

Annex 1

to the Sixth Periodic Report of the Slovak Republic on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. The powers of the Council are governed by the Statute, which defines the activities of the Council. Despite the requests and justification, the Commissioner for Children is not yet a member of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights. The financing of the Council's activities is provided by the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic. Within the framework of cooperation with other national bodies and ministries, the Council cooperates in the coordination of departmental policies and activities of central state administration bodies in the field of human rights. In this area, it cooperates with ministries and other central state administration bodies, municipalities, higher territorial units, local state administration bodies, non-governmental non-profit organizations, scientific workplaces and academic institutions and submits to them suggestions, proposals and recommendations in its area of competence. In addition, it also takes positions on the national implementation of the Slovak Republic's international obligations in the field of human rights protection, notes draft reports on the implementation of international conventions ratified by the Slovak Republic and human rights treaties to which the Slovak Republic is a party, submits proposals to the Government on strategies and concepts of the policy in the fields of human rights protection, takes positions and adopts resolutions on bills and other generally binding legal regulations, as well as governmental, departmental and other non-legislative measures that may have implications for the protection or observance of human rights; takes and publishes positions on the current human rights issues - in this context, as a whole or through its members as well as the chairmen of the committees and heads of working groups of the council, it may request information and opinions from central state administration bodies, including those not represented in the council, it cooperates with the National Council of the Slovak Republic and its committees.

1A. The child has the right to turn to the Commissioner for Children directly or through another person, even without the knowledge of the parents, guardian, carer or other person to whom the child has been entrusted to the care replacing the care of the parents. One of the original legal competencies of the Commissioner for Children alone is also the submission of notifications on behalf of the child or children under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the notification procedure. Part II of this Protocol sets out the conditions under which a notification to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child can be submitted (e.g. only if all available national remedies have been exhausted). The Commissioner for Children promotes the interests of children in society, works with children directly or through children's rights organizations, consults with children on matters that concern them, examines children's views and promotes their interest in public affairs. He or she also supports raising awareness of the rights of the child in society. The Commissioner for Children cooperates with foreign and international bodies involved in the exercise of the rights of the child or the protection of the rights of

the child. The competence of the Commissioner in relation to public bodies and non-public entities is regulated in Section 3 of the Act on the Commissioner, while in paragraph 2 it also defines the negative competence in relation to courts, the public prosecutor's office, the National Council of the Slovak Republic, and other institutions. The Act on the Commissioner regulates the status of the Commissioner as an independent body, which exercises its powers separately from other bodies for which special legislation establishes competences in the field of human rights protection. The law unequivocally declares the independence of the Commissioner's position in accordance with the Annex to the UN General Assembly Resolution No. 48/134 of 20 December 1993 on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (the so-called Paris Principles) "Composition and guarantee of independence and pluralism". "Given that the Commissioner is involved in the protection of rights by promoting and enforcing the rights specifically guaranteed to specific groups, such as children, by international conventions, his independence lies, inter alia, in the fact that public authorities may not interfere in the exercise of his powers or authorizations. It will be solely up to the Commissioner when and how to exercise his powers as defined by the Act on the Commissioner, and thus he is independent in the performance of his duties and exercises his powers separately from other bodies." This means that no state authority may issue any instructions, proposals or recommendations to the Commissioner on how to deal with things entrusted to the Commissioner's remit. This can only be done by the law or the Convention. A current amendment to the Act on the Commissioner has been prepared, which is currently in a shortened legislative procedure and allows for the dismissal of the Commissioner for Children (as well as the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities), in addition to the other reasons listed in Section 19 para. 4 of this Act, according to the proposal in Section 19 para. 4, letter c) of the Act, if the Commissioner "acts in a manner which raises reasonable doubts as to his or her independence and impartiality in the performance of his or her duties as Commissioner". For this reason, the Commissioner for Children is very concerned about the disproportionate political interference not only in her powers as a Commissioner, but also in the institution as such, which fundamentally violates the Paris Principles.

1B. The Office of the Commissioner for Children reminds that, as of 14 April 2014, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Notification Procedure, which the Slovak Republic signed on 28 February 2012, entered into force.

1C. We assure the committee that despite the fact that in the Slovak Republic it was not possible to find and implement a method of monitoring resources allocated from the state budget for the implementation of children's rights, policies for children and families are allocated with funds in the state budget and subsequently in budgets of individual ministries and self-governments. We also state that policies approved at the government level must be accompanied by a clause on selected impacts, including social effects or impacts on marriage, parenthood and the family.

2. The Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “CLSAF”) operates and develops, within a unified information system in the field of social affairs and employment services, a unified interconnected system of collecting, processing and transmitting information, as well as monitoring processes in mediation of substitute family care. The bodies of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship (hereinafter referred to as “SLPCaSG”) record the implementation of SLPCaSG measures in the KIDS information system, which is constantly evolving and expanding with regard to application practice needs. The KIDS information system collects detailed data that meet the requirements of the Convention, except for ethnic origin. At present, its expansion with centres for children and families is being prepared, where statistics will be created not only for the needs of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, but also for the entire state statistical reporting. The KIDS information system monitors indicators related to the number of cases of individuals and families for which measures of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship were implemented (minors, adults), indicators related to the implementation of individual measures of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship in the monitored year and indicators related to personnel securing the performance of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship performed for minors and adults.

3. For social benefits and subsidies, the source of data is the information system for social benefit management (IS SBM DMO), subsequently these data are processed in the management information system SBM MIS, which is an extension of IS SBM DMO. Data for the purposes of Act No. 447/2008 Coll. on financial contributions to compensation for severe disability and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the “Act on Financial Contributions to Compensation”) are processed by the offices of labour, social affairs and family and the CLSAF. For persons receiving assistance in the form of financial contributions to compensation, a card of a natural person with a severe disability or a parking card for a natural person with a disability, information on the age of the person as well as on the type of disability, inter alia, shall be processed. The processed data are generally published and publicly available on the website of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. If it is necessary for other systems to have some processed data not in general, but directly data concerning specific persons, the CLSAF provides these directly to other institutions by law, e.g. the Health Care Supervision Authority for the purposes of health insurance, the Social Insurance Agency for the purposes of social insurance. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic prepared a bill amending Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on social services and on the amendment to Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on trade licensing (Trade Licensing Act), as amended, it was adopted by the National Council of the Slovak Republic on 10 September 2019, and after its signature by the President of the Slovak Republic it was promulgated in the Collection of Laws of the Slovak Republic under the number 280/2019 Coll. The priority objective of the submitted draft amendment to the Social Services Act, in addition to other legislative amendments, is to create legal conditions for a new system for the collection of data on social services, as part of the information system of

social services, administered by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic. It is about providing up-to-date data for the needs of fact-finding in the field of social services, improving the process of medium-term planning for the development of social services and their related co-financing, at all levels of management, from local through regional to national levels. The introduction of the social services information system will also create preconditions for streamlining the system of providing financial support to social service providers from public budgets and reducing the administrative burden by submitting an application for a financial contribution from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic budget in electronic form directly to the social services information system. The provisions of the Act concerning the information system of social services will enter into force on 1 January 2021. The information system of social services will also collect data (including personal) on individual recipients of social services in reliance on the assistance of another person (including children), while the subject of data collection will also include data on the age, gender, residence and selected health-related data. For other types of social services, these data will be equally available, but not from the point of view of individuals but within the total number of recipients of social services for individual providers of social services. Selected personal data (age, gender, residence, degree of dependence) will also be available from the records of self-governing bodies (municipalities and higher territorial units) on persons on whom a decision on dependence on social services has been issued.

4. The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “MJ SR”), through its analytical centre, collects statistical data, which it uses within its sector to streamline court proceedings, operational management of the ministry, the evaluation of quality and speed of court proceedings and decision-making, the evaluation of court work results, evaluation of valid legal amendments and preparation of bills and other generally binding legal regulations, preparation of conceptual and strategic materials of the Ministry. Judicial statistics at the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic are governed by the Instruction 2/2018 of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic of 5 February 2018 on court statistics, which is approved by the Minister of Justice of the Slovak Republic. Statistics consist of the following areas: statistics on the legal results of court proceedings, which is a selection of data on the course and outcome of court proceedings; statistics on the status and movement of individual types of court agendas in courts monitor the cases received in individual types of court agendas, as well as the course and manner of their handling by courts in individual stages of court proceedings.

5. The Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force (hereinafter referred to as the “BBFP PPF”) has long strived to improve the system of their collecting and statistical reporting of data on legal and illegal migration of foreigners (including age, gender, unaccompanied minors), as this is part of the department’s tasks. These tasks are performed mainly as part of the constant adjustment of relevant information systems of the Police Force, which relate to illegal and legal migration of foreigners (IS ECU, IS MIGRA - by creating new items, new outputs broken down by age and gender for different categories of legal and illegal migration, etc.), processing and updating the methodology for

collecting data on illegal migration in IS MIGRA, training, updating and expanding the breakdown of data on legal and illegal migration in published statistical reports. These activities result from the ever-increasing demands for quality information collection and production of statistical data at both the national and European levels (European Statistics for Eurostat, FRAN Statistics for Frontex). The BBFP PPF ensures the collection, compilation and provision of Eurostat statistics in accordance with Articles 5, 6 and 7 of Regulation (EC) No. 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on Community statistics on migration and international protection. European statistics, which are regularly sent to Eurostat from individual Member States, including Slovakia, are available on the official Eurostat website.¹ At the national level, statistics on legal and illegal migration of foreigners are regularly processed in accordance with national legislation, which are published on the website of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic.² These statistical summaries (semi-annual and annual) contain a number of statistics on legal and illegal migration in various breakdowns and also include statistics on unaccompanied minors detected during illegal migration. As of 1 January 2017, we have included a new breakdown by the gender and age categories in the above-mentioned half-yearly and annual statistical reports - in addition to the basic categories of illegal migration (unauthorized crossing of the state border, unauthorized residence). Other various disaggregated statistics of the BBFP PPF are processed for official purposes within the Police Force and are accessible on the intranet page of the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force (monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, annually, cumulatively, etc.). These statistics are also provided to other entities on request (state bodies, non-governmental institutions, legal and natural persons).

