mission, and orientation. It takes into account pupils' needs related to their further education, or career while reflecting the possibilities of the region.</p>
<p>Identification of needs / referral for services</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Concept of Education of Children with Disabilities, approved by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport, intensified many activities, which are aimed at new trends in the educational process of children and pupils with SEN. The proposal to admit children/pupils with SEN into the system of special education in special schools and special classes or education within mainstream schools (inclusive education) is commented on by experts from the sectors of health and education. In some cases, the social affairs and family sector is also involved.</p> <p>Diagnostics of children from socially disadvantaged environment is methodologically governed by a provision of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. Procedures applied by centres of pedagogical psychological counselling and prevention in</p>

		the assessment of readiness for school attendance of children from socially disadvantaged environment – guidelines (SK) and Methodical information for specialist employees of counselling facilities (SK).
Data sharing	No	Data is not shared systemically, it is retrieved individually according to specified rules and as needed.
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	The Education Act defines that the quality of education and training is monitored and evaluated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school or school facility,</li> <li>• <a href="#">State School Inspection</a>,</li> <li>• <a href="#">Ministry of Health of the SR (SK)</a>, concerning the professional part of the preparation of education for health care programmes at secondary healthcare schools,</li> <li>• <a href="#">National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements</a>.</li> </ul>
Quality assurance and accountability	Yes	The Education Act defines that the quality of education and training is monitored and evaluated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school or school facility,</li> <li>• <a href="#">State School Inspection</a>,</li> <li>• <a href="#">Ministry of Health of the SR (SK)</a>, concerning the professional part of the preparation of education for health care programmes at secondary healthcare schools,</li> <li>• <a href="#">National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements</a>.</li> </ul> <p>Evaluation of the quality of education, research, development, artistic and other creative activity of higher education institutions is under the remit of the Accreditation Commission</p>

### 1.13. Are non-governmental organisations and/or associations involved in governance processes?

✓ Yes

If yes, please describe their involvement:

The Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality has established an advisory body, which is the [Committee for Persons with Disabilities](#) (hereinafter referred to as

the “Committee”). Representatives of non-governmental organizations representing different groups of persons with disabilities are members of the Committee. The Committee shall carry out its tasks in order to increase the level of promotion, protection and respect for the rights of persons with disabilities. The Committee cooperates with ministries and other central state administration bodies, local and regional authorities, NGOs, scientific workplaces and academic institutions on the rights of persons with disabilities. The Committee continuously monitors and participates in the evaluation of the implementation of the National Program for the Development of the Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities, submits proposals for amendments to legislation for the Government and individual ministries. It is also involved in drafting reports for the control mechanisms of international human rights treaties, in particular the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Non-governmental organizations, represented on the Committee or on the recommendation of the Committee, work in working groups set up by individual ministries.

**1.14. Are there any accountability mechanisms to promote the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?**

✓ Yes

If yes, what is the focus of the mechanisms?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the focus/actors involved (e.g. state/non state)
Appeal process for rights violations	Yes	<p>The child/pupil who considers that their rights or legally protected interests have been affected as a result of violation of the principle of equal treatment, can claim legal protection in a court under a special regulation (§ 145).</p> <p>Slovakia has an <a href="#">Office of Child Commissioner</a>. The commissioner works to protect children’s rights; anybody is entitled to contact the commissioner about matters where children’s rights are violated or threatened.</p> <p>The only specialized institution in the Slovak Republic that fulfils the role of overseeing compliance with the principle of equal</p>

		treatment laid down in the Antidiscrimination Act is the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights
School inspection	Yes	<p>Schools inspectors can invite practicing experts to consider technical issues in the pursuit of school inspection, counselling, and writing an expert opinion report.</p> <p>Practicing experts must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• professional and pedagogical competence,</li> <li>• pedagogical work experience of at least 5 years,</li> <li>• personal qualities required for professional work.</li> </ul> <p>Practicing experts are selected mostly from experienced pedagogical employees, employees of guidance facilities, and other specialists.</p> <p>Practicing experts are assigned into inspection groups upon getting acquainted with the inspection matter in the respective type of school or school facility</p>
Monitoring and evaluation (e.g. data collection on attendance, participation, achievement, funding)	Yes	<p>The Education Act defines that the quality of education and training is monitored and evaluated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school or school facility,</li> <li>• <a href="#">State School Inspection</a>,</li> <li>• <a href="#">Ministry of Health of the SR (SK)</a>, concerning the professional part of the preparation of education for health care programmes at secondary healthcare schools,</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements</a>.</p>

**1.15. Please describe the general mechanisms for funding schools. Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.**

Funding mechanisms	Description of who, what, to whom and how
<p>Normative principle: School financing is based on the normative principle; schools are financed according to the number of pupils and staff and the financial demands of the educational process.</p>	<p>Public funds for education come from the public budget, which comprises the state budget, the municipal budgets and the budgets of higher territorial units. The position, function and drawing up of budgets are regulated by the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 253/2004 of the Law Code on Budgetary Rules of Public Administration. Funding sources include rental revenues from renting space, profits from business activity, contributions and gifts, and other sources, subject to a special regulation. Act No. 597/2003 of the Law Code on Financing Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Facilities established normative financing per pupil from 1 January 2004.</p> <p>Act No. 597/2003 on financing primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities as amended by subsequent provision; Regulation of Government No. 630/2008 whereby the details of breakdown of finances from the national budget are set down for schools and school facilities as amended by subsequent provisions.</p> <p>The coefficients for calculating the school budget vary for different categories of learners with special educational needs (SEN), depending on the level of their needs. The individual coefficients are higher for the education of learners with SEN in mainstream education or in special classes than in special schools.</p>
<p>Non-normative financial resources from the state budget are designed for funding various activities in pre-school and school education.</p>	<p>Funding of personnel costs of teacher's assistants for pupils with health disabilities,  transportation allowance,  allowance for school in nature,  allowance for textbooks,</p>

	<p>allowance for interest-based education,</p> <p>funding of extraordinary results of pupils,</p> <p>funding of emergency situations,</p> <p>funding of development projects,</p> <p>funding of costs for socially disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Subsidies for the abovementioned activities are provided to higher education institutions upon founder's request.</p>
Allocation of budget from the Chapter of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the schools, in which the education is considered as systematic vocational training in the founding competence of the municipality, church founder, private founder and district office in the seat of the region,</li> <li>• to the kindergartens for children with special education needs in the founder competence of the district office in the seat of the region,</li> <li>• to the school facilities in the founder competence of the district office in the seat of the region.</li> </ul>
Calculation based on needs – School system	<p>Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on School Financing determines an increase of the budget for a school that educates pupils with health disabilities or gifted pupils, the budget is increased through a coefficient for calculating the budget of the school; the coefficient is higher if special educational needs are more severe. Preference of education in mainstream schools to education in special schools is applied. The Act also provides the possibility of funding schools from different sources, for example provision of subsidies from the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for schools aimed at supporting education and care for pupils with SEN.</p>
Funding in higher education	<p>A higher education institution creates a fund for support of disabled students.</p> <p>This fund can be used to provide appropriate study conditions for disabled students with respect to their special needs. Students have to submit an application supplemented by a medical report on the state of their health, which is subsequently evaluated by a commission.</p>

From own taxes of municipalities and higher territorial unit	<p>The following is funded through the Municipalities and their tax income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kindergartens, basic schools of art, language schools and school facilities in the founder competence of the municipalities and higher territorial units</li> <li>• Kindergartens, basic schools of art, language schools and school facilities in the founder competence of church and private founders</li> </ul>
Funding division between Ministries	<p>Education funding in Slovakia: Public education spending managed by: (i) the Education Ministry at a rate of 35.7 %; (ii) the Ministry of the Interior responsible for 30.5 %; and (iii) the self-governing bodies (regions and municipalities) managing the remaining 33.8 %.</p>

**1.16. Do schools have flexibility to use funding allocations to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please describe the flexibility:**

According to the OECD Review of School Resources The Slovak Republic has a sophisticated, transparent and well-embedded system of funding state, church and private schools by a formula, which is largely driven by the number of students, but includes modifying weights to adjust for schools' structural costs and students' characteristics. The funding system enables a high degree of financial autonomy for schools. In the hands of good school leaders, this autonomy gives them the means to make spending decisions that promote school improvement. The system is widely accepted and managed well; it needs minor modifications rather than a major overhaul.

Founders will provide funding from public resources for the operation of public schools or school facilities in their founder competence. These funds are earmarked and school and school facility headteachers can decide on their use only within the budget set out by the founder. A founder of a school or school facility performs financial control of the management of public resources allocated from the state budget, management of material assets and property under the founder's administration and monitors their efficient and purposeful use.

**1.17. Please describe the specific mechanisms for funding the inclusion of vulnerable learners and their families in education (e.g. benefits, cash transfers, scholarships). Give details on: which**

**institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.**

Funding mechanisms	Description of the who, what, to whom and how
Financial support for families of pupils with special education needs	<p>Financial support for families with children with special education needs is provided indirectly in the Slovak Republic.</p> <p>The founder of a primary or secondary school for pupils with special education needs can be allocated an allowance from the state budget for improvement of the education conditions of socially disadvantaged pupils.</p> <p>Upon the founder's approval, primary schools can set up specialised classes for pupils in need of compensation or development programme and for pupils previously educated at a school with an educational programme for pupils with disabilities.</p> <p>Schools provide individual education programmes to pupils who have been exempted from attending school and who are cared for at home.</p>
Allowance	<p>Since January 2018, the state pays the allowance for partial payment of the cost for families in need for approximately 5,400 children during the entire time of their kindergarten attendance supporting their participation in pre-primary education</p>
The concept of up-bringing and education of Roma children and pupils including secondary and tertiary education (SK) – Decree No 206/2008 of the Government of the Slovak Republic	<p>Slovak Republic systematically supports access of pupils from socially disadvantaged environment to education (financially and institutionally).</p> <p>Financially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● free pre-school education from the age of 5;</li> <li>● specialized classes at the primary school – compensation and development programme;</li> <li>● allowance for pupils from Socially Disadvantaged Environments;</li> <li>● food and school aids subsidies;</li> <li>● social assistance benefit for the purpose of providing for child's basic life needs, as long as the child fulfils the compulsory school attendance.</li> </ul>

**1.18. Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of funding and resourcing relating to inclusive education.**

European Semester country report 2019

- Many reforms and projects funded by ESF have is positive for the educational system, however tangible reform results cannot yet be traced to the entire educational system.