6. The Information Centre for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Crime Prevention of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "IC MI SR") provides data on victims of trafficking in human beings to Eurostat and UNODC, as it collects statistical data on identified and formally identified victims of trafficking in human beings in the Slovak Republic, including child victims, in accordance with its tasks as the appointed national rapporteur for the fight against trafficking in human beings. For this purpose, it uses the information system of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic Trafficking in Human Beings, which was innovated in 2018 due to the requirements for the collection of data defined in the questionnaires from Eurostat and UNODC. The collection of statistical data on victims of trafficking in human beings includes information on the age of victims at recruitment, the gender of victims of trafficking in human beings, whether they are unaccompanied minors, records in the register of victims in the foreign national reference mechanism, cooperation with law enforcement authorities, assisted voluntary return, recruitment, travel, exploitation and assistance provided to victims of trafficking in human beings. These statistical categories (if known) are collected for both adult and child victims of trafficking in human beings. In addition, every year since 2017 the IC MI SR has been publishing the situation reports on combating trafficking in human beings

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database>

² <http://www.minv.sk/?rocenky>

with a comprehensive overview of victims, perpetrators (defendants, convicts), modus operandi and preventive activities carried out in the Slovak Republic in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

7. The collection of data in the health sector is carried out mainly on the basis of the Act No. 153/2013 Coll., on the national health information system and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended. The purpose of data processing, the list of processed data and the circle of data subjects about whom the data are processed, as well as the purpose of their provision to third parties are regulated by Annex No. 2 National Health Registers and Annex No. 3 Identification of events characterizing the health status of the population of this Act.

For the purposes of health statistics, the National Centre for Health Information processes data from national health registers, as well as national health administrative registers, reports on the detection of events characterizing the health status of the population, and statistical reports in health care according to Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic No. 74/2014 Coll. of 11 March 2014 establishing the list of reports to the national health registers, their characteristics, details of the content of the national health registers, the procedure, the methods, the scope of the reporting agents and the deadlines for reporting to the national health registers. Changes in data collection are made on an ongoing basis in connection with amendments to acts and regulations.

8. The aim of collecting, disseminating and providing statistical outputs of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic are activities related to the completion and publication of static and dynamic outputs. through various distribution channels. The outputs of the departmental statistical survey also serve to provide the best possible selection of data collection in the best interests of the child, adjustments related to the protection of children in the social field and strengthening the protection of children's lives and health in cases of violence. In this context, all necessary information (data and metadata) is collected or assembled using various collection methods (including obtaining data from existing statistical, administrative and non-statistical registers and databases) and provided to ministries and other state administration bodies performing state affairs, budgetary organizations and contributory organizations, state and public universities, municipalities, self-governing regions and social service facilities. The outputs of statistical surveys are published electronically (web application, e-mail).

9. On 1 June 2017, the Implementation Unit was established at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investments of the Slovak Republic. The aim of the Implementation Unit is to monitor the deduction of measures defined in the Revisions of Expenditures prepared by the Value for Money Department. At the same time, it helps ministries achieve results faster through accelerators. It communicates with analytical departments, but also with relevant sections or subordinate organizations of individual ministries in the interest of setting up cooperation and creating monitoring processes, or measurable indicators in connection with established measures. Since 1 August 2018, the Implementation Unit has been operating at the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic. The Government of the Slovak Republic has launched the Value for Money project, which plans to reform the rules, set up processes

and strengthen institutions that will support good decision-making in the public interest and significantly increase value for money in the Slovak public sector. One of the tools for value for money is a complete review of most public spending. In 2016, there was a revision focused on health care, transport and informatization of public administration, and in 2017 a revision of expenditures on education, labour market and social policies and the environment. Subsequently, in 2018, a second revision of expenditures on health care and revisions of expenditures on vulnerable groups, agriculture, employment and remuneration in public administration are taking place. Expenditure reviews assess the effectiveness and efficiency of spending and identify measures that increase value for money from public finances, thus enabling fiscal savings, better public services for citizens (results) and/or shifting finances to government priorities.

10. The Judicial Academy, a budgetary organization of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic, is an independent educational institution with nationwide competence, which ensures, organizes and performs training for judges, prosecutors and court officials. In line with the fulfilment of objectives of the Convention, such as the development and implementation of a comprehensive juvenile judiciary policy. The Judicial Academy within the Operational Programme Effective Public Administration implements projects with the aim of streamlining court proceedings and the associated improvement of the quality of court decisions by improving training activities in the system of training judges, prosecutors and judicial staff.

The key approach of the project is the modernization and innovation of judicial education (introduction of the so-called specialized education), consisting of dividing the target group into smaller groups according to the judicial agenda with precisely defined specific educational needs, i.e. specialization and targeted education. Organization and implementation of lifelong specialized training of judges, prosecutors and judicial officers in various areas of law, related expert areas, interdisciplinary areas, including application superstructure using innovative training methods, simulated hearing methods for functionally young judges and prosecutors, greater involvement of foreign lecturers in various areas of law.

Expert areas of law consist of specialization in digital skills, i.e. education aimed at acquiring the skills necessary for the proper exercise of the powers conferred by law in accordance with current application practice.

Lifelong specialized education:

- 60 three-day specialized educational events in family law,
- 139 two-day specialized training events,
- 60 one-day specialized (regional) training events,
- 4 specialized two-day annual conferences.

(Management of stressful situations in proceedings and decision-making in matters of minors, Sexual abuse of children and entrusted persons, Adversarial conduct of questioning of a child and entrusted person in court proceedings, Protection of victims, Effective conduct of civil proceedings and technique of hearing, Brexit - changes in judicial cooperation in civil and commercial matters, a working meeting of judges dealing with the agenda P and the agenda for the enforcement of judgements in juvenile matters, and others.)

11. Part of the research on human rights and the rights of the child was also to find out the perception of extremism and terrorism from the point of view of primary and secondary school pupils and their parents. The aim was to find out the opinions, information and personal costs of primary and secondary school students (and their parents) with manifestations of extremism and the perception of terrorism as a serious threat today. The task followed up on the issue of intolerance, violence and extremism in young people aged 12 to 18 years, which were implemented in 2010 and 2016, and this year the questionnaire was supplemented by a set of questions focused on the perception of terrorism and its impact on young people's lives in Slovakia.

12. The working group implements the following projects related to this topic and their findings are the basis for the work of the working group mentioned. The National Project "Better Public Policies through Better Knowledge of Civil Society", which is covered by the Office of the Slovak Government Plenipotentiary for Civil Society Development,³ has long focused, through using synergies, on collecting primary data on the participatory potential of children and young people throughout Slovakia, and also with the own projects of the members of the working group. Data collection has now been completed, with the analytical phase beginning, during which, also with regard to the objectives of the working group, it will analyse and evaluate the data so that they could also determining recommendations for the working group in question. The working group will keep informing about further progress and opportunities at meetings of the Committee on Children and Youth.

13. Within the project Creating Mechanisms of Participation of Children and Youth in School Decision-Making Processes and Public Policy Making, further research was carried out, supported by the Operational Programme Effective Public Administration, which is being worked on by several members of the Committee for Children and Youth - the Institute for Active Citizenship together with the Youth Council of Slovakia and the Open Society Foundation. The research took place at fifteen primary and secondary schools throughout Slovakia. It focuses on participation in the school environment (e.g. student school boards). The results of this research will also form the basis for the work of the committee's working group. Currently, the project formulates recommendations for public administration and schools so that they support the involvement of children and young people in policy-making in the school and state environment. One of the results of the project will also be the so-called A strategy for the participation of children and young people in public policy-making, which aims to cover the topic of participation of children and young people at a higher political level, in both formal and informal education, self-government and public policy-making for children and young people.

14. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic was preparing an amendment:

³ http://www.minv.sk/?ros_np_participacia

- to the Act on Financial Contributions for Compensation as well as an implementing regulation. In accordance with Art. 4 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the prepared amendments were consulted with persons with disabilities already in the preparation stage. To this end, a working group was set up, whose members were representatives of persons with disabilities, representing the interests of people with different types of disabilities, including children.

- Act No. 305/2005 Coll. on the social and legal protection of children and on social guardianship and on the amendments to certain acts as well as an implementing regulation. A working group of representatives of facilities, both state and non-state ones, was set up to prepare a bill as well as to prepare an implementing regulation. Following the agreement of the representatives of all facilities, a solution was formed - a proposal to create a new type of multifunctional facility, which would create conditions for the development of outpatient and field measures and voluntary stays for professional work - a centre for children and their families from today's orphanages, crisis centres and resocialization centres, of course under the conditions laid down by law.

At the same time, draft legislation was submitted for assessment to the Committee for Persons with Disabilities and the Committee for Children and Youth (the committees are part of the Slovak Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality).

15. Within the framework of the National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for the years 2014–2020, a measure was adopted aimed at “reassessing the nature, purpose, substance and financing of the early intervention service”. The conclusions of the implementation of this measure were reflected in the amendment to the Social Services Act, made with effect from 1 January 2018 by Act No. 331/2017 Coll.

For the purpose of coordination, development, accessibility and sustainability of the early intervention service, another measure was taken within the National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for 2014–2020 - “Support the development, accessibility and sustainability of the early intervention service”. The early intervention service requires the cross-cutting participation of experts from several fields. For this reason, a working group was set up at the level of the State Secretary of the Ministry, consisting also of representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, providers of early intervention services and, last but not least, parents of children to whom this service are provided. The purpose of the early intervention service is ultimately to influence the development of a child with a disability, taking into account his or her individual and specific needs, and to teach them to make the most of impaired functions and create compensation mechanisms for lost abilities. This is not possible without the involvement of experts in relevant areas and cooperation of the child's family in providing care for a child with special needs and by stimulating their development and the support for the family in coping with the child's disability.

- Act 448/2008 Coll. on social services, as amended, is part of social security law. Social services are provided in the public interest, as specialized activities aimed in principle at eliminating and mitigating the consequences of an unfavourable social situation, preventing,

addressing and mitigating it, in the interest of social inclusion of an individual - natural person, family or community, or preventing their social exclusion.