OECD Review of school resources 2016

- The funding system enables a high degree of financial autonomy for schools. In the hands of good school leaders, this autonomy gives them the means to make spending decisions that promote school improvement

OECD Economic survey, Slovak Republic, February 2019

- There are good reasons for increasing public expenditure in some areas, notably education and Roma integration. One of the recommendations in the report revolved around an increased spending on pre-school education.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic: Review of expenditure on groups at risk of poverty or social exclusion, Final Report, March 2020

- This is the first cross-sectoral expenditure review to analyse the problem of poverty and social exclusion in a comprehensive way in the areas of education, the labour market, social policies, housing and healthcare. Disadvantaged children have lower education in kindergartens, worse results in international and home testing, more repeat of the year and more early school leaving. Pupils from marginalized Roma communities are segregated in mainstream schools and over-represented in special education. Expenditure analysis shows that early age expenditure and preventive measures, which have the highest return and the greatest potential to positively influence the children's success, are not sufficient. Support for disadvantaged pupils in primary and secondary education is also insufficient and ineffective.

Therefore, in addition to savings (EUR 13 million), the revision proposes, in particular, significant investments in enhancing the inclusiveness of the education system (EUR 174 million), several changes in governance, legislation, data collection and pedagogical research.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic: Priority axis status report no. 1 Education of the Human Resources Operational Program (ESF), 19 November 2019

- In particular, calls for projects to support inclusive education are:

V\_1 Dual education OPLZ-PO1 / 2016 / NP / 1.2.1-01; V\_2 School open to all OPLZ-PO1 / 2016 / NP / 1.1.1-02; V\_6 More successful at primary school OPLZ-PO1 / 2016 / DOP / 1.1.1-01; V\_7 In primary school more successful II V\_7 (ZŠÚ2) OPLZ-PO1 / 2018 / DOP / 1.1.1-02; V\_12 Standardization of the guidance and prevention system for inclusion and success in the labour market V\_13 Support for inclusive education OPLZ-PO1 / 2019 / DOP / 1.1.1-05; V\_14 Support for improvement of students' learning outcomes and competences OPLZ-PO1 / 2019 / DOP / 1.1.1-01

### **1.19.Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to governance and finance issues in the country?**

#### 1.19.1.Challenges:

According to information provided in connection with the agency's Country Policy Review and Analysis project are the objectives focused on changes in the field of funding in education included in The National Programme of Education NPoE "[Learning Slovakia](#)" – the proposed measures are defined in chapter 4.

The information provided for the Country Policy Review and Analysis grid includes: In 2013, Organisation for Economy Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries spent on primary, secondary and tertiary education an average of 5.2% of gross domestic product (GDP), and 3.8% of GDP in Slovakia. This figure includes both public and private expenditure. The difference between the OECD countries and Slovakia has not changed significantly in the past 20 years. A systematic analysis of expenses on education and funding system in Slovakia is missing; the document related to the educational institutions is available from 2007. The information the in grid continues; the current level of education financing means Slovakia cannot expect to improve the quality of education, to raise interest in the teaching profession, to improve material conditions of schools or to sufficiently develop professional teams to help teachers to master the education of children with different educational needs.

#### 1.19.2.Opportunities:

The National Reform programme 2019 writes the following:

- A more transparent, more objective and fairer method of allocation of funds for pedagogical assistants for children and students with disability will be prepared. A new form of funding will be proposed for the support of children and students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds by partial integration of the funding into

normative funding, which will make the funds for schools more predictable (Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2019, p29)

Objectives focused on changes in the field of funding education are included in the National Programme of Education NPoE '[Learning Slovakia](#)'– the proposed measures are defined in chapter 4:

- by the end of 2017, to develop a plan on increasing overall spending on education and training from public funds;
- to allocate all state resources on education only through the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic;
- to adjust the system of allocation of funds to schools, which will consider all specifics of the school – personnel norms, labour norms, requirements on material and technical equipment, not only the number of pupils, but also the number of classes and the number of pupils with special educational needs.

(Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2019)

## Section 3: Data

What data on inclusion in education is available to understand if progress is being made towards equitable learning opportunities for all learners?

**1.20. Please indicate if the following frameworks are in place, provide a link and give a brief description of their aims and focus:**

Framework	Yes / No	Description
For monitoring and evaluating the implementation of national-level inclusion in education policy	Yes	<p><u>State School Inspection</u>: Amongst other things the State School inspection inspects schools and school facilities for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance with generally binding legal regulations and internal regulations and decisions concerning education,</li> <li>• the process of education and its results,</li> <li>• teaching professionalism,</li> <li>• spatial and equipment conditions of the educational process as well as their purposeful and efficient utilisation,</li> <li>• provision of further education of pedagogical employees,</li> <li>• meeting qualification requirements of headteachers of school and school facilities,</li> <li>• compliance of the school educational programme with the state educational programme, goals and principles of education,</li> <li>• agreement of the educational programme with the goals and principles of education,</li> <li>• quality of education in individual education,</li> <li>• quality of education.</li> </ul>
For quality assurance across all levels of the	Yes	Quality monitoring of primary and secondary education is provided by internal and external evaluation. Each school carries out internal evaluation as self-evaluation; external institutions carry out external evaluation - the State

system (national, regional, school)		School Inspection ( <a href="#">Štátna školská inšpekcia</a> ) and the National Institute of Certified Measurement in Education ( <a href="#">Národný ústav certifikovaných meraní vzdelávania</a> ). Evaluation of higher education institutions is within the competence of the Accreditation Commission ( <a href="#">Akreditačná komisia</a> ), which is a counselling body of the Slovak Government. Accreditation Commission evaluates the efficiency and quality of each higher education institution and gives recommendations on improving the institutions' work.
Providing guidance on the use of a range of different data sources for evaluation and self-review at different levels (national, regional, school)	Yes	<a href="#">The National Institute for Education</a> , amongst other things, are also responsible for performing activities focused on the evaluation of education, the defining of evaluating criteria and instruments. They also act as an advisory and consultancy services for schools, educational bodies and other parties.

### 1.21. What data is collected on learners from vulnerable groups, how and why?

Data on the number of pupils from vulnerable groups are collected for statistical purposes and to prepare the annual budget for each school. The education of pupils from vulnerable groups in the school will be reflected in an increase in the budget, as in Slovakia the calculation of the budget according to the coefficient per pupil is applied for each type of school, class and whether it is "regular" education or increased demands. Coefficients for SEN pupils are increased. Their value is higher the more additional support the pupil's education requires. Therefore, the number of pupils with health handicaps is statistically reported according to their classification in the groups defined by the Education Act ([see section 1.7](#)).

- Registering the number of pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds has an impact on the allocation of the school contribution to their additional support, e.g. to teaching assistants.

### 1.22. Please provide the available data relating to all learners in the compulsory education system and where they are enrolled for their education.

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Data on learner access to compulsory education	Learners	Notes	Source
(i) What is the <i>potential population</i> of learners for the compulsory education system in the country (i.e. how many children are in the country that should, by law, be in some form of compulsory education)?	Total: 668.590 Male: 341.933 Female: 325.657	Covers ISCED 02, 1, 2 School year 2016/2017	Sources: <a href="#">Štatistický úrad Slovenskej Republiky</a> (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic) – UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) data Also available at: European Agency EASIE Data
(ii) How many learners are enrolled in all forms of education (i.e. educational settings maintained by the ministry of education or by other authorities such as health, welfare or labour ministries)?	Total: 642.213 Male: 330.529 Female: 311.684	Covers ISCED 02, 1, 2 School year 2016/2017	Sources: <a href="#">Štatistický úrad Slovenskej Republiky</a> (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic) – UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) data Also available at: European Agency EASIE Data
(iii) How many learners are out of any form of education (who by law should be in some form of education)?	Total: M Male: M Female: M		
(iv) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools (i.e. all learners, not just those with recognised needs or from vulnerable groups)?	Total: 620.064 Male: 317.445 Female: 302.679	Covers ISCED 02, 1, 2 School year 2016/2017	Sources: <a href="#">Štatistický úrad Slovenskej Republiky</a> (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic) – UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) data Also available at: European Agency EASIE Data

(v) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in inclusive groups/classes with their peers?	Total: 610.370 Male: 312.077 Female: 298.293	Covers ISCED 02, 1, 2 School year 2016/2017	Sources: <a href="#">Štatistický úrad Slovenskej Republiky</a> (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic) – UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) data Also available at: European Agency EASIE Data
(vi) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in separate, special groups/classes, away from their peers?	Total: 9754 Male: 5368 Female: 4386	Covers ISCED 02, 1, 2 School year 2016/2017	Sources: <a href="#">Štatistický úrad Slovenskej Republiky</a> (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic) – UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) data Also available at: European Agency EASIE Data
(vii) How many learners are enrolled in totally separate, special units and/or schools, away from their peers?	Total: 19.377 Male: 11.591 Female: 7.786	Covers ISCED 02, 1, 2 School year 2016/2017	Sources: <a href="#">Štatistický úrad Slovenskej Republiky</a> (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic) – UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat (UOE) data Also available at: European Agency EASIE Data

Note:

ISCED 02: Notes: Age 3–5 years; discrepancy 5.4%

ISCED 1: Notes: Age 6–9 years.