- The Social Services Act creates the same legal conditions for public and non-public social service providers as regards entry in the register of social service providers on the same legal basis, and their rights and obligations as a social service provider.
- The financing of social services is multi-source, and the sources of co-financing of social services are based on differences between the legal forms of public and non-public social service providers, which limit their management.
- If a municipality or a higher territorial unit provides a social service through a non-public social service provider, it is obliged by law to provide financial contributions to such provider under the conditions stipulated by law, namely a financial contribution to the operation of social services provided (FPP) and a financial contribution in the event of a natural person dependence on the assistance from another natural person in self-service activities (FPO). The Social Services Act stipulates the method of determining FPO and FPP, which provides in the relevant territorial district the financial support for the provision of social services of the relevant type of social service and the form of social service and capacity of social service facilities to non-public providers of this social service from funds of a municipality or higher territorial unit, adequate for such resource provision of a comparable social service operated by public providers of this social service. As the provision and ensuring social services is a self-governing competence of municipalities and higher territorial units, the Ministry cannot influence the provision of FPP and FPO in relation to specific non-public providers of social services of a particular type of social service in a specific place of its provision, or social services provided to a specific target group of people.
- The financial support of social service providers in social service facilities conditioned by dependence from the state budget by providing a financial contribution for co-financing of these social services by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic is established in the Social Services Act for public and non-public social service providers on the same legal basis, in accordance with the commitment arising from the Programme Statement of the Government of the Slovak Republic for 2016–2020 “to streamline the system of multi-source financing of social services, by introducing a contribution according to the degree of dependence for all founders equally”.
- The method of determining and the amount of financial contribution for the provision of social services in facilities conditioned by dependence provided by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic is stipulated in the Social Services Act on the same basis for both public and non-public social service providers in these social service facilities and takes into account complexity of personal care for recipients of social services. In the method of determining this financial contribution, legal conditions are created so that the amount of provided financial contribution reflects as much as possible the real structure of social service recipients according to their degree of dependence, thus ensuring differentiation of co-financing level of specific social service providers in specific social service facilities, according to specific conditions of complexity (cost) of providing social services given by the structure of recipients of provided social services in terms of the degree of their material and time dependence on personal assistance and support.
- Social services provided by a non-public social service provider may be financed from:

- a) the financial contribution for a natural person's dependence on the assistance of another natural person in self-service (FPO) and from the financial contribution for the operation of social service (FPP) provided from the budget of a municipality or from the budget of a higher territorial unit within their scope of competence under the conditions established by the Social Services Act, b) payments for social services from the recipient of social services on the basis of a contract on the provision of social services and payments for other activities that are not regulated by the Social Services Act and increase the quality of social services specified in a special contract,
- c) the state budget through the budget chapter of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, namely from the 1st financial contribution for the provision of social services in facilities conditioned by dependence (supported housing facility, facility for elderly, care service facility, rehabilitation centre, social service home, specialized facility, day hospital), and from the 2nd financial contribution for the provision of social services in dormitories,
- d) the sources of public health insurance for the payment of nursing care in social service facilities referred to in Section 35, 36, 38 and 39 of the Social Services Act (facility for the elderly, nursing home facility, social service home, specialized facility) on the basis of a concluded contract on the provision of nursing care in social service facilities with the relevant health insurance company according to regulations in the field of health care - to the extent of lump sum payment for a specified minimum number of beds for individual self-governing regions (new legislation with effect from 1 January 2018 established by Act No. 351/2017 Coll. amending Act No. 576/2004 Coll., on health care, services related to the provision of health care and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "Act No. 576/2004 Coll."), Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic No. 20/2018 Coll., which establishes the minimum number of beds for the purpose of the provision of nursing care in social service facilities and facilities of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship and the calculation of the minimum number of beds for the relevant health insurance company according to the share of its policyholders in the total number of policyholders according to the relevant self-governing region),
- e) from the own resources of a non-public social service provider,
- f) from funds received on the basis of a written donation contract,
- g) from profits coming from business activities after taxation by income tax, which is performed by a non-public social service provider according to special legislation,
- h) from profits from a social enterprise,
- i) from other sources, e.g. from tax allocation, using the legal possibilities of the Employment Services Act, as an employer, through active labour market measures and related contributions, using possibility of financing by providing non-repayable financial contributions through operational programmes, e.g. Human Resources (ESF), or through the IROP, the use of subsidies to support the development of social services within the competence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

16. Act No. 274/2017 Coll. on victims of crime, as amended by Act No. 231/2019 Coll. regulates the rights, protection and support of victims of crimes, relations between the state and entities providing assistance to victims and financial compensation to victims of violent

crime. The law also defines a particularly vulnerable victim, which includes, among other entities, a child, i.e. a person under the age of 18 years. The law regulates the conditions for the provision of professional assistance to victims and the prohibition against secondary victimization or repeated victimization of victims of crime. An entity providing assistance to victims that is interested in providing professional assistance and obtaining a subsidy for this activity under the Victims Act must be granted accreditation. If an entity providing assistance to victims has received a subsidy under the Victims Act or special legislation, it is obliged to provide general professional assistance to victims for a period of 90 days free of charge, if this is justified by the seriousness of the crime committed, regardless of the filing of a criminal report or its active participation in criminal proceedings. A particularly vulnerable victim has the right to the provision of specialized professional assistance, which is provided free of charge by the victim support entity for a period of 90 days and, at the request of the victim, even after that period. The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic has granted accreditation to 11 entities providing assistance to victims, of which 8 entities are engaged in the provision of specialized professional assistance with a target group including children.

17. The IC MI SR, which is an administrator of the specialized Programme for the Support and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (hereinafter referred to as the “programme”), cooperates with a non-governmental/international organization (non-governmental sector), which is currently contracted by the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic for the provision of the programme services, the provision of services of assisted voluntary return to victims of trafficking in human beings and services on the National Helpline for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings 0800 800 818 (hereinafter referred to as the “National Helpline”). In order to improve the above services, joint coordination and implementation, there is a regular platform (meetings on a quarterly basis), which is attended by NGOs and representatives of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, as well as other invited ministries or other bodies/institutions, according to current issues being solved. The programme itself, assisted voluntary returns and services on the national hotline are financed from a special budget chapter of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic designated and allocated for these purposes.

18. The area of systematic involvement of civil society, including non-governmental organizations (hereinafter referred to as the “NGOs”) and children’s organizations in the planning, implementation, monitoring, policy evaluation and providing the necessary funding for NGOs is also provided by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the public in preparing legislative and non-legislative documents. For example, Act No. 525/2010 Coll. on the provision of subsidies within the competence of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, as amended, enables civil societies, non-governmental organizations and organizations for children to participate directly in national programmes, action plans and strategies within which the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic publishes calls and conditions for drawing funds from the budgetary chapter of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic. The involvement of civil society in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes related to children’s rights is ensured through the Slovak Government Council for Crime Prevention, the Expert Group for

Children and Youth Crime Prevention, the Committee for Preventing and Eliminating Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance and the Expert Group on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, where representatives of civil society are actively represented and co-participate in crime prevention activities, including in areas involving children as a risk group of population in the field of crime prevention. The financing of non-governmental organizations is provided annually through calls for subsidies from the state budget in the area of crime prevention, while the supported projects are in line with the priorities of the Crime Prevention Strategy and other anti-social activities in the Slovak Republic for 2016–2020.

19. Within the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, the youth department deals with informal education, which from parts of the final recommendations continuously implements and also assesses and considers possibilities for their implementation. In 2018, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic supported the Edah civic association with a subsidy for the provision of an educational event in the field of extremism prevention. The main activity of this association is the education of students, teachers and the general lay and professional public and the organization of educational events aimed at acquainting the public with Jewish culture and the history of the Holocaust. In the field of informal education in youth work and work with children and youth as such, or work with young people outside formal education, the implementation covers the following areas:

20. For the area of youth work and for entities operating in this area, subsidies are provided through the Youth Programmes for 2014-2020. The subsidy scheme includes 6 sub-programmes within which subsidies are also provided to organizations implementing projects focused on children and youth in the field of human rights, social inclusion, bullying and cyberbullying, participation, health, education, and others. These are, for example, directly educational projects on this topic (for young people, as well as for workers with youth) or other types of projects and activities, which also include topics related to the Final Recommendations of the UN Committee. One of the goals of the Youth Programmes is also social inclusion, and in providing subsidies, emphasis is also placed on activities supporting young people with fewer opportunities, including socially disadvantaged youth. Supported organizations working with youth are also involved, as part of their activities, in various types of campaigns, which bring the above topics closer to the public, and also carry out various types of research and surveys from the provided subsidy.

21. IUVENTA - The Slovak Youth Institute (hereinafter referred to as “IUVENTA”) as a directly managed organization (hereinafter referred to as “DMO”) of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic continuously implements various training activities for youth and youth workers. As part of these activities, we can specifically mention, for example, the accredited education Education of Roma Leaders in Youth Work or the evaluation training Roma Leaders in Youth Work II or the training Prevention of Generic-based Violence, Prevention of Socio-pathological Phenomena,

Education Reflecting Needs of Young People with Disabilities, Youth For Human Rights, and others. These are topics which are largely addressed in the recommendations presented and which will continue to be the subject of IUVENTA's work. IUVENTA also started, on the basis of the authorization from the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, implementing the School without Hate programme for primary and secondary schools in Slovakia which follows on from the campaign No Hate on the Council of Europe website. The aim of the programme is to implement a quality standard in the field of prevention of bullying, cyberbullying and hate speech at primary and secondary schools, which after meeting the conditions and completing the programme with the help of experts in the given field will receive a certificate proving the quality standard achieved. A pilot year of this programme took place in 2018, and as the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic is aware of the importance and seriousness of these topics, the financial support was increased for 2019 and also the number of participating schools, and the intention for the future is to provide this programme to the highest possible number of schools, which will help implement the UN final recommendations.

22. The on-demand audiovisual media service, the programme service and their components shall not

a) interfere with human dignity and the fundamental rights and freedoms of others with the way of their elaboration and content,

b) promote violence and incite, in an open or hidden form, hatred, disparage or defame on grounds of gender, race, skin colour, language, religion and belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, nationality or ethnic group.

The compliance with these obligations is overseen by the Broadcasting and Retransmission Council, which may impose a sanction in the event of non-compliance in the form of penalty, obligation to broadcast the announcement of a breach of law, suspension of broadcasting all or part of the programme, suspension of the provision of the programme through on-demand audiovisual media services, and if the broadcaster - despite any imposed sanctions - repeatedly intentionally and seriously violates the obligations stipulated in Section 19 para. 1 letter b), the Broadcasting and Retransmission Council shall revoke its licence.

23. Regarding the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Act in RTVS (the Radio and Television of Slovakia), we would like to point out the provision of Section 3 para. 3 letter c) of Act No. 532/2010 Coll. on radio and television of Slovakia and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended, according to which the RTVS programme service consists of news, journalistic, documentary, dramatic, musical, sports, entertainment and educational programmes, programmes for children and youth and other programmes that develop national awareness and cultural identity of the population of the Slovak Republic, regardless of gender, race, skin colour, language, age, religion and belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, nationality or ethnic group, property, family or other status so that these programmes reflect the diversity of views, political, religious, philosophical and artistic trends and so that they support the development of civil and knowledge-based society.