ISCED 2: Notes: Age 10–14 years.

**1.23. Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of data collection and monitoring for inclusion in education.**

Statistical data on SEN pupils obtained from schools and the departmental information system, processed and published by an organization set up by the [Ministry of Education – Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information](#)

**1.24. Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to data collection issues in the country?**

**1.24.1. Challenges:**

In the concluding observations on the initial report of Slovak, (2016) the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities raise concerns about absence of systematic data collection disaggregated by disability, sex and age across all sectors. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned at the lack of coordinated research about the lives of persons with disabilities and their families.

In the field of education, we have no reservations about the type of data that is collected for the needs of providing education for people with disabilities.

It appears problematic to obtain data on the ethnicity of pupils who come from marginalized Roma communities, as they do not indicate their origin according to their mother tongue or other characteristics. They officially claim the nationality of the majority population or of a national minority, but not of the Roma. This contributes to the problems of identifying and reporting adequate educational support, which should be specific to this part of the population, e.g. preparing teachers in the Roma language, publishing textbooks, etc. (Information added by the Ministry Representative).

**1.24.2. Opportunities**

Development of action plans with increased attention focused on inclusive education and their consistent implementation within the National Program of Education Development “[Quality and Affordable Education for Slovakia](#)” for 2019 - 2027, adopted by Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic on 27 June 2018 under number 302/2018.

## Section 4: Curricula, learning materials and assessment

To what extent are curricula, learning materials and different assessment processes and procedures adapted to the principles of inclusive education?

### 1.25. Curriculum

**a. Does the curriculum content include and represent all learners?**

✓ **Partially**

**If yes or partially, please provide a description and available links, including to underpinning values and principles.**

Partially

The content of education (the curriculum) for all pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with disabilities/disorders, is the same as for pupils without special educational needs, except pupils with intellectual developmental disability – these pupils have adjusted content in individual subjects, depending on the degree of their disability (§ 108 section 3 Act No. 245/2008). According to the [National Educational Programme](#), subjects (in mainstream schools and special schools) are divided into compulsory and optional. In special schools for pupils with cognitive impairment (namely for pupils with intellectual disability), there is no foreign language, Religious Education is an optional subject and Ethics is part of Civic Education. According to the type of disability and special educational needs of pupils, optional special subjects can be included, e.g. individual speech therapy intervention, development of communication skills, mobility and orientation training, Braille, etc.

**b. Does the process of curriculum development involve the participation and contribution of different stakeholders?**

✓ **Yes**

**If yes, please provide information on stakeholder involvement.**

The framework plans and pattern syllabi development are a responsibility of the [National Institute for Education](#) (Štátny pedagogický ústav). In co-operation with different curricular review groups, teachers and methodologists it submits proposals of framework curricula and pattern syllabi to the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of Slovak Republic for approval. The approved framework teaching plans and curricula are binding. The schools which are not capable to work out their own syllabi, may use pattern syllabi.

**c. Is there guidance/procedures for schools to ensure that the curriculum content takes account of all learners (e.g. using flexibility to address differences due to gender, culture, religions, the ethnicities/nations living in the country, their history and culture, differences related to disability and socio-economic background, LGBT community).**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description and examples of this flexibility.**

Partially:

The OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education (2014) states that schools enjoy more autonomy in developing a school education programme but are accountable to pay attention to requirements in the [national education programmes](#), that is, the central framework. This means that schools follow a shared core of educational content (the national education programmes) but have the ability to adapt this to the needs of their particular student group (the school education programme).

Teachers are allowed to use textbooks approved and/or recommended by the Ministry of Schools may also use other textbooks, but they have to be in line with the principles of Education and upbringing defined in the School Act (i.e. in line with the National Education Program).

The [National Institute for Education](#) who develops and is a national budgetary organisation directly managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic also provides methodical guidance in designing and implementation of optional subjects and cross-curricular themes into schools, including traffic education, environmental education, media education, multicultural education, personal and social development, protection of life and health, developing projects and presentation skills.

Content wise are guidelines on the content and organisation of citizenship education set out in a policy manual addressed to schools each year by the Ministry. The guidelines, which were substantially changed in 2015/2016, cover issues such as human rights, children's rights, discrimination, national minorities and foreigners, and set out detailed directions and proposals for action. The European Commissions' Education and training Monitor 2018 for the Slovak Republic further states that the Ministry also changed the national curricula (known as 'state educational programmes'), on which schools' educational guidelines are based. Amongst other things the curricula aim to increase the attention and to ensure education ... aimed at effective and targeted prevention of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, extremism and other forms of intolerance.

**d. If individual education plans (IEPs) are used, please describe the procedure for developing (who is involved and how), what they focus on (specific curriculum areas; cross curricular competences; support strategies etc.) and how IEPs are implemented, used across the school?**

In the case of pupils in special schools, for whom, for different reasons, following the curriculum of a particular school or particular educational programme is not possible (e.g. pupils with diverse abilities, multiple disabilities, combination of disability and social disadvantage, etc.), it is appropriate to follow an individual education plan.

Most of the pupils with SEN in mainstream schools have an individual education plan.

In special schools for pupils with intellectual impairment, teaching is carried out according to the internal differentiation of the school in three variants:

- A (pupils with mild cognitive impairment)
- B (pupils with moderate cognitive impairment)
- C (pupils with serious cognitive impairment).

In the case of pupils in special schools, for whom, for different reasons, following the curriculum of a particular school or particular educational programme is not possible (e.g. pupils with diverse abilities, multiple disabilities, combination of disability and social disadvantage, etc.), it is appropriate to follow an individual education plan.

The education of children and pupils with special educational needs is based on the [State Educational Programme](#) approved for education of all children and pupils at each level of education. The adjustments to the organisation of education, methods and other specifics of teaching (e.g. complement a subject focused on special-pedagogical support) are stated in the supplementary programmes for education of children and pupils with disabilities/disorders, specified by kinds of disabilities/disorders. These programmes are a part of the [State Educational Programme](#) (§ 6 section 1 and section 4 letter (p) Act. No. 245/2008).

The centre for special educational counselling, which is generally established as a part of special school through experienced special pedagogues who are employed in the centre and carry out specialpedagogical diagnosis, cooperate on the development of an individual education plan for a pupil with special educational needs and provide teachers in mainstream schools with professional advice on their education (Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training (the Education Act) in § 133 and § 94 section 1 letter (b) point 2).

**e. Are there different curricula or programmes for specific groups of learners at risk of exclusion (e.g. ethnic minorities or minority language groups)**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description of the main characteristics/organisation.**

The Education Act defines the rights and obligations of schools and educational facilities. It defines the state education programmes for individual levels of education and types of schools, with specifics for pupils with special educational needs, including the possibility to follow an individual education programme.

The education and training of children and pupils with special education needs are based on the following educational programmes designed for:

- children and pupils with mental disorder,
- children and pupils with hearing disorder,
- children and pupils with sight disorder,
- children and pupils with physical impairment,
- children and pupils with impaired communication ability,
- children and pupils with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders,
- children and pupils ill and weakened,
- children and pupils deaf and blind,
- children and pupils with multiple defects,
- children and pupils with behavioural disorders,
- pupils with developmental learning impairments,
- pupils with impairment of attention and activity,
- which are a part of the state educational programmes.

Content of education is adapted to the mental level of each pupil.

Teaching plans for pupils with mental disabilities contain almost all subjects like in regular schools. However, there is more time allocated to the subject Work education and the subjects are supplemented by individual logopaedic care.

Children and pupils from socially disadvantaged environment do not have a separate educational programme. Schools follow appropriate state educational programmes in education of such children and pupils.

Children and pupils from national minorities and ethnic groups are guaranteed a right both to learn the state language and to be educated in their own language.

Children and pupils belonging to national minorities are guaranteed education and training in:

- schools and classes which provide education in the language of the national minority
- schools and classes where the language of the national minority is one of the subjects and the language of teaching in the rest of the subjects is the state language.

Education and training of children and pupils from national minorities schools and school facilities which provide teaching in a minority language or teaching of the language of minorities: Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Roma and German.

### **1.26.Learning materials**

**a. Is there autonomy for schools and teachers to select learning material/textbooks etc?**

✓ **No**

**If no, please give further information:**

According to Eurydice, textbooks for schools providing education according to the valid state educational programme are provided by the [Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic](#). Schools are obliged to use textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. Creation of textbooks is provided by the ministry through the [National Institute for Education in Slovak Republic](#) – its directly controlled professional organisation. Textbooks are created based on the publication plan, they undergo the approval process and they are listed in the publicly accessible textbook register of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR. Regular evaluation and innovation of textbooks are carried out. The textbooks are also evaluated by teachers. The approved textbooks are distributed to schools and lent to pupils for the respective school year free-of-charge. Schools can also use different textbooks but they must finance them from their own resources. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic provides textbooks in the state language of instruction, languages of national minorities, Braille, and by means of the implementation of sign language for the deaf or a different form appropriate for pupils with a health disadvantage. Teachers are allowed to use textbooks approved and/or recommended by the Ministry of Schools may also use other textbooks, but they have to be in line with the principles of Education and upbringing defined in the School Act (i.e. in line with the National Education Program).