24. Anti-discrimination measures are also contained in the RTVS internal regulations. The Statute of RTVS programme staff and collaborators also includes anti-discrimination among the principles of the RTVS programme service.⁴

25. The Code of Ethics for Internet Communication states in point 2.2.1: RTVS employees are obliged to adhere to the principle of social responsibility in their communication via the Internet. The principle of social responsibility requires to refrain from disseminating such content that is in conflict with the valid legislation of the Slovak Republic. Such content shall be deemed to be, in particular, such content:

- a) which interferes with human dignity and the fundamental rights and freedoms of others,
- b) which promotes violence and incites, in an open or hidden way, hatred, disparages or defames on grounds of gender, race, skin colour, language, religion and belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, nationality or ethnic group.

26. An effective and long-term financial instrument to support social inclusion and cohesion is the subsidy programme of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic “Culture of Disadvantaged Groups”, which enables to meet and develop the cultural needs of people with disabilities and otherwise disadvantaged groups of population. In the years 2014–2016, a total of EUR 375,300 was redistributed annually within the subsidy programme Culture of Disadvantaged Groups. In 2017, EUR 980,000 was allocated to support culturally disadvantaged groups under this grant programme. This grant programme supports cultural activities of people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups of the population, including the cultural activities of these people and groups, including the promotion of equal opportunities, integration into society, prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, discrimination, racism, xenophobia and extremism, promoting education for tolerance, strengthening social and family cohesion and developing intercultural dialogue. In addition to supporting live culture, the subsidy programme also supports the publication of periodicals, which contributes to creating equal opportunities in cultural activities and provides information on the life and culture of people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups of population, and publishing non-periodicals in the field of fiction and original, professional and translation literature, publishing electronic media and publishing websites developing cultural activities of persons with disabilities or otherwise disadvantaged groups of the population.

27. Within the framework of strengthening non-discrimination, tolerance and non-violence, organizations under the founding competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic perform important tasks (especially in the field of development, protection and support of cultural rights of marginalized groups and dissemination of information in the field of intercultural dialogue), for example:

- The National Education Centre publishes the journal Social Prevention, which reflects various topics related to negative social phenomena (including xenophobia, racism and

⁴ <http://cdn.srv.rtvs.sk/a542/file/item/sk/0000/statut-programovych-pracovnikov-a-spolupracovnikov-rtvs.52.pdf>

extremism, intolerance, discrimination, and all forms of violence), and regularly carries out training activities in the regions for staff performing cultural and educational activities. The magazine is available free of charge via the Internet at the website www.nocka.sk. - The Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica, within the framework of continuous education of teachers, implements an accredited educational programme Ethnic Purge, Genocide, Racial Intolerance in History for Teachers of History, Civics, Social Studies and Ethical Education, which brings not only new expertise into the solution to the Jewish question in Slovakia in the years 1939–1945, the solution to the Jewish question in Europe during World War II, persecution of Roma in Slovakia, but also reflects on modern manifestations of racism, neo-Nazism and xenophobia and improves the key professional competencies of teachers in working with historical sources and the oral history method. All year-long, the museum organizes an interactive educational programme for primary school students entitled “Suitcase number” ... focused on the issue of the solution to the Jewish question in Slovakia in the years 1939–1945, modern extremism and racism.

- A significant contribution to the majority’s awareness of the Roma culture is the National Project Documentation and Information Centre of Roma Culture in the State Scientific Library in Prešov, which contributes to the elimination of prejudices and stereotypes. The aim of the project is to build a digital database of Roma culture. The task of the Documentation and Information Centre of Roma Culture is to gather comprehensive information on Roma culture, history, language, traditions and other areas of life of the Roma community in one place and to create a unique access to necessary and required information on everything related to Roma issues.

28. The prohibition of discrimination against persons while ensuring the full independence, impartiality and effectiveness of the monitoring body within the competence of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic is provided for in Section 11 of Act No. 576/2004 Coll. Everyone has the right to health care.

- The right to the provision of health care is equally guaranteed to everyone in accordance with the principle of equal treatment in health care and in the provision of goods and services laid down in special legislation.

- In accordance with the principle of equal treatment, discrimination on grounds of gender, religion or belief, race, citizenship, nationality, ethnic group, sexual orientation, marital or family status, skin colour, language, political or other opinion, trade union activity, national or social origin, disability, age, property, family or other status is also prohibited.

The Health Care Surveillance Authority (hereinafter referred to as the “HCSA”) pursuant to Act No. 581/2004 Coll. on health insurance companies, supervision of health care and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 581/2004 Coll.”) is an independent body which, pursuant to Section 18 para. 1 letter b) of this Act, supervises the provision of health care.

29. The joint international pilot project of the Council of Europe and the European Commission “INSCHOOL - Inclusive Schools: Real change for Roma children” in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak

Republic. At the end of 2017 and the beginning of 2018, an initial communication between the Council of Europe/European Commission and the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “Minister”) took place and after its approval, a National Working Group was established.

30. On 9 July 2019, the 2nd working meeting of the National Working Group of the pilot project “INSCHOOL“ took place, which is being implemented in 5 countries. The subject of the meeting was the evaluation of the 1st phase of project implementation at 7 primary schools in the Slovak Republic and a discussion on the proposal for the 2nd phase of the pilot project. Given the interest of school representatives, their founders and after the initial phase of self-evaluation of schools on the basis of the inclusion index, preparation of school development plans and identification of positive benefits, at the end of the meeting it was agreed to continue the INSCHOOL project phase 2 from September 2019 to December 2020.

31. In recent years, intercultural dialogue, an integrated, inclusive model of education and upbringing, has been promoted at schools. One of the tasks of eliminating existing forms of discrimination and stigmatizing Roma at schools is the gradual approximation, the integration of students from the marginalized Roma communities (MRCs) into standard classes. Various researches show that integration and inclusion in the school environment are long-term processes and, inter alia, cannot be achieved without textbooks. The National Institute for Education has published the textbook entitled Roma Culture, which is intended for secondary school teachers and students. The textbook will help teachers in their demanding work and guide them to other sources of information from which they can draw in educating students.⁵

32. Based on the initiative of the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities, the Institute for Research of Work and Family carried out the Research analysis of the situation of same-sex couples and parents - obstacles to the exercising of rights within the partnership and the upbringing of children (The authors: Silvia Porubánová, Andrej Kuruc, Jana Jablonická - Zezulová). The aim of the research analysis was to find and select a sample of respondents (LGB couples and parents), preparation of the topic, scenario, structure of interviews with selected respondents and conducting interviews with regard to obstacles in implementing rights in partnership and upbringing of children. The results of the research analysis are intended for policy makers who have an impact on addressing the situation of such couples, as well as for the general public, which largely does not know any LGBT people in their area and conversations with them can bring them closer to their lives. As part of the research analysis, 10 interviews were conducted with same-sex couples, which were analysed in terms of the obstacles they experience in partnership, and final findings and recommendations were prepared for state institutions.

33. The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic, within the subsidy scheme for the promotion, support and protection of human rights and freedoms and for the prevention of all

⁵ <http://www.statpedu.sk/sk/o-organizacii/projekty/spolu-romami-dosiahneme-viac/>
<http://www.statpedu.sk/sk/o-organizacii/projekty/erasmus/>

forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other manifestations of intolerance, financially supports projects of non-governmental organizations focused on any of the above areas. Since 2017, one of the priority areas has been the prevention of youth radicalization and the fight against extremism. In 2018, 20 projects were supported, in which the target group included children and youth. The projects were focused on raising awareness on various topics (radicalization, extremism, the Holocaust, etc.), peer education. In 2019, projects related to the topics of 2018 were supported, as well as new projects dedicated to work with children and youth. Within the subsidy scheme, the Child Safety Line was also supported in the years 2017–2019, providing non-stop counselling for children and youth.

34. Trends in the field of extremism and radicalization were presented by trainers of the National Anti-Terrorist Unit of the National Criminal Agency of the Presidium of the Police Force (hereinafter referred to as the “NATU NCA PPF”) at a thematic meeting of the European Migration Network in Piešťany (lecture on “Prevention of unsuccessful integration of persons granted international protection in the Slovak Republic”) at the summer academy of the non-profit organization ETP Slovakia, which provides comprehensive social services to vulnerable groups and individuals facing social exclusion due to their ethnicity, race, nationality or social status (lecture on “Extremism and radicalization“ for the Roma community in Drienica) and at the conference of the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic in Piešťany on the integration of foreigners (lecture on “Profiles of persons prone to radicalization”).

35. The priority No. 3. “Crime prevention in risk groups“ Strategies for crime prevention and other anti-social activities in the Slovak Republic for 2016-2020 include mainly children and youth, socially excluded communities, health and physical disabilities, prevention of committing crimes relating to the gender-, race- and religion-based hatred, prevention of crime against LGBT persons and prevention of drug addiction in general. In addition to providing subsidies for trainings, workshops and conferences, the Crime Prevention Department of the Office of the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic participates in raising awareness of valid legislation in the Slovak Republic by organizing its own trainings, workshops and conferences, as well as in cooperation with NGOs intended for primary and secondary school students. It also raises awareness through appearances in television and radio programmes.

36. Education Action Plan

The global goal of this action plan is to reduce any differences in the educational level of Roma compared to the common population by improving the access of children, pupils and students from Roma communities to quality education at all levels of education. The partial objectives are to increase the training of children from Roma communities in pre-primary education, support early care programmes, increase the share of pupils from Roma communities in regular primary school classes, improve the results of pupils from Roma communities and also prevent the establishment of primary schools in which pupils from marginalized Roma communities would concentrate. The stated objectives follow the individual activities of the action plan in this area.

37. The National Project PRIM (inclusion project in kindergartens).

The aim of this project from the Operational Programme Human Resources is to create an inclusive environment in kindergartens and increase the number of children from marginalized communities, especially Roma in kindergartens. This measure is intended to increase the educational level of members of these communities. The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic/the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities provides municipalities involved in the project with funds to perform the work of teacher assistants, professional staff and the coordinator of inclusive education. Eligible users of the NP PRIM include 150 municipalities identified in the Operational Programme Human Resources. An important legislative measure that we have been pushing for in this regard for a long time is also the introduction of compulsory pre-school attendance, which especially, but not only, in the case of children from marginalized Roma communities can ensure a smoother transition of children from home to primary school. The adaptation of children in the school environment and education has the potential to contribute to their further employment in the labour market, and thus to the gradual emergence from the circle of generational poverty.

38. The NP CC in towns and villages with the presence of marginalized Roma communities (MRCs).

One of the goals of the project is the socio-economic integration of marginalized communities, especially marginalized Roma communities, increasing their financial literacy, employability and employment. The community centres are also a suitable space for children from marginalized communities, who, under the guidance of professional staff - social workers, can participate in activities in accordance with the established community plan.

39. The National Project “Improving the situation of marginalized Roma communities in the field of social determinants of health through the implementation and development of health mediation and education in marginalized Roma communities”, which focused on supporting the systematic provision of services and assistance through the programme of community workers in health education in municipalities with the presence of separated and segregated MRCs. Within this call, the conditions improved (reporting is carried out through MU P0268 Number of persons from MRCs who used services in the field of providing health education and counselling) for 12,391 persons from the MRC environment who used services in the field of providing health education, prevention and counselling.

40. Calls for “improved forms of housing for municipalities with the presence of marginalized Roma communities with elements of transition housing”, calls for “local roads and related elements to improve the availability of services for MRC residents”, where the approval process is currently underway, calls for “support for access to drinking water in the environment of separated and segregated marginalized Roma communities“, where we supported 35 projects (municipalities) in the total amount of EUR 2,524,332 (EU resources), and calls aimed at “building, or completion of the system of separate collection and removal of municipal waste and implementation of remediation works of illegal landfills, including the

elimination of adverse effects of illegal landfills”, where 132 projects worth EUR 14,913,391 have been contracted so far (EU resources). Within the framework of the above-mentioned calls, the conditions for Roma children will improve to their reasonable standard of living.

41. Social services of crisis intervention at the community level were first supported through the ESF in 2014 (01/2014–11/2015) through the National Project Community Centres with an allocation of EUR 17,173,522.80. The National Project Community Centres (hereinafter referred to as “NP CC”) created the preconditions for building a network of community centres for persons who are socially excluded or at risk of social exclusion, especially residents of the MRCs, including children. The NP CC contributed to the reduction of poverty and the rate of social exclusion. The main goal of the national project was and is to support social inclusion and positive changes in communities with special emphasis on marginalized Roma communities. Within the implementation of the NP CC, the expansion of social work performance through community centres and standardization of the performance of CC activities were achieved, which improved the provision of services to clients and increased the extent of activities in support of social inclusion, and the number of socially excluded persons or persons threatened with social exclusion also increased, who are provided with services in the CC, which are otherwise insufficient or are not provided to the target group at all. The activities were and are focused on social counselling, social rehabilitation, assistance in exercising rights and legally protected interests, educational - preventive, educational and activation activities, mediation of contact with the social environment, low-threshold programmes for children and youth, preschool training, early care programmes, hobby and other activities. The mission of the CC is to contribute to the social inclusion of socially excluded persons, both at the individual and local levels, by providing comprehensive social and community services. At present, CCs are already defined in Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on social services as a social service, i.e. that the registration of a community centre in the register of social service providers creates a tool for verifying the functioning, control and quality of the services provided by community centres. Project implementation and registration of community centres as social services helped to unify and harmonize the functioning of community centres according to uniform principles. CURRENT NP (2015–2019) Support of selected social services of crisis intervention at the community level (NP SSSSCICL) Eligible territory: the whole of Slovakia, except for “150 municipalities“ from PO 5 and possible adjustments Allocation on call (EU and state budget resources): EUR 20,915,000 108 - number of service providers and measures for the purposes of social inclusion 384 - supported jobs 39,338 - number of persons who used new, innovative services or measures for the implementation of social inclusion services PREPARED NP (2019–2023) Professional capacity building at the community level (PCBCL) NP PCBCL will have one main activity - Building professional capacities of selected social services of crisis intervention at the community level - support for streamlining current SSSCI tools (CC/NDC/NSSDR) in order to increase the effectiveness of their activities in the context of activities of various actors of crisis intervention at the community level. The ultimate goal is to provide quality professional support for individuals and families at risk of poverty and social exclusion leading to self-help solutions to their social problems, as well as support for the development of entire communities, through the targeted use of community resources.

Eligible territory: the whole of Slovakia, except for “150 municipalities“ from PO 5 and possible adjustments Allocation on call (EU and state budget resources): EUR 21,227,287.26

42. In 2017, through the organization Healthy Regions under the auspices of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, a space was created for the implementation of activities for the inhabitants of marginalized Roma communities (hereinafter referred to as the “MRC”) in the field of health promotion. One of the main activities in this respect is the implementation of the National Project Healthy Communities 2A (hereinafter referred to as “NP HC2A”) financed from the European Structural and Investment Funds. The aim of the organization is to implement measures and programmes that will have a major impact on reducing health inequalities and at the same time bring significant improvements in access to health services, information, contribute to increasing health literacy and responsibility of individuals for their health and also contribute to integration of excluded groups of the population into the society. The main goal of NP HC 2A is to improve the situation in the field of social determinants of health and the development of health mediation in the MRC. The project implementation period is 2017–2019. The project is implemented in the territory of seven regions of Slovakia in 263 municipalities and cities. The number of health educational assistants (hereinafter referred to as “HEAs”) is 253, the number of coordinators of health education assistants (hereinafter referred to as “CHEAs”) is 24 and the number of HEAs in the hospital environment is 8. The implementation of relevant activities of NP HC 2A contributes mainly to building human capacities in the MRC (increasing employment and qualifications in the MRC) and introducing health support in the MRC within the scope of the current model of health mediation (improving access to health care by reducing internal barriers, increasing participation in preventive examinations and compulsory vaccination, ensuring early identification of infectious diseases, raising awareness of health and health care, improving communication and relations between MRCs and healthcare providers, increasing trust in the health system, increasing the number of nursing mothers, improving the personal and communal hygiene level, improving information on over-the-counter medicines and their use, etc.).

43. In recent years, the concentration of extremist crime has been seen mainly in cyberspace. It is most often manifested by the publication of aggressive and hate speech towards minorities in discussion in the Internet forums, by showing sympathies for undemocratic regimes, the publication of forbidden symbols on social networks, and the like. In 2018, the field of migration and events that shook Slovakia and increased tensions in society were also very topical subjects for the spread of hate speech. These events included the murder of journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová and the media coverage of the activities of the Noční vlci (Night Wolves) motorcycle club in Slovakia. When monitoring the activities of extremist manifestations on the Internet, the Police Force registers the increased caution of participants in communication on social networks, which can be justified by the targeted repressive activities of the Police Force in this area of extremist crime.

44. The CRAX was established on the basis of the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 158 of 2 March 2011 as one of the committees of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality. It is an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic specifically focused on the prevention and elimination of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other similar forms of intolerance in society. It is a supra-ministerial advisory body in which the ministries concerned, independent institutions, experts as well as civil society are represented. The issue of racism, xenophobia and extremism, their effective prevention and elimination interferes with the competence of several ministries and requires a coordinated and conceptual approach that synergistically connects the activities of different entities. Within the activities of individual CRAX entities, the verification of those groups of the population is ensured that are exposed to the risk of radicalization, e.g. in the form of discussions at schools

45. The Judicial Academy provided training in the topic of hate speech and hate crime: in 2017, three training activities and the total number of participants was 86; in 2018 it organized 4 activities for 138 participants, and in 2019 there were two activities for 41 participants. As part of ensuring the quality of work of specialized bodies for the conduct of prosecution of hate crimes, training was carried out in cooperation with the ODIHR under the TAHCLE (for investigators) and PAHCT (for special prosecutors and judges) programmes.

46. In accordance with the tasks set out in the Concept of Combating Extremism in the Slovak Republic in the conditions of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic and the Police Force for the years 2015-2019 for 2018, the NATU NCA PPF staff performed the following:

- Elaboration of the methodological manual “Crimes of Extremism”, which provides a comprehensive overview of the issues of crimes of extremism and racially motivated crime and aims to bring closer the uniform approach of the Police Force members in detecting, clarifying, documenting and investigating crimes of extremism so that the purpose of criminal proceedings is secured.

- Elaboration of two methodological materials, namely “Guidelines on the procedure before the prosecution and during the preparatory proceedings for the investigation of hate crimes” and “Guideline setting minimum standards of documents necessary for a properly drafted implementation proposal to initiate prosecution in matters of extremism crimes” in order to unify and streamline the activities of the unit’s police officers.

- Regular organization of meetings of an inter-ministerial working group of experts aimed at eliminating racially motivated crime, extremism and spectator violence. The meetings were mainly focused on reassessing the need for changes in various legal regulations in order to combat extremism more effectively (e.g. Act No. 190/2003 on firearms and ammunition, Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 372/1990 Coll. on offences and Act No. 84/1990 Coll. on the right of assembly).

- the NATU provided trainers on the issue of extremism crimes at Operational-investigative activities courses for newly admitted members of criminal police departments held at the

Police Force Secondary Vocational School in Devínska Nová Ves. During the courses held in 2018, about 90 members of the Police Force were trained on the issues of extremism, racism, intolerance, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and aggressive nationalism. Approximately 40 service psychologists working in individual departments of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic were also trained on this issue. Trends in the field of extremism and radicalization were presented at a thematic meeting of the European Migration Network in Piešťany (lecture on “Prevention of unsuccessful integration of beneficiaries of international protection in the Slovak Republic”), at the summer academy of NGO ETP Slovakia - Centre for Sustainable Development during the lecture for Roma community Slovakia in Drienice (lecture on “Extremism and radicalization”), in the Centre for Terrorism Prevention in Warsaw (lecture on “Signs of radicalization, ways to detect them and possibilities of prevention”), at the conference of the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic on foreigner integration in Piešťany (lecture on “Profiles of people prone to radicalization”).

- In May, the NATU organized instructional and methodical employment for NATU members, extremism specialists from the OKP Regional Directorate of the Police Force and the Railway Police focused on current trends in the development of radicalization and criminal extremism and getting acquainted with the minimum standards of documents necessary to process the implementation draft to initiate prosecution in matter of extremist crimes. 75 members of the above-mentioned Police Force departments took part in the subject instructional and methodological employment in question. In this context, the NATU has drawn up a guideline “Minimum scope of documents for implementation proposals concerning suspicions of extremist crimes under Section 140a of the Criminal Code in a virtual environment”, which was sent to the departments concerned.

- In order to make the fight against extremism in the Slovak Republic more effective, the NATU concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the NGO Digital Intelligence (DigiQ) on 20 September 2018, which regulates mutual cooperation between the NATU and the company DigiQ in monitoring cyberspace, especially social networks, in order to detect and solve hate speeches.

- In November 2018, a training of TAHCLE programme trainers took place in the premises of the Academy of the Police Force in Bratislava. The purpose of this programme is to educate law enforcement authorities in the fight against hate crime. The aim of the training is to improve police skills in preventing and responding to hate crimes, work effectively with victims and build trust in investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies. The OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) has entrusted the ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) with the task of developing programmes to assist participating States in the fight against hate crime. To this end, the Office has developed training for law enforcement authorities in the fight against hate crime - TAHCLE. The training was attended by two representatives of the NATU. The lecturers of the training programme were experts from ODIHR.