Ministry of Education of Slovakia provides for free approved textbooks, teaching texts and workbooks to schools based on their order, even in transcription into Braille or other suitable forms of transcriptions. In 2011, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports Slovakia ensured, free of charge, all of the orders of the schools for textbooks for pupils of special elementary schools.

**b. Are there policies to ensure the availability of textbooks/materials that promote the inclusion of learners from different vulnerable groups? (e.g. resources relevant to different ethnic groups etc.)**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

The Constitution guarantees national or ethnic minorities the right to overall development in Chapter 34, "especially the right to develop their own culture along with other members of the minority, the right to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue, to join nationality associations, the right to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions"; Section 2 "Citizens who are part of national or ethnic minorities have under the conditions determined by the law along with the right to master the official language also the right:

- to education in their own language,
- to use their own language in official communication,
- to take part in the solution of matters concerning national and ethnic minorities.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic provides textbooks in the state language of instruction, languages of national minorities, Braille, and by means of the implementation of sign language for the deaf or a different form appropriate for pupils with a health disadvantage. The approved textbooks are distributed to schools and lent to pupils for the respective school year free-of-charge (§ 113 sections 2, 5, 8 Act No. 245/2008). Schools can also use different textbooks, but they must finance them from their own resources. Teachers are allowed to use textbooks approved and/or recommended by the Ministry of Schools may also use other textbooks, but they have to be in line with the principles of Education and upbringing defined in the School Act (i.e. in line with the National Education Program)( § 113 sections 1Act No. 245/2008).

**c. Is there guidance/procedures to help schools to make learning materials accessible for all learners? (e.g. Braille/large print for learners with visual impairment, materials in other languages).**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

[The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport](#) of the Slovak Republic provides textbooks in the state language of instruction, languages of national minorities, Braille, and by means of the implementation of sign language for the deaf or a different form appropriate for pupils with a health disadvantage. The approved textbooks are distributed to schools and lent to pupils for the respective school year free-of-charge.

[eAktova](#)

[eAktovka - Digitálne verzie učebníc](#)

Accessibility of electronic texts in various formats through [RoboBraille](#) has been provided in the Slovak language since 2018. Information on individual use of RoboBraille for children and pupils with disabilities and especially visual impairments is provided by special pedagogical counselling centres methodically guided by the [State Pedagogical Institute](#).

**d. Is ICT used to improve access to materials for vulnerable groups?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

In 2011, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports Slovakia ensured, free of charge, all of the orders of the schools for textbooks for pupils of special elementary schools. The first transcriptions of the new reform textbook in Braille and electronic versions of textbooks for partially sighted pupils on CD medium - textbooks for literature for the 5th, 6th and 7th grades of elementary school were also published.

In order to support the integration of digital technology into education the Ministry of Education Science, Research and sport implemented the pilot project IKATIKA which is scheduled from October to December 2017. It aims to support the integration of digital technology into the education of children from mixed language environment and children from socially disadvantaged environment. The project is designed for children and pupils from 30 selected kindergartens and zero grades of primary schools with Ruthenian, Hungarian and Roma language of instruction.

**e. Are there specific financial and practical resources available for textbooks/materials/ICT for different vulnerable groups?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

In order to ensure compensation and teaching aids as a condition for educating children and pupils in common schools, the Ministry of Education allocates funding from the budget chapter of the Ministry for the implementation of development projects which are in compliance with the valid legislation targeted on the development of upbringing and education of pupils with disabilities and support in the area of modernizing and renovating compensation aids for pupils with disabilities.

As stated by Eurydice, non-normative financial resources from the state budget are designed for funding various activities in pre-school and school education. These include:

- funding of personnel costs of teacher's assistants for pupils with health disabilities,
- allowance for school in nature,
- allowance for textbooks,
- allowance for interest-based education,
- funding of development projects,
- funding of costs for socially disadvantaged pupils.

Subsidies for the abovementioned activities are provided to higher education institutions upon founder's request.

### **1.27.Assessment**

**a. Is there a national/local assessment framework that includes all learners?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

While school leaders determine school assessment policies, with the advisory support of the School Pedagogical Board, the national education programmes contain both content and minimum performance standards to guide student assessment.

Marking on certificate is used to assess the pupil's academic performance in individual subjects as follows:

- excellent (1),

- very good (2),
- good (3),
- sufficient (4),
- insufficient (5).

(The above-mentioned markings are taken from OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: Slovak Republic, 2014)

Eurydice elaborates, the evaluation and marking of pupils with special education needs in mainstream primary school are regulated by methodical guides. The general principles are: in Grades 2-4, with incorporated pupils it is recommended to carry out formative as well as summative verbal evaluation in all subjects. In Grades 5-9 the combined evaluation is recommended. At evaluation of educational results, the teacher takes into account the psychical and physical health state of the pupil, the kind and extent of his/her disorder, if it has an effect on the level and results of the pupil's work in the respective subject. The teacher evaluates the pupils' achievements impartially and adequately to the demands of the subject matter, considering his/her efforts, conscientiousness, individual abilities, interests and preconditions of the further education after completing the compulsory schooling. At evaluation of pupil's study results the stress is laid on his individual skills which are a basis of his working and social integration

External testing of pupils attending grade 9 of primary school is carried out:

Taking part in the external testing are all pupils of primary school of the respective grade in which it is held, including the pupils with special education needs, except for pupils educated according to educational programmes for pupils with mental disorder.

The pupils with special education needs are adequately adjusted the conditions for performing the external testing.

**b. Is there guidance for teachers on how to use curriculum-based assessment to identify all learning needs in the classroom?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

The teacher adapts the teaching to the target group of the pupils who make up the class. He has at his disposal individual recommendations of the guidance centre as well as education programs with educational specifics for their application according to the categories of SEN pupils (visual impairment, hearing impairment, autism, impaired

communication ability, dyslexia and others) which form part of the State educational programs at the respective level of education. In addition to identifying the need for extra attention for other pupils, the teacher addresses the next step with a school special educator, a school psychologist and, if necessary, a counselling centre in the education sector, in collaboration with the pupil's parent.

**c. Is there guidance/procedures on providing access to tests/examinations when learners need additional support/reasonable adjustments? (e.g. adapted materials, extra time etc.)**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

Pupils with special educational needs which do not allow them to take the school-leaving examination in a standard way take the examination under conditions adapted to them as defined in the Annex to the referenced Act, that is, the school-leaving tests will be adapted to them according to the degree of their disability, using enlarged letters, clearly divided text, the underlined substance of the assignment. The blind pupils will work with texts in Braille's.

**d. Are there specific arrangements and/or formal procedures to support the assessment of the specific needs of learners who need additional support in their learning? (e.g. those with disabilities)**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description, including clear information on the focus of needs identification procedures and who is involved in the procedures (learners, parents, professionals):**

The evaluation and marking of pupils with special education needs in mainstream primary school are regulated by methodical guides. The general principles are: in Grades 2-4, with incorporated pupils it is recommended to carry out formative as well as summative verbal evaluation in all subjects. In Grades 5-9 the combined evaluation is recommended. At evaluation of educational results the teacher takes into account the psychical and physical health state of the pupil, the kind and extent of his/her disorder, if it has an effect on the level and results of the pupil's work in the respective subject. The teacher evaluates the pupils' achievements impartially and adequately to the demands of the subject matter, considering his/her efforts, conscientiousness, individual abilities, interests and preconditions of the further education after completing the compulsory schooling. At evaluation of pupil's study results the stress is laid on his individual skills which are a basis of his working and social integration.

External testing of pupils attending grade 9 of primary school is carried out.

Taking part in the external testing are all pupils of primary school of the respective grade in which it is held, including the pupils with special education needs, except for pupils educated according to educational programmes for pupils with mental disorder. The pupils with special education needs are adequately adjusted the conditions for performing the external testing.

~~Pupils with special educational needs which do not allow them to take the school-leaving examination in a standard way take the examination under conditions adapted to them as defined in the Annex to the referenced Act, that is, the school-leaving tests will be adapted to them according to the degree of their disability, using enlarged letters, clearly divided text, the underlined substance of the assignment. The blind pupils will work with texts in Braille.~~

**e. Is ICT used in the assessment of vulnerable groups?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

Pupils with special educational needs which do not allow them to take the school-leaving examination in a standard way take the examination under conditions adapted to them as defined in the Annex to the referenced Act, that is, the school-leaving tests will be adapted to them according to the degree of their disability, using enlarged letters, clearly divided text, the underlined substance of the assignment. The blind pupils will work with texts in Braille's.

**1.28. Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, studies, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to issues around curricula, learning materials and assessment processes.**

[Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016, Concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of Slovakia, CRC/C/SVK/35](#)

The concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of Slovakia has several references to curriculum and assessment. Amongst other things

[OECD Reviews of School Resources: Slovak Republic 2015, published 19 February 2016](#)

Amongst other things the report highlights that the relatively low level of spending translates into inadequate spending on teacher and school leader salaries and on learning materials, including textbooks, and failure to meet the demand for pre-primary education places.

The report is organised into five chapters, concluding with policy recommendations for each chapter. These include but are not limited to:

- The introduction of standardised national assessments;
- Improve the framework for professional development provision;
- Place more emphasis on the implementation aspects of education policy;
- Strengthen the impact assessment of policy interventions.

#### OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education, Slovak Republic

The review provides, from an international perspective, an independent analysis of major issues facing the evaluation and assessment framework in the Slovak Republic. These include a focus on curriculum and assessment.

The reports main conclusion include but are not limited to:

- Evaluation and assessment enjoys broad political support, but lacks strategic oversight;
- There are some efforts to build capacity for evaluation and assessment, but these need to be sustained and strengthened;
- There is improvement in supervision for external testing, but internal student assessment remains inconsistent across schools;
- Give more support to teachers to implement curriculum and assessment and develop models to assess skills and competencies.

### **1.29.Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to curricula, learning materials and assessment processes in the country?**

#### 1.29.1.Challenges:

The Committee on the Rights of the Child report in its concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of Slovakia (2016) that despite recent legislative amendments, the number of Roma children placed in schools for children with mild disabilities continues to be disproportionately high, the process of psychological

assessment during school attendance continues to fail to take into account the different socioeconomic backgrounds of Roma children, the State party's legislation does not stipulate that a regular re-evaluation of the initial diagnosis of the disability should be undertaken and the system is financially incentivized to retain the highest possible number of Roma children in special schools and classes.

The committee also reports a concern for the use of educational approaches and teaching methods that cannot ensure that pupils acquire adequate competencies in valuing diversity and equality, particularly between different faiths and ethnic groups, settling disagreements and conflicts in a non-violent manner, and combating all forms of discrimination and violence, especially bullying

It further says the State party's legislation does not provide a framework for achieving inclusive education, there is no effective policy providing for the transition from a segregated to an inclusive educational system and material, financial and human resources are not available for mainstream schools to ensure inclusive education.

The National Programme of Education (NPoE), entitled '[Learning Slovakia](#)' has the following comments:

- The current level of education financing means Slovakia cannot expect to improve the quality of education, to raise interest in the teaching profession, to improve material conditions of schools or to sufficiently develop professional teams to help teachers to master the education of children with different educational needs.

#### 1.29.2.Opportunities:

The legislative amendments and implementation of the following measures on the National Programme for the Development of Education "Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia" for years 2019- 2027, can provide opportunities in the development of support measures for the adaption and selection of curriculum. The support measure is identified in section 4.2.1: Professional and methodological support of pedagogical staff in the selection and adaption of curriculum and development of school education programmes.

Priorities of the Slovak Republic in relation to inclusive education are reflected in the Government Programme for the years 2016–2020. One of its focus areas concerns the development of material and technical conditions in order to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs. This can be used to raise the achievement of all learners and resolve social exclusion. The specific focus area read:

- To focus on the development of inclusive education in all schools as an effective tool for resolving social exclusion, including the development of necessary material and technical conditions in order to meet the needs of children and pupils with special educational needs

## Section 5: Teachers and support personnel

How are staff in schools prepared to accommodate students of all abilities and backgrounds, in terms of their initial training, continuing professional development and their attitudes to inclusion?

### 1.30. Please list type of staff, their numbers and required level of education for the position in different type of educational institutions

Type of staff	Number	Required education	Comment
<b>Mainstream schools</b>			
Teachers	Sum 85.517 Pre-primary 17.078 Primary + Low Secondary 36.189 H. Secondary 20.702 Tertiary 11.548 All data was collected by September 15, 2019 Source: <a href="#">Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information - support of science, research and development, innovation and education</a>	Pre-primary education: full secondary vocational education in pedagogy or a bachelor's degree in teaching, tutoring and pedagogical sciences– pre-school elementary pedagogy. Primary school teachers (primary and lower secondary education), secondary school teachers (higher secondary education) is a master's degree in teaching, tutoring and pedagogical sciences with approbation usually in two selected study programmes. All teachers in higher education must have at least a master's degree and they are supposed to develop their professional	

		and pedagogical competencies through further education in the academic, scientific and pedagogical areas.	
Professional staff (psychologists, special pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	<p>402 school psychologists</p> <p>736 special pedagogues</p> <p>3.794 pedagogical assistants</p> <p>School year 2019/2020</p> <p>Source: <a href="#">Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information - support of science, research and development, innovation and education</a></p>	<p>They must all be graduates of at least a master's degree in the relevant field.</p> <p>Special pedagogues may have a Masters degree in Special education supplemented by a shortened study at the university in addition to their original education, which is a Master's degree in teacher education for teaching in mainstream schools.</p>	<p>The following are available in the Slovak educational system: Special pedagogue and field special pedagogue, Psychologist, Speech therapist, Therapeutic pedagogue, Social pedagogue</p> <p>They can be used in mainstream schools or assist in mainstream schools from counselling centres</p> <p>Pedagogical assistants (The common name for school assistants is a teaching assistant: this includes a teacher assistant (working in the classroom), a tutor assistant (working in the children's school club) and a master assistant in vocational training; the statistics do not differentiate these positions and so the teacher assistant = pedagogical assistant.</p>
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)	3.794 (2019/2020)	The teaching assistant / teacher assistant must be a graduate of upper secondary education with a pedagogical focus. If his / her education is not	According to the requirements of the teacher, educator or vocational training trade-master, the pedagogical assistant participates in the implementation

		<p>pedagogical, he / she must additionally complete his / her education at a secondary vocational school with a pedagogical focus or complete a bachelor's degree with a pedagogical focus. This completion of education must be completed within 4 years of the start of teaching assistant / teacher assistant.</p>	<p>of the school educational programme for students with disabilities or other SEN at kindergartens, elementary schools, schools for gifted children or pupils and special schools and the educational programme for children and pupils in the compulsory school attendance age. The assistant may also work at secondary schools if it pertains to ensuring the education of students with disabilities.</p>
Head teacher	Unknown	<p>According to the new <a href="#">Act on pedagogical and professional employees</a> (SK), the headteacher must complete the basic module of functional education prior to taking office. The term of headteacher's office is 5 years. Headteachers and management pedagogical employees with at least a bachelor's degree in the study programmes focusing on school management are not required to complete functional education.</p>	
<b>Special schools</b>			

Teachers	4.927 (2019/2020)	<p>Teachers for the primary level of education are required to have at least a master's degree of education focusing on special education in a particular health disadvantage or in a general focus on special education. A teacher who has a master's degree in mainstream education must complete a special education at university. A teacher for lower secondary education in a special school is required to have at least a master's degree focused on specific academic subjects and also to complete a special education at university, or a master's degree in special education combined with a teacher education for a specific academic subject.</p>	
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	Counselling centres: 773 psychologists, 621 special pedagogues, 105 school speech therapists, 31 curative pedagogues,	<p>They must all be graduates of at least a master's degree in the relevant field.</p> <p>Special pedagogues may have a Masters degree in Special education supplemented by a shortened study at the university in addition to their</p>	They can be used in mainstream schools or assist in mainstream schools from counselling centres

	<p>108 social pedagogues.</p> <p>Out of the above mentioned total number:</p> <p>Pedagogical psychological counselling and prevention: 538 psychologists, 205 special pedagogues, 17 curative pedagogues/teachers, and 91 social pedagogues</p> <p>Special pedagogical counselling: 235 psychologists, 416 special pedagogues, 14 curative pedagogues/teachers, and 17 social pedagogues</p>	<p>original education, which is a Master's degree in teacher education for teaching in mainstream schools.</p>	
<p>Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)</p>	<p>953 (2019/2020)</p>	<p>The teaching assistant / teacher assistant must be a graduate of upper secondary education with a pedagogical focus. If his / her education is not pedagogical, he / she must</p>	<p>See section on mainstream education</p>

		<p>additionally complete his / her education at a secondary vocational school with a pedagogical focus or complete a bachelor's degree with a pedagogical focus. This completion of education must be completed within 4 years of the start of teaching assistant / teacher assistant.</p>	
<p><i>Others (please specify and add rows as required)</i></p>	49	School psychologists	
<p><b>Other institutions offering education if they exist (i.e. children's homes, young offenders institutions etc).</b></p>			
Teachers			
<p>Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)</p>			
<p>Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)</p>			

<p>Teachers working with home schooling</p>		<p>Master's degree with a pedagogical focus on teaching pupils at primary school.</p> <p>(Home education is allowed to first level primary school pupils (ISCED 1))</p>	<p>The parent of a pupil who was permitted to be home education must provide a person who will be responsible for pupil's home education. The person must meet the qualification criteria set for teachers at the first level of primary school - that is the second degree of higher education.</p> <p>The teacher is financially remunerated to the parents of the pupil who applied for home education. School textbooks are provided free of charge from a school that has allowed home education (ie individual education).</p> <p>A school which has allowed individual home education (home education) to a pupil for health reasons provides his / her teacher for the pupil's teaching, including the financial cost of that teaching.</p>
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**1.31. Please indicate if education/training on inclusion in education is available for the following groups of professionals.**

Type of staff	Yes	No	No information	If yes please state if pre- or in-service, mandatory or optional, who provides education/training and summary of content
Head teachers/School directors		X	Headteachers and management pedagogical employees with at least a bachelor's degree in the study programmes focusing on school management are not required to complete functional education.	
Teachers	X			<p>Alternative forms of education and work with pupils with special educational needs are a part of education and training in teacher training study programmes at the second level of higher education.</p> <p>Qualified teachers can obtain specialisation in work with pupils with special educational needs through extension training.</p>
Teacher Assistants				<p>The <a href="#">Methodological and Pedagogical Center</a> (MPC) with its allocated workplaces, which is established by the Ministry of Education, organizes seminars according to the interests of pedagogical staff, including teaching assistants, as well</p>

				as accredited educational programs with various specializations
Professional Staff	X			If his / her specialization does not meet the needs of some pupils or there are new methodologies, further education is necessary in order to complement knowledge and competencies. Practitioners need to implement specialist recommendations at the required level and, at the same time, to provide specialists with objective information on the effectiveness of their recommendations and the usage of developed methods. Diagnostic, therapeutic and counselling care provided by the specialists needs to be in line and in synergy with education and educational support for school professionals.
Inspectors	x			
Teacher Trainers	x			
Others (please list add rows as required)				

**a.If you answered no to any of the above, please provide further information:**

It is expected that the functional education of school managers, as well as their additional training, will in the near future also include training in the management of inclusive education. The assumption is based on the existence of

the National Education Development Program “Quality and Affordable Education for Slovakia” for 2019 - 2027, approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic.