47. The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic within the Judicial Academy and the Institute of Education provides year-round and lifelong training of [judges](#), [prosecutors](#) and

[court officials](#). Educational projects, including sensitization of the public and professionals working with victims of crime, further supporting tolerance, democratic values and eliminating the influences that lead to intolerance and discrimination, are financially supported annually by the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic within the call for human rights support. The Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic also annually supports, through subsidies, the provision of professional assistance to victims of crime by accredited entities in accordance with the Act on Victims.

48. The Slovak Trade Inspection (hereinafter referred to as the “STI”) regularly performs inspections of products intended for children, focused primarily on the commodity of toys. The performance of controls is closely related to the information on dangerous and non-compliant products published in the RAPEX and ICSMS systems. Since 2017, the STI has implemented inspections focused on playground equipment, bicycles, walkers, prams, plastic toys, child car seats and toys of all categories. We would also like to point out the participation of the STI in various international projects, as an example we present JA2015 Chemicals in plastic toys, JA2016 Electric toys, CASP 2019 Plush toys, CASP 2019 Slimes. In the years 2017–2018, there were more inspections, most of which are focused on several types of inspections (e.g. security, labelling). The data are therefore different. In the first half of 2019, a control action was carried out on toys of all categories. As part of this inspection, 109 operating units within the Slovak Republic were inspected. Deficiencies were found in 36 operating units (33.03% of the inspected units). As part of the inspection, 2,835 types of toys were inspected, while deficiencies were found in the designation of 221 types of toys with a total value of EUR 7,457.11. In order to verify the safety and conformity of the products, the inspectors took 22 types of toys, of which 8 types did not pass the tests for technical requirements. During this period, the customs authorities sent 28 reports to the STI. In 9 cases, inspections were carried out, in which 440 types of toys worth EUR 70,204.81 were inspected. Of these, 4 types of toys worth EUR 24.85 were not released for free circulation.

49. The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic is currently preparing a bill transposing into our legal order Directive (EU) 2018/1808 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, another legislation or administrative action in the Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) in the light of changing market conditions (hereinafter referred to as the “revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive”). This legislative proposal will also include strengthening the protection of minors from inappropriate content and extending it to video-sharing platforms.

50. The primary consideration of the best interests of children is also reflected in the Statute of RTVS programme staff and collaborators, which also includes a special approach to children and adolescents among the principles of the RTVS programme service. The Statute states in its section 3.5:

a) RTVS is very sensitive to children and adolescents when preparing and broadcasting programmes, taking into account their age and individual maturity. Any persons under the age of 18 are considered to be children and adolescents.

- b) In the event of a one-off performance of children and adolescents, RTVS shall in principle request the consent of their parents or legal representative. An exception is the recording of surveys at schools during breaks or lessons, which requires the consent of the school principal and the class teacher, who knows the individual maturity of the pupil.
- b) In case of regular performance of children and adolescents, RTVS will request in advance the written consent of parents or legal representative.
- d) Children and adolescents must not come into contact with such content of programmes that may cause them fear, or other emotional, moral or any negative effects.
- e) When making programmes with children and adolescents, it is necessary to exclude direct and indirect pressure, it is forbidden to expose them to any manipulation.
- f) RTVS is obliged to secure the safety of children and adolescents in the process of recording and broadcasting so that they do not become the object of any psychological or even physical violence.
- g) Recording and broadcasting with children and adolescents must be planned by RTVS so as not to interfere with their physical and mental development.

51. Within the Operational Programme Effective Public Administration, the Judicial Academy of the Slovak Republic has set the main goal of the project to streamline court proceedings and the associated increase in the quality of court decisions by improving training activities in the system of training judges, prosecutors and judicial staff. The key approach of the project is the modernization and innovation of judicial education (introduction of the so-called specialized education), consisting of dividing the target group into smaller groups according to the judicial agenda with precisely defined specific educational needs, i.e. specialization and targeted education.

52. In accordance with the international legal obligations of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the network of diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Slovak Republic abroad take into account the best interests of the child and subject to this the method of administrative cooperation in cases such as parental abductions, repatriations, etc. As part of the regular pre-departure training for consuls, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, in cooperation with the Centre for the International Protection of Children and Youth and the Information Centre for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Crime Prevention, provides professional training on international legal protection of children and youth.

53. The application of the best interests of the child is determined by the valid legislation of the Slovak Republic within the material competence of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, in particular Acts No. 576/2004 Coll., Act No. 578/2004 on healthcare providers, health professionals, professional organizations in health care and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 578/2004 Coll.”) by Act No. 577/2004 Coll. on the scope of health care reimbursed on the basis of public health insurance and on reimbursements for services related to the provision of health care, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the “Act No. 577/2004 Coll.”), No. 581/2004 Coll., No. 355/2007 Coll. on the protection, support and development of public health and on the

amendments to certain acts, as amended, and others, while ensuring the highest quality and safety of the health care provided to the child in the areas of disease prevention, early diagnostics and provision of effective treatment, including rehabilitation services and functionality of the public health care system aimed at the protection, promotion and development of children's public health are highly emphasized. Legislation in force.⁶

54. The University of Trnava, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, is carrying out a research task aimed at developing a test for assessing the social risk of the family for social workers. This tool is intended to objectify the assessment of the social risk of the family from the point of view of fulfilling the protection of the rights and legally protected interests of the child.

54A. Pursuant to Act No. 138/2019 Coll. on pedagogical and professional staff and on the amendment to certain acts are among the obligations of pedagogical and professional staff to protect and respect the rights of children, pupils, students and their legal representatives, maintain confidentiality and protect against misuse of personal data, health information and results of professional examinations of children, respect the individual educational needs of the child, pupil and student with regard to their abilities, possibilities, social and cultural background and recommendations of professional staff, behave in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Teachers and Professionals (Code of Ethics contains the basic framework of conduct of pedagogical and professional staff and is published and released by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic on its website). The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic issued Directive No. 36/2018 on the prevention and solution of bullying of children and pupils at schools and school facilities, which regulates, inter alia, mainly the possibilities of preventive action and methods of solving bullying of pupils in connection with the responsibility of the school and school facilities under the provisions of the Education Act. This Directive shall enter into force on 1 September 2018. According to the Directive, the headmaster is responsible for the school's systemic activities in the field of bullying prevention and involves the pupil's school board, the school board and the founder in the prevention of bullying. This Directive was issued at the request of the Commissioner for Children, addressed to the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic in 2018, to take effective measures to prevent bullying, especially to issue legislation that regulates the basic features, forms and manifestations of bullying of children and pupils, possibilities of preventive action and methods of dealing with bullying of pupils (through a written request and set out in the 2018 Report on the Activities of the Commissioner for Children)

55. Investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies within the competence of the Police Force in assessing needs of child victims fully apply Act No. 274/2017 Coll. on victims of crime and on the amendments to certain acts (hereinafter referred to as the "Victims' Act"). Pursuant to the provisions of Section 3 para. 8 of the Victims Act, investigative, prosecuting

⁶ <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2004/576/20190601>; <https://www.slov-lex.sk/vyhľadavanie-pravnych-predpisov?text=578%2F2004>, <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2007/355/20180701>

and adjudicating bodies, courts and entities providing assistance to victims of crime are obliged to take into account the best interests of the child in the case of a particularly vulnerable victim, who is a child. The Criminal Police Office of the Presidium of the Police Force annually convenes a working meeting connected with the training of designated police officers of the criminal police departments in the Slovak Republic included in the area of crime committed by youth and on youth in order to increase their professional level and exchange information and experience.

56. In cooperation with the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic regularly organizes professional seminars dedicated to equal opportunities, non-discrimination and protection of the rights of disabled people, including children, for employees and representatives of organizations within the scope of the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic. The seminars are also attended by employees working with and for children. The seminar on the topic Principle of equal treatment and personal mobility in the context of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which took place in 2018, was attended by 20 participants. The seminar on the topic Diversity in the transport and construction sector in 2019 was attended by 25 participants.

57. In the proposal of 2017, the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic pointed out the ongoing implementation of the Pilot Project of Consumer Education. On the basis of this project, lectures focused on secondary school teachers are given in cooperation with individual self-governing regions. The possibility of participants to participate in the project was presented both to schools in the founding competence of higher territorial units, as well as to private and church schools. In the second round of lectures, in addition to the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic - Department of Consumer Protection, representatives of the European Consumer Centre in the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic and the Financial Administration of the Slovak Republic also participate in the project. After completing the training activity, participants are provided with teaching aids that explain consumer rights in a simple way. Individual lectures, as well as distributed educational material, consist of an explanation of the issue using simple examples. Practical examples and simple implementation of training activities and teaching aids follow the intention to bring consumer protection closer to pupils and students, through participating teachers. In this context, the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic also wants to point out the training activities of the European Consumer Centre (hereinafter referred to as the "ECC") in the Slovak Republic, which has organized 56 educational seminars for students in the field of consumer protection since September 2017, of which 3 seminars were for pupils of the second stage of primary schools. As part of its training activities in 2019, the ECC also procured a board game "Consumer in Action".

58. The National Education Centre, an organization under the founding competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, provides regular training for workers in the field of cultural and educational activities entitled Prevention of selected socio-pathological

phenomena, which takes place twice a year. This education also includes topics related to the field of the rights of the child.

The National Education Centre is also the publisher of the professional magazine Social Prevention, which publishes topics on the issue of children's rights, including the best interests of the child. The magazine is also available to the general public via the website www.nocka.sk. As part of its publishing activities, the National Education Centre also contributed to the discussion of this topic by publishing a collection of papers from the seminar Protection and Promotion of Human Rights⁷ (2017) and the methodological material Human Rights in the Activities of Cultural Facilities⁸ (2018).

59. Within the material scope of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, the development of procedures and criteria for providing guidelines to relevant persons with the power to assess the best interests of the child is ensured in the area of acquiring professional theoretical knowledge and practical skills according to the Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic of 17 September 2010 No. 12422/2010-OL, which lays down minimum standards for specialization study programmes, minimum standards for certification study programmes and minimum standards for lifelong learning study programmes and their structure, as amended. The explicit topic of the rights of the child is the subject of a minimum standard for a specialized study programme in the specialized field of paediatrics and other specialized fields whose main specialization is paediatrics.