**1.32. Is education and training of teachers aligned with national policy goals on inclusive education?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

Teachers’ higher education is accredited based on the descriptions of teacher training study fields which are created by each higher education institution autonomously. The key topics are determined by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Sport of the Slovak Republic and all higher education institutions providing education in Teacher training must adhere to them.

**1.33. With respect to the main initial teacher education programmes, describe how inclusion in education is addressed in it (i.e. requirement for number of academic credits under European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), subjects and topics covered, focus etc).**

Teacher training and education focus on different educational areas and professional development. The training focuses on how to increase the level of a particular group of pupils (e.g. pupils from a socially disadvantaged background; pupils from Roma communities). The issue of understanding and supporting learners with diverse and additional educational needs is included in each university accredited training programme. Initial teacher education also includes preparation for work in partnership with families

For the students enrolled in teacher education: Requirements for students’ practical performance are defined by professional competencies:

- project competence (planning of teaching)
- communicative, organisational and managerial competencies (management of learning processes)
- diagnostic and intervention competencies (diagnostics of individuals or group, management of pupil’s individualised learning)
- reflexive competences (work self-reflection, changes and self-improvement)

Organisationally, the content of initial teacher training is first drawn up from the point of view of educational theory and needs of practice and is explicitly expressed in the graduate's profile. From these facts the study plan is derived which is specified in the syllabi of individual subjects with required and recommended literature needed for examinations, marked credit or credit indicated.

The study is organised in terms. A term in most cases lasts 12 - 14 weeks. Upon successful completion of a subject, the student will, in addition to a mark, also obtain credits. Upon meeting all study requirements, the study is completed by the final thesis defence and a state exam(s).

Institution for Teachers' Education and Training prepares teachers through special trainings such as:

- Development of competences of the teaching staff in the field of prevention of extremism
- Using multicultural education against prejudice and racism

Education of school staff is provided by the Institution for Teachers' Education and Training through educational programs aimed at promoting inclusive education such as:

- Creation of individual educational programs
- Development of competences of a pedagogical employee for work with pupils with special educational needs in vocational training
- Components of systematic school development planning in the context of the creation of an inclusive environment
- Innovative education in the field of inclusive education for children from marginalized Roma communities.

[The methodology and Pedagogy Centre](#) (MPC) is a budget organization of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic

The issue of understanding and supporting learners with diverse and additional educational needs is included in each university accredited training programme. Initial teacher education also includes preparation for work in partnership with families.

Agency research additionally found that the issue of understanding and supporting learners with diverse and additional educational needs is included in each university accredited training programme. Initial teacher education also includes preparation for work in partnership with families. (Country information for Slovakia - Teacher education for inclusive education.

### **Additional section on diversity amongst staff**

The teacher population is ageing. In 2017, 30% of primary teachers and 39.6 % of secondary teachers were aged over 50; only 7% of primary teachers and 8.8% of secondary school teachers were under 30. The profession in Slovakia is dominated by women: they are represented most strongly in pre-primary (99.5%) and primary education (90%), but still over 70% in secondary education. The ratio is reversed at tertiary level where women constitute 45.8% of teachers.

Percentage of female teachers (2018) 68.3% OECD average in Slovakia 82.1%.

### **1.34. Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to initial teacher education and/or professional development issues.**

[Education and training Monitor 2019 – European Commission](#)

The 2019 edition of the European Commissions Education and Training monitor has a special focus on Teachers. The report indicated that the teacher profession in Slovakia is over all seen as unattractive. This largely due to the low salaries of teachers, the perception that initial teachers training is weak and often used as an easy access route to higher education.

[Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016, Concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of Slovakia, CRC/C/SVK/35](#)

The concluding observation from the Committee on the Rights of the child, 2016 include but are not limited to:

- There is no systematic application of the Romani language in schools, primarily owing to a lack of Romani-speaking teachers, and children of the Hungarian minority likewise face difficulties in receiving education in their mother tongue.
- Despite numerous plans and strategies, Roma children, especially in segregated settlements, continue to face multiple forms of discrimination, mainly in the fields of education, health care and standard of living, including as they relate to housing, evictions and payment of benefits.
- Use legislative, policy and educational measures, including sensitization and awareness-raising, to end stigmatization of Roma, Muslim and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and children with disabilities.

**1.35.Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to teachers and sup**

1.35.1.Challenges:

The 2019 Education and Training monitor report has a special focus on teachers and states:

- The teaching profession remains unattractive in Slovakia. According to the 2018 OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)<sup>1</sup>, the proportion of Slovak teachers who think that the teaching profession is valued in society is the lowest in the EU — 4.5% v 17.7% at EU level
- Slovak teachers indicate that their participation in CPD is hindered by its high cost (42.9%), lack of incentives (42.8%), and its low relevance (40.3%). 20.8% of teachers feel well prepared for teaching in a multicultural setting (EU average: 23.8%), and 9.3% declared a high need for related training. 16.6% of teachers identified information and communications technology (ICT) skills as their main training need.

Slovak Republic Teacher and training conditions (TALIS 2018) showed the following:

The 2018 TALIS report shows that in general teachers in the Slovak Republic feel less equipped to deal with the challenges of a multicultural classroom (1,2,5) than the OECD average. Additionally, only 25.9 % of teachers report that 'teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting' was included in their formal education or training compared to the 34.8 % OECD average.

TEACHING IN MULTICULTURAL SETTINGS	OECD Average %	SK %
1. Teachers who feel they can cope with the challenges of a multicultural classroom 'quite a bit' or 'a lot' in teaching a culturally diverse class (%)	66.9	63.6
2. Teachers reporting a high level of need for professional development in teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting (%)	15.0	9.3

3. Teachers teaching in classes with more than 10% of students whose first language is different from the language of instruction (%)	18.0	11.2
4. Teachers for whom 'teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting' was included in their formal education or training (%)	34.8	25.9
5. Teachers who felt 'well prepared' or 'very well prepared' for teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting (%)	25.5	20.8
6. Teachers for whom 'teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting' was included in their professional development activities (%)	21.9	14.2
7. Principals who think that 'many' or 'all or almost all' teachers in their school would agree that children and young people should learn that people of different cultures have a lot in common (%)	94.6	91.4

#### 1.35.2.Opportunities:

Priorities of the Slovak Republic in relation to inclusive education are reflected in the Government Programme for the years 2016–2020 (GP) includes:

- To support measures including optimising the employee structure to allow an increase in the number of professional staff in schools, especially teaching assistants, social educators, school psychologists and special pedagogues

The national project entitled 'More successful in Primary School II' 2018-2019 is a follow-up to the national project 'More successful in Primary School I'. The project aimed at creating inclusive Teams in primary schools, school psychologist, school special pedagogue, social pedagogue, teacher assistant) – funded by the EU Structural Funds, Operational Program Human Resources, Priority Axis Education.

The right of all learners to an inclusive education is defined in law and policy, just as the right to additional support to meet individual learning needs. It is important for mainstream schools to improve their ability to provide inclusive education in the required quality for the benefit of all pupils. The National Program of Education entitled '[Learning Slovakia](#)' (2017) sets the framework for the transition of special schools to the "centre for special pedagogical counselling". It presents a solution whereby special pedagogues (special teachers) will transit from special schools, i.e. from the closed special educational environment to the open environment of inclusive schools, and they will share their expertise with other teachers and participate in the learning process of pupils.

On 10 May 2019, the Parliament of the Slovak Republic adopted Act No. 138/2019 Coll. on pedagogical and professional staff and on amendments to certain acts. In addition to most of the provisions introduced so far, the new law updates or adds the following

- qualification requirements,
- increasing the attractiveness of beginning teachers and other staff the beginning teaching staff and other employees,
- school's culture and code of ethics,
- professional development: verification of competencies, further education, attestation process, continuing education plan,
- changes in accreditation of continuing education programmes,
- employer's obligation to arrange continuing education of teachers,
- deleting credits from the act so that teachers do not only learn to earn credits for their pay, for education that was easier, but not very important for their professional development,
- the position of the profession's representatives
- new positions: career advisor, library information specialist, school trainer for special activities,
- professional standards and
- functional education for headteachers.

[The Action Plan for the Nation Reform Programme 2019](#) highlights:

"Measures continue to be taken to support better financial remuneration for teachers and improve quality of education. The wage tariffs of pedagogical and specialised employees in regional education system were increased

by 10 % effective as of January 2019. Additional 10% rise will take place in January 2020. Funds were allocated in excess of the general increase to increase, in September 2019, tariff wages of beginner teachers with the aim to make the teaching profession more attractive. The Ministry of Education prepared a new pedagogical and specialised employees' law that was passed in January 2019 in order to improve the quality of, and support, the teaching profession. The law lays down a new mechanism of attestation proceeding which should improve the relationship between quality and remuneration associated with higher career degree. A mechanism to audit quality of education in the professional development of teachers based on results of providers has been set up” Action no. 7: Higher quality and better support of teachers.

## Section 6: Schools

How does the work of schools, school management and leadership impact on access, participation and provision of equitable opportunities for all learners?

### 1.36. Who is excluded from attending any form of school?

**Please give reasons for this group being excluded from attending school and describe any form of alternative provision made for them?**

Learners can be completely or partially exempt from schooling in particular subjects for all or part of the school year, at the written request of the parent of a pupil or of an adult pupil (a pupil who is 18 years of age or older), if the medical condition does not allow his / her education at school. Learners are exempted by the head teacher on the basis of a recommendation from the special pedagogue, psychologist and doctor. The school provides individual schooling for at least two lessons a week for learners who are exempt from compulsory school attendance and are in home care.

### 1.37. Are there issues around the over- and under-representation of different vulnerable groups in different school settings?

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description and provide any data/evidence that is available**

In 2017/2018 only 43% of children aged 3-5 from families receiving the 'benefit in material need', and 31.7% of children in that age group from marginalised Roma communities, were enrolled in kindergartens.

In 2017/2018, 7.8% of 16-year-olds had not entered the final class of lower secondary education, putting them at risk of dropping out of school. The rates were particularly high for pupils from families receiving the 'benefit in material need' (32.6%) and marginalised Roma communities (37.2%).

Roma children continue to be the victims of de facto segregation in the State party's school system, with over 50 per cent being taught in Roma-only classes or attending classes in separate school pavilions, often providing inferior education (Committee on the rights of the Child).

Statistical data show that the least balanced proportion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools (in school integration) concerns pupils with cognitive impairment; (compared to their representation in the special education

system): 13 376 pupils with cognitive impairment; are educated in special primary schools, 6 370 pupils are educated in special classes in primary schools, 3 811 pupils are educated in classes with other pupils in mainstream schools. This category of pupils is the biggest in special schools and special classes.

The group of pupils with SEN resulting from their development in a socially disadvantaged environment (22 341) and the group of pupils with specific learning disabilities - dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysortography, dyscalculia, (20 768) are the biggest groups in the mainstream schools.

### **1.38. Please give details on the main admissions criteria for schools.**

#### **a. Highlight any issues with the national policies.**

There are no admission criteria in public schools.

The rights and responsibilities in education are laid down in the [Constitution of the Slovak Republic \(SK\)](#), Chapter 42, and Section 1 "Everybody has the right to education. School attendance is compulsory"; Section 2 "Citizens have the right to free education at primary and secondary schools, and according to citizen's abilities and society's possibilities also at higher education institutions".

The primary school in the place of residence of a child cannot refuse to accept a child with special educational needs. Founders of mainstream schools (i. e. municipalities for primary schools, self-governing regions for secondary schools) are obliged to create conditions for education of pupils with SEN. In case the education in this school is not for the benefit of the child, the school head may propose to change the integrated education to education in a special class or special school, if there is a written approval of the state administration body in education and experts from the counselling centre. If the child's parent disagrees with the change, the court resolves the discrepancy.

#### **b. Where schools set their own admissions criteria, please outline any impact on inclusion.**

Not applicable.

### **1.39. Please provide information on the different forms of support that are available to learners in schools.**

#### **a. Inclusive pedagogy, personalised learning and universal design approaches**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

In the education sector, support services are provided by the following specialists: psychologist in the counselling centre, school psychologist in the school, special pedagogue in the centre of counselling focusing on types of health disabilities (cognitive impairment, visual, hearing, physical; behavioural disorders), curative pedagogue, school special pedagogue in the school, social pedagogue. They are professional staff in the education sector financed from the budget of the education sector. Teacher's assistants are financed from the budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, from their own budget, which are increased by schools on the basis of higher coefficients for pupils with disabilities to calculate the school budget, as well as from extra-budgetary sources from the school founder and other sources in accordance with the budgetary rules. Neither the health care sector, nor the labour, social and family affairs sector is involved within the employment and financing support services.

Provision of support measures and guidance in competence of regional education (pre-primary, primary, and secondary education) is governed by the Education Act.

Support measures and guidance in regional education is provided by:

- Schools (kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools) mainly by means of school special teachers, educational counsellors and prevention coordinators, school psychologists, pedagogical assistants (teacher assistants), etc.
- School facilities of educational counselling and prevention – the centre of pedagogical –psychological counselling and prevention and the centre of special pedagogical counselling,
- Special educational facilities - diagnostic centres, therapeutic-educational centres and re-education centres.
- School facilities of educational counselling and prevention perform mainly the following kinds of activities:
  - Psychological
  - Pedagogical
  - special pedagogical activity including logopedic and therapeutic and educational activity and
  - educational and social counselling and prevention

Activities of school facilities of educational counselling and prevention focus on optimisation of educational, psychological, social and career development of children from their birth to their completion of preparation for work. Special care is provided by expert employees of these facilities (mainly psychologists and special pedagogues)

to children with special educational needs. The experts also engage with children's parents and give recommendations to their teachers.

Counselling services are also provided to children's legal representatives and teaching staff free-of-charge.

Special educational methods used in special education may be summed up as follows:

- Method of re-education – special educational procedures which are aimed at the affected function
- Method of compensation – special educational procedures aimed at development of compensatory unaffected functions
- Method of rehabilitation – special educational procedures aimed at socialisation/integration of the person with disability in the community.

Within the framework of the above methods, methods and forms of special education are used which are suitable for individuals.

Furthermore, various compensatory aids, such as computers, hearing aids, ICT, various optic aids, etc., are also used. These compensatory aids are used individually or collectively – within special classrooms such as video studios, speech therapist's room, etc.

#### **b. counselling and mentoring possibilities**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

Special pedagogical counselling centre provides professional services for children with disability, including children with development disorder, aiming to reach optimal development of their personality and social integration.

In schools, guidance services are provided mostly by a school special pedagogue, school psychologist, educational counsellor, and by a coordinator of prevention in the area of risk behaviour prevention.

The task of an educational counsellor is to provide guidance in solving personal, educational, professional and social needs of children, and career guidance if there is no career counsellor at school. If necessary, the educational counsellor mediate pedagogical, psychological, social, psychoterapeutical, re-educational and other services for children and their legal guardians, which coordinate in cooperation with class teachers. He/She closely cooperates with the school psychologist, school special pedagogue and experts from counselling facilities. Study counselling services are also provided by school facilities of educational counselling and prevention.

Educational counsellors are teachers at primary and secondary schools and special schools (where appropriate in school facilities as well), which deal with pupils in problem solving situations, or guidance in professional career choice and also with parents.

Educational counsellors are professional consultants at schools, together with their pedagogical activity. They mediate interconnection of school with professional facilities and other facilities dealing with care for children.

Higher education institutions provide information and counselling services to students free of charge. Higher education institutions must take support measures to equalise opportunities for students with special educational needs to study at a higher education institution. A number of higher education institutions provide study, career, psychological, social and religious guidance or a combination of the above in their own counselling centres.

### **c. input from specialist teachers/therapists**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

Psychological counselling is provided to children, legal representatives in matters relating to children / pupils and school employees in schools and school facilities by means of a school psychologist or a psychologist in order to develop their healthy personal development and mental health.

The basic components of education counselling and prevention system are facilities of educational, psychological and special pedagogical counselling and prevention.

Another component of education counselling and prevention system are:

- educational counsellor,
- school psychologist,
- school special pedagogue,
- curative pedagogue/teacher,
- social pedagogue,
- prevention coordinator.

Particular components of the system of educational counselling and prevention cooperates mainly with family, school, school facility, employers, public administration authorities and non- profit organisation.

Pedagogical-psychological counselling and prevention centre provides complex psychological, special pedagogical, diagnostic, educational, counselling and prevention care for children, beside children with health disability.

Some higher education institutions provide psychological counselling in combination with career, study and religious counselling.

Separate psychological counselling is provided to students only by Comenius University in Bratislava.

Psychological counselling and crisis intervention can be provided to students in higher education by specialist staff – psychologists from centres of pedagogical and psychological counselling and prevention.

Speech therapist performs logopedic diagnostics and provides intervention and counselling to children and pupils with impaired communication ability, their legal representatives and teachers.

#### **d. input from learning support assistants**

✓ Yes

##### **If yes, please give a description.**

According to the requirements of the teacher, educator or vocational training trade-master, the pedagogical assistant participates in the implementation of the school educational programme for students with disabilities and other SENs at kindergartens, elementary schools, schools for gifted children or pupils and special schools and the educational programme for children and pupils in the compulsory school attendance age. The pedagogical assistant may also work at secondary schools if it pertains to ensuring the education of students with disabilities.

In classes of primary schools, special primary schools the headteacher may set up the profession of assistant teacher who participates in creation of conditions necessary for overcoming especially the language barriers (in case of enrolment in grade 1 or zero, of pupils who do not master the language of instruction), health and social barriers of the child while providing the educational process. In establishing the post of assistant teacher in the school the headteacher applies the appropriate founder of the school for a consent. The assistant teacher may be also introduced in such classes which are attended by pupils with special education needs.

At university, a student with disabilities can be assisted by a personal assistant; its work is financed by the Department of Labour and Social Affairs, not by the Ministry of Education

#### **e. availability of ICT / assistive technology**

✓ Yes

If yes, please give a description.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic provides textbooks for pupils with SEN at elementary and secondary schools free of charge. It also provides Braille textbooks and electronic versions of textbooks for visually impaired pupils, as well as some textbooks for deaf pupils with vocabulary with sign language. There is also a web portal for electronic textbooks. Schools are equipped with interactive whiteboards and tablets for pupils with educational programs as well as for pupils with severe mobility or intellectual impairment.

f. Please describe any other forms of support available.

Not applicable.