60. Based on the initiative of the Commissioner for Children of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, RTVS annually provides a contribution from the state budget according to the State Budget Act for the relevant budget year on the basis of a contract with the state intended for the implementation of programmes in the public interest, for the implementation of special-purpose investment projects or for the reimbursement of expenses for the ensuring of broadcasting abroad. Pursuant to this contract, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic may each year designate areas of special interest of state support for the relevant calendar year. RTVS is obliged to set aside a certain amount of the state contribution for the implementation of public interest programmes in order to implement the programme commitment that will be used for the implementation of new original programmes in the public interest in the field of special interest of state support. One of the three areas of particular interest to the state for 2019 was programmes for children to exercise their rights under the Convention.

61. The Centre for Children and Families provides a child with a safe environment in individually arranged groups, which temporarily replaces his natural environment. Child care is based on an individual and integration approach, so that the rights and opinions of the child are respected in order to actively cooperate with the child's family and closed persons.

⁷ <http://www.nocka.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Zbornik-ochrana-a-podpora-ludskych-prav-v-oblasti-kultury.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.nocka.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/FINAL-pdf.pdf>

Education is based on strengthening and activating the child's strengths and fulfilling his needs depending on the current life situation and his physical and mental condition. Through systematic and consistent planning in the individual plan of the child's personality development, which also includes an educational plan, the child's future is directed towards his independence, self-development, identity and active participation in the co-decision process and in matters affecting his or her life. The basic starting point for planning is the diagnostics of the family environment and also the comprehensive diagnostics of the current physical, psychical, mental and health condition of the child. In accordance with the points of the Decree, the Centre's programmes contain detailed and unambiguously regulated internal procedures, rules and obligations related to rights, and at the same time a defined use of educational means, so as to ensure the highest possible quality of care provided. Pursuant to Art. 12 para. 1 of the Convention, States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. Also in view of the above, children in the Centres for Children and Families are involved in the decision-making process and expressing their opinion, especially in the direction of co-decision about themselves, activities, running and intentions of a professional substitute family, a separate organized group and the whole SLPCaSG facility (e.g. "delegation" of a children's representative in submitting requests to meet their needs and interests, filing and handling complaints), involving children in the preparation and evaluation of IPROD, continuing to involve children in activities of the facility (e.g. cleaning, shopping and handling of funds, cooking, beautifying the environment, etc.), acquiring common work and self-service skills, including the involvement of young adults in activities in the facility and in general in everything related to their lives and future. Recommendations of the Commissioner for Children for redress:

- Provide in the centres for children and families personnel, financial and material-technical conditions for the performance of activities arising from the Act on Social and Legal Protection.
- Develop a system of housing for young adults as one of the social rights, the implementation of which will ensure a positive impact on the integration of children after the end of their stay in the centres for children and families and re-education facilities that do not have the opportunity to return to the family.
- Develop a concept (including a schedule) for the debarrierization of facilities for the implementation of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship so as to enable also the stay of children with severe physical disabilities.
- Create comprehensive legislative, financial and material-technical conditions for the employment of professional medical staff (paediatric psychiatrist, paediatrician, specialist nurses) in the centres for children and families, especially in specialized groups where children with disabilities are placed, as well as in re-education facilities and social service facilities for children requiring continuous health care financed by health insurance.
- Ensure systematic training of employees in all areas according to the needs of the centre for children and families.
- Also ensure, in cooperation with other organizations, regular vaccinations and the provision of preventive aids in order to protect the public health.

- Regularly evaluate and adjust the goals set in the child's development plan in order to fulfil them.
- Develop a unified methodological guideline on awareness of the child's health status.
- With regard to disability, in particular the deep range of mental disabilities with undiagnosable mental disorders, as well as the health of children in need of palliative care, which are placed in the centres for children and families, provide special facilities with extended and continuous health care.
- Exclude the Centre for Children and Families from serving as an institution providing services for children with mental disorders.
- Ensure the development of early intervention centres and cooperation of field social workers with early intervention centres.
- In order to successfully rehabilitate the family, pay attention to the placement of the child in the centre for children and families, so that it takes into account the place where the child comes from and where he has a social background.
- Involve more children in the process when choosing schools; the school should be chosen primarily as the most suitable for the child on the basis of his personal preconditions. The goal must be the child's development.
- There is a need to raise children's awareness of children's rights and human rights in all areas.
- Pay attention to children's participation in the organization of the daily programme, but also when compiling, for example, a menu.
- When providing leisure activities for children, take into account the best interests of children.

62. In the sector of labour, social affairs and family, the long-term priority goal is to enable every child (taking into account his or her age and mental maturity) to express their opinion on matters that concern him or her and then take this opinion into account when implementing SLPCaSG measures so that the best interest of the child is achieved. The child is therefore perceived as a subject and not an object of the implementation of these measures. This approach is also supported by the obligation of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family to draw up an individual plan for the development of the child's personality with the participation of the child, his or her parents and other parties involved. In 2018, monitoring of children's homes - today's centres for children and families in the field of protection and observance of children's rights was carried out, which was provided by a questionnaire method, group discussion with children, focused on children's subjective views of their own rights in the CCF in accordance with the Convention. The file documentation of children placed in the CCFs was also monitored. The findings of the monitoring mainly pointed out that the most important thing for children placed in the CCF is to maintain the contact with both their parents, and in this context the children positively assessed the created conditions of the centres for meeting of children with their parents and ensuring the contact with them which is fully financed by the state. On this basis, the implementation of insufficient, but very necessary and priority measures of the SLPCaSG was supported in the form of the so-called recommendations of the offices of labour, social affairs and family which are implemented in the given locality both by state and non-state accredited CCFs, and are fully financed by the

state. These are, in particular, measures to support the solution of educational, social and other problems in the family and interpersonal relationships, restore the development of parental skills and assess the child's situation in order to determine the child's risk, while a natural part of all these measures is finding out the child's opinion on matters that concern him or her. In 2019, the Office of the Commissioner for Children monitored the protection and observance of the rights of the child as a complex process divided into two interconnected parts. The collection of information in the introductory part was ensured by a questionnaire method and a group discussion. The questionnaires used focused on the subjective perception of children's rights in the centres for children and families in accordance with the Convention. The group discussion with children focused on obtaining information from children and emphasizing the meaning of the terms "human rights" and "children's rights". The second part of the monitoring was focused on the monitoring of children's file documentation in accordance with the Act on Social and Legal Protection. By monitoring the observance of children's rights in the centres for children and families, the Office of the Commissioner for Children visited and monitored all original children's homes and transformed centres for children and families. The information obtained has a high informative value and provides objective information on the conditions for children living in institutional facilities (in the reports of the Commissioner for Children for 2018, 2019). Based on the findings, the Commissioner for Children made recommendations to the relevant public authorities and institutions for remedy:

- Provide in the centres for children and families personnel, financial and material-technical conditions for the performance of activities arising from the Act on Social and Legal Protection.
- Develop a system of housing for young adults as one of the social rights, the implementation of which will ensure a positive impact on the integration of children after the end of their stay in the centres for children and families who do not have the opportunity to return to the family.
- Develop a concept (including a schedule) for the debarrierization of facilities for the implementation of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship so as to enable also the stay of children with severe physical disabilities.
- Create comprehensive legislative, financial and material-technical conditions for the employment of professional medical staff (paediatric psychiatrist, paediatrician, specialist nurses) in the centres for children and families, especially in specialized groups where children with disabilities requiring continuous health care are placed.
- Ensure systematic training of employees in all areas according to the needs of the centre for children and families.
- Also ensure, in cooperation with other organizations, regular vaccinations and the provision of preventive aids in order to protect the public health.
- Regularly evaluate and adjust the goals set in the child's development plan in order to fulfil them.
- Develop a unified methodological guideline on awareness of the child's health status.
- With regard to disability, in particular the deep range of mental disabilities with undiagnosable mental disorders, as well as the health of children in need of palliative care, which are located in the centres for children and families, provide special facilities with extended health care.

- Exclude the Centre for Children and Families from serving as an institution providing services for children with mental disorders.
- Ensure the development of early intervention centres and cooperation of field social workers with early intervention centres.
- In order to successfully rehabilitate the family, pay attention to the placement of the child in the centre for children and families, so that it takes into account the place where the child comes from and where he has a social background.
- Involve more children in the process when choosing schools; the school should be chosen primarily as the most suitable for the child on the basis of his personal preconditions. The goal must be the child's development.
- There is a need to raise children's awareness of children's rights and human rights in all areas.
- Pay attention to children's participation in the organization of the daily programme, but also when compiling, for example, a menu.
- When providing leisure activities for children, take into account the best interests of children.

63. In the field of developing tools for public consultations on the national policy development in order to standardize such high-level consultation on inclusion and participation, including consultations with children on matters that affect them, the health sector provides the civil society space, including NGOs and children's organizations, to participate in creation and development of departmental policies, as well as participation in training activities of the Public Health Office of the Slovak Republic and Regional Public Health Offices of the Slovak Republic within conferences, educational events, workshops organized by state institutions in the health sector or professional companies and, last but not least, participation in the activities of educational institutions - universities, especially medical and nursing faculties.

64. Several organizations under the founding competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic have created mechanisms for the active participation of children, for example:

- The National Education Centre announces and professionally guarantees national promotional competitions and shows, in which children's performers also actively participate: Šaffova ostroha (solo dancers in folk dance - children's category), Eniki beniki (children's folklore ensembles), Vidiečanova Habovka (children's musical folklore), Zlatá priadka (children's dramatic creativity), Theatre and children (adult theatre playing for children), FEDIM (youth theatre), Hviezdoslavov Kubín (artistic recitation of poetry and prose, creation of recitation groups and theatres of poetry - categories of children and youth), CINEAMA (amateur film production - category of children), AMFO (amateur photographic production - category of children), Youth sings (children and youth choirs), Divertimento musicale (non-professional instrumental music - children's and youth category), FestMlaDych (children's and youth wind music). Children's groups and individuals also present their creative and

interpretive art at national festivals - as part of the Folklore Festival Východná, the theatre festival Scénická žatva and the festival of non-professional art TvorBa. The National Education Centre also organizes creative workshops for children: Creative workshop for young brass band players, Musicians and Little Dancers, Primášikovia, Photoworkshop, FILMWORK, Summer course of choirmasters (for conductors and children's choirs), workshops in national promotional competitions. When evaluating the feedback from the activities, the opinions and suggestions of the children's participants are sporadically applied to the future educational, competitive presentation activities of the National Education Centre. Children's juries also traditionally operate within two theatrical promotional competitions: Zlatá priadka Forum and Children's Forum Agora at the national competition Theatre and Children (theatre for adults playing for children). The children always work under pedagogical supervision, they analyse individual productions, their opinions reach the directors through an analysis seminar, and also contributions in festival diaries. At the end of the competition, one ensemble wins the prize of the children's jury.