**1.40. Please give a description of the strategies in place for practically supporting mainstream school staff teams to increase their capacity to be inclusive and to improve access, participation and achievement for all learners.**

Strategy	Description of the focus
The National Programme for the Development of Education " <a href="#">Quality and Accessible Education for Slovakia</a> " for years 2019 – 2027	Based on the conceptual document " <a href="#">Learning Slovakia</a> " (2017, September), "Reports on the State of Education in Slovakia" are prepared and submitted annually from 2013 by the <a href="#">State School Inspectorate</a> to the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and subsequently the Government of the Slovak Republic, and other relevant documents and materials in the respective area; the concerned area is addressed in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy in the field of education and in line with national needs.
Updated Action plan for the <a href="#">Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Romany Integration up to 2020</a>	Its main goal in the education area is to reduce the differences between the education level of Romany and the population average

	by means of improving the access to quality education at all levels for children from marginalized Roma communities.
<a href="#">The National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2019</a>  <a href="#">Action Plan for the national Reform programme 2019</a>	Describes the structural measures planned by the Slovak government to be taken in the next two years. Complex approach to the priorities identification taking into account GDP, as well as other life quality aspects, identified the education, the healthcare system and labour market again as the biggest challenges of the Slovak economy in 2019.

**1.41. Please provide information regarding school buildings and infrastructure.**

General information:

The school founder is responsible for infrastructure investments, maintenance and management. In order to provide educational services, founders receive funds from the state budget, EU structural funds or use own resources

**a. Are there schools that face infrastructure issues that are barriers to inclusion?**

No other information available

**b. Are there strategies and/or initiatives to improve school buildings and infrastructure?**

No information available

Strategy	Description of the focus
...	
...	
...	

If no, please give further information:

**1.42. Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of the school system, potentially drawing on information from school inspections and / or school self-review work.**

[Education and training Monitor 2019 – European Commission](#)

Gives several indications of over or under representation of certain population groups in the Slovak schools.

[Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016, Concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of Slovakia, CRC/C/SVK/35](#)

Highlights the large over representation of Roma children in special school or special classes.

[OECD Reviews of School Resources Slovak Republic, 2015](#)

Highlights the importance and the need for good infrastructure in order to accommodate all types of learners

[The National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2019](#)

Amongst other things highlights the system of pedagogical and psychological, and of special pedagogical counselling and how it is planned to be made more effective and of higher quality.

**1.43. Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to schools in the country?**

1.43.1. Challenges:

No information on school infrastructure available.

The European Commission Education and Training Monitor 2019 highlights the underrepresentation of children from socially disadvantaged families and children from Roma communities in kindergardens.

Additionally, according to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016 Roma children continue to be the victims of de facto segregation in the State party's school system, with over 50 per cent being taught in Roma-only classes

or attending classes in separate school pavilions, often providing inferior education (Committee on the rights of the Child).

#### 1.43.2.Opportunities:

Updated Action plan for the [Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Romany Integration up to 2020](#)

National reform programme 2019 mentions, amongst other things:

“The system of pedagogical and psychological, and of special pedagogical counselling is planned to be made more effective and of higher quality. Conditions will be amended for inclusion of non-state counselling facilities into the network so as to harmonise the supply of provided services with the demand in individual cities and regions. In order to include a non-state facility into the network, an opinion of the county authority in the city of the region will be required. This will be followed by the discussion on possible regulation of the state and non-state facilities funding system”.

In a meeting on 20. November 2018, Representatives of the Government of the Slovak Republic agreed on the introduction of compulsory pre-primary education for all 5-year old children as of 1. September 2020. Compulsory pre-school education will start a year before compulsory school attendance. In order to implement this change, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Sport of the Slovak Republic is preparing amendments to the legislation.

“Support for pre-primary education of children from marginalised Roma communities” (PRojekt Inklúzie v Materských školách - PRIM) JULY 2018: The main objective is to increase kindergarten attendance by children from marginalised Roma communities by creating an inclusive environment (establishing inclusive teams involving additional teachers and professional staff) and working with families whose children are not yet attending kindergartens. The project is open to 150 municipalities until 31 October 2020. It is implemented by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities.

## Section 7: Communities, parents and students

How far does the wider school community support learners to access and benefit from education opportunities?

### 1.44. Have there been any campaigns to raise awareness of inclusion in education at national or local level?

✓ Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Non-governmental organisations:

Foundation for Children of Slovakia - project "Who is missing?", Within which the Program of Inclusive Education of Children with Health Disabilities was created, implemented by the Foundation for Children of Slovakia together with the Coalition for Children Slovakia with partners of the Ball in Opera and Orange project. The main objective of the program is to support primary schools from different regions (up to 40 schools) through the grant-educational project School of Inclusionists, to adapt their educational conditions and pedagogical strategies to the diverse needs of all school children. The partial objective of the program is o. i. Supporting and strengthening the societal debate on inclusion. <https://www.ktochyba.sk/>

Effective Inclusion project (EIP) - implemented by schools in Slovakia with the support of the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund under the Human Resources Operational Program (2018 - 2021).

The aim of the project is to increase inclusiveness and equal access to quality education and to improve the outcomes and competences of children and pupils. Individual activities are realized both during the lessons and also outside the lessons such as sports activities, creative activities, ring activity. An important part of the project is regular cooperation of pedagogical and professional staff and at the same time coordination of procedures and communication with parents of given pupils as well as with professional workplaces.

Example of good practice EIP: [Základná škola s materskou školou](#), Komenského 3, 919 04 Smolenice, Slovak Republic (Primary school with Kindergarten, Smolenice is a small rural village, 3,500 inhabitants)

### 1.45. Does legislation/policy support parental involvement in schools?

✓ Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Following the Declaration of Human Rights and the Education Act (2008), parents have the right to express their opinion on the proposal for integrating their child into the educational system. They give their consent or disapproval to proposed solutions and recommendations through their signature. Parents must approve the child's assessment and placement into the special school/special class/mainstream class and the special educational support.

Parents of a pupil are entitled to:

- familiarise themselves with the individual education plan of their child with special educational needs;
- participate in education with the prior approval of the director of the school or school facility;
- comment on the educational programme of the school or school facility through school governing bodies (§ 94 section 1 letter (b) point 2 and § 144 section 6 in Act No. 245/2008 of the Law Code on Education and Training (the Education Act))

Parents have the right guaranteed by law to be elected to the self-government bodies of the school board, and to be informed through democratically elected representatives of all activities of the school and its economic management.

Slovak school boards have a broad composition with eleven members representing the three major stakeholder groups (founder, school staff and parents/students). This approach is likely to reduce opportunities for "political appointments" by school founders

The National Programme of Education NPoE '[Learning Slovakia](#)' defines objective no. 4-03.03, which is to 'actively engage parents in the functioning of the school and to actively engage the school in co-operation with the family'

#### **1.46. Does legislation/policy support collaboration between schools and stakeholders in their local communities (e.g. services/employers)?**

✓ Yes

**If yes, please give a description.**

Partially:

Within VET, the aim of the new law (no. 61/2015 Coll.) is to allow an easy transition of secondary vocational school graduates from education to the labour market and to reduce the risk of unemployment of young graduates.

Alongside other matters, enabling the preparation of pupils in dual education includes:

- Preparation for the job according to the requirements of the employer;
- performance of practical training directly at the employer's;
- an agreement on dual training between the employer and the secondary school;
- a teaching contract between the employer and the pupil.

The development of partnerships is enabled by the new act no.61/2015 Coll. On Vocational education and training amendments to certain acts, focusing on the development of dual education.

**1.47.Does legislation/policy support the development of learning communities in local/regional areas e.g. support for schools to work together; involvement with universities, support services to provide research evidence and development of innovative practice?**

✓ **No information available**

Universities are partly involved, on their own initiative, in their research and activities in providing evidence and developing innovative practices for the development of inclusive education.

**1.48.Does legislation/policy set out a role for NGOs, DPOs, or other organisations representing vulnerable groups?**

✓ **Yes**

**If yes, please describe the role. Specify which non-governmental actors are particularly active in inclusion in education and how they operate.**

Legislation creates a space for cooperation with non-governmental organizations. For example, in the past four years, the civic association Platform of Families of Children with Disabilities has been successfully profiling, "bringing together the experiences of parents, partners, experts, NGOs and their own mission." Through its activities, it aims to create a "strong organization that will bring together families of children with disabilities, NGOs and the state for the ultimate goal of bringing together the majority population with people with disabilities and their families." Representatives of the Platform participate in the working groups of ministries to prepare plans that are being prepared and bring experience of practical problems to be solved, but also organize their own seminars for parents of children together with experts. <https://www.platformarodin.sk/>

**1.49. Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of parental and wider community involvement in the work of schools.**

No information available

There are no reports, systematic evaluations or other evaluations of parental and wider community participation in schoolwork. Information about the school's common activities with parents can be found when visiting the school or on its website, such as the school mentioned in section 7.1.

**1.50. Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to communities, parents and students in the country?**

No information available

**1.50.1. Challenges:**

The lack of information found / provided on this issue can be noted as a challenge in itself.

**1.50.2. Opportunities:**

Based on legislation, parents' interest in educating their children in mainstream schools is increasing. In last 10 years the total number of pupils educated in mainstream classrooms along with other pupils was increased by 125.6%.

The National Programme of Education NPoE 'Learning Slovakia':

- Objective 2-04: introduces a new concept of the teaching profession and function of school which is to develop procedures and methodological materials on building relationships with all actors in education and public in the school area. (Measure 2-04.08)
- Objective no. 4-03.03: Concerns family involvement in schools and works to actively engage parents in the functioning of the school and to actively engage the school in co-operation with the family. This could be in the form of open classes, workshops, common activities for children and parents, as well as an opportunity within school self-evaluation.