- The Museum of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) organizes travelling exhibitions focused on the history of the Slovak National Uprising and the Second World War for primary and secondary schools in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Experts from the Education Centre of the SNP Museum prepare and train pupils and students as lecturers of a travelling exhibition, who then accompany their classmates to schools. The peer accompaniment method has proven to be very effective and is also in demand by teachers. Currently available are the exhibitions Slovak National Uprising 1944, Heydrichiad, Returns of Lidice Children, Operation Valkyrie, Wagon. The SNP Museum is also organizing an international student conference War through the eyes of young people, in which students form research teams led by teachers. Thematic areas for research are prepared by the SNP Museum, the Terezín Memorial and the Lidice Memorial (historians and professional staff). The Slovak areas are assigned to Czech schools and the Czech thematic sections to Slovak schools. The individual years of the project begin in September of the relevant school year, and in mid-June, when the school year ends, a two-day international student conference is held in the premises of the Education Centre of the SNP Museum. At the conference, students present the results of their research and the school they represent. As part of this project, students will learn to work with archival material, learn about the scientific work of historians, gain new knowledge and understanding of a specific historical event of a neighbouring nation.

- BIBIANA, the International House of Arts for Children, organizes the Biennial of Animation Bratislava (BAB), which also gives the Children's Audience Award. In 2018, this award went to the film Christmas Wedding of the Snowman Karol directed by Petr Vodička (Czech Republic). Ballot papers at the screenings of the competition films were handed over by 8,528 children. The prize of the children's jury is also presented at the Biennial Illustration Bratislava (BIB). The children's jury meets on the same date as the International Jury and presented the prize at the grand opening of BIB in the historic building of the Slovak National Theatre.

65. In assessing possibilities and scope of implementation of the 21st recommendation, the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic relied on valid legislation and binding documents, in particular:

- Constitution of the Slovak Republic Art. 15 para. 1 and 2 “Everyone has the right to life. Human life is worth protection even before birth. No one shall be deprived of life.”
- Convention Art. 6 “1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life. 2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.”
- Convention “Bearing in mind, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1959, ”the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth”.
- Act No. 300/2005 Coll. the Criminal Code Section 146 Murder of a New-Born Infant by its Mother ”A mother who in a state of post-natal disturbance intentionally kills her infant (baby) at birth or immediately after birth shall be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of from four to eight years.”
- Act No. 578/2004 Coll. Annex No. 4 CODE OF ETHICS OF THE HEALTH PROFESSIONAL points 1 and 2 “The professional duty of a health professional is the professional care of the health of the individual and society in accordance with the principles of humanity, in the spirit of respect for human life from its beginning to the end with respect for human dignity. It is the duty of the health professional to preserve life, protect, promote and restore health, prevent disease, alleviate suffering regardless of nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, social status, moral or intellectual level and the patient’s reputation.”

According to statistical data, since the rescue nests/public incubators started operating in the Slovak Republic in 2004, the number of crimes of “murder of a newborn child by the mother“ decreased on average threefold compared to 2002 and 2003.

Since the creation of the rescue nests, 60 children have been placed in them. 20 rescue nests have been established. Following the provision of the Convention that the States shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child and the right to life guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic as well as subsequent legislation, the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic considers the possibility of placing a child in a publicly accessible incubator as an appropriate solution of the protection of the child’s life in relation to the potential risk of committing the crime of murdering a newborn child by a mother or another criminal offence.

In relation to the recommendation so that the state provides services for planned parenthood, adequate counselling and social support for unplanned pregnancies and as a last resort - the possibility of secret childbirth in the hospital, we state that in the provision of health care, the area of planned parenthood is part of the preventive gynaecological examination of a woman pursuant to Act No. 577/2004 Coll.

Public health insurance fully reimburses health care in connection with a secret childbirth. 11a). Reimbursement by the health insurance company will be carried out on the basis of the healthcare provider’s declaration that the woman who has requested in writing that her person

be kept secret in connection with childbirth is its insured person. If the mother finds herself in a difficult situation during pregnancy, she can turn to active civic associations, non-profit organizations, foundations, churches and religious societies, which will provide her with help in the areas of professional counselling, finance, material support or psychological assistance during pregnancy.⁹ Several non-profit organizations, civic associations, etc. also provide crisis accommodation for women in need (even pregnant women).

65A. Prior to the commencement of criminal prosecution and in the preparatory proceedings, the prosecutor shall supervise the observance of legality pursuant to Section 230 para. 1, para. 2 of Act No. 301/2005 Coll. the Criminal Procedure Code, as amended, where the prosecutor is authorized to give binding instructions for the procedure pursuant to Section 197, the investigation and accelerated investigation into criminal offences and to set time limits for their handling, such instructions are part of the file; request from the police officer's files, documents, materials and reports on the status of proceedings in the cases in which criminal proceedings have been initiated; ascertain whether a police officer has initiated criminal proceedings in time and is continuing properly in them; take part in the fulfilment of duties of a police officer; carry on an individual act, or even the entire or accelerated investigation in person and issue a decision on any matter; in doing so, the prosecutor shall proceed in accordance with this Act; a complaint is admissible against such a decision of the prosecutor, as well as against the decision of a police officer to return the case to the police officer to complete the investigation or accelerated investigation with instructions and to set time limits for their completion; the prosecutor shall notify both the accused and the injured party of the return of the case; annul illegal or unjustified decisions of the police officer, which the prosecutor may replace with his own decisions; in the case of a resolution to discontinue the criminal prosecution, suspend the criminal prosecution or transfer the case, the prosecutor may do so within 30 days of their delivery; if the prosecutor replaced the decision of the police officer by his own decision in a manner other than on the basis of a complaint of the entitled person; a complaint is admissible against his decision, as well as against the police officer's decision; withdraw the case from the police officer and take measures to order the case to another police officer or police officers; order that an investigation be held in the matters referred to in Section 202; take measures to ensure that the accelerated investigation is carried out by the police officer referred to in Section 10 para. 8 letter a) or letter c); take measures to ensure that the investigation or accelerated investigation into a criminal offence of a member of the armed security corps is carried out by the police officer referred to in Section 10 para. 8 letter a), whereas, before taking action, the prosecutor shall request the opinion of the Director of the Office of the Inspection Service and the prosecutor is also authorized to proceed with the investigation or accelerated investigation into a criminal offence of a customs officer. Any decision issued by an investigator of the Police Force included in the Office of the Inspection Service in the matter itself is reviewed by the relevant public prosecutor's office. According to the Act on the Commissioner, the Office of the Commissioner for Children has the right to monitor the observance of the child's

⁹ <https://www.health.gov.sk/Clanok?zoznam-obcianskych-zdruzeni-neziskovych-organizacii-nadacii-cirkvi-a-nabozenskych-spolocnosti-ktore-poskytuju-zenam-financnu-materialnu-alebo-psychologicku-pomoc-v-tehotenstve>

rights, in particular by conducting an independent inquiry and promoting his or her interests; nevertheless, the Commissioner for Children has no basis in the Criminal Procedure Code for participating in procedural acts in criminal proceedings in order to be able to defend the best interests of the child.

65B. Within the 25th recommendation, the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic states the following:

THE ECHR (EUROPEAN COURT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS) CASE-LAW V.C. vs SLOVAKIA (complaint No. 18968/07) Judgement of 8 November 2011; although the court concluded that there was a violation of Art. 3 (in the procedural and material part) and of Art. 8, but that there was no violation of Art. 13 of the Convention, and it did not examine the violation of Art. 14 of the Convention. The ECHR concluded that the available information did not sufficiently prove that the doctors had performed the complainant's sterilization in bad faith, that their behaviour was intentionally racially motivated or that sterilization was in fact part of a more general organized policy. THE ECHR I.G. and others (complaint 15966/04) Judgement of 13 November 2012 and N.B. vs Slovakia (complaint 29518/10) Judgement of 12 June 2012. In Judgement of N.B. vs Slovakia (complaint 29518/10) of 12 June 2012 the ECHR also concluded that the information did not sufficiently demonstrate that the doctors had performed sterilization in bad faith, that their behaviour (behaviour of hospital staff) was intentionally racially motivated or that sterilization was in fact part of a more general organized policy. Resolution CM/ResDH (2014) 43, implementation of all three judgements adopted by the Committee of Ministers - decision to close the review. The report on activities provided by the Government of the Slovak Republic sets out the measures taken for the purpose of enforcing judgements, including the information provided on the payment of just satisfaction. Report DHDD (2013) 860rev. Non-property damage awarded to the complainants by the first instance courts in a total amount of EUR 85,000. Appropriate legislation has been adopted, the entire training system has been implemented, judgements have been published and judges and prosecutors have been made aware of them.

66. In Act No. 576/2004 Coll., Act No. 577/2004 Coll. and Act No. 581/2004 Coll. not only the system of rights, tools but also the bodies ensuring the control of the correctness of the provision of health care, including professional chambers, are regulated. The Health Care Surveillance Authority ("HCSA") supervises the provision of health care. The HCSA was established in Section 17 of Act No. 581/2004 Coll. as an independent legal entity, while Section 18 para. 2 of the said Act guarantees the Office an independent position and at the same time prohibits in any way all public administration bodies from interfering in its activities in the supervision of health care. In Section 11 para. 1 and 3 of Act No. 576/2004 Coll. it establishes the principle of equal treatment and the principle of non-discrimination in the provision of health care, and the obligation to comply with good morals in the provision of health care. The recipient of health care has the right to ask the provider for redress and has the right to submit requests and complaints to the HCSA. It follows from the above-mentioned that there is no need to create another separate, independent body.

67. Since 2017, the HEA Pilot Project has been running in hospitals for members of the MRCs, as one of the activities of the National Project Healthy Communities 2A, in a total of six hospitals. This Pilot Project also includes the prevention of cases of ill-treatment in obstetrics services. In particular, in the National Project Field Social Work and Field Work in Municipalities with the Presence of Marginalized Roma Communities, financed with the amount of EUR 26,511,131.00, interventions were carried out for 38,266 Roma, while 156 Roma were employed in the project out of 460 employees. Also in the NP CC in towns and villages with the presence of MRC - Phase I, financed with the amount of EUR 18,688,722.00, 154 workers in 56 community centres provided services, interventions and support to 8,360 Roma. These projects are implemented by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic, while with regard to the regulatory level, in particular Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on social services and on the amendment to Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on trade licensing (Trade Licensing Act), as amended, one of the obligations of field social workers is to provide effective support for clients also in their access to health care.

68. In the case of alleged involuntary sterilization of Romani women from the past, the then Regional Office of the Judicial Police of the Košice Police Force proceeded. On 28 December 2007, the Investigator of the Police Force by resolution pursuant to Section 215 para. 1 letter b) of the Criminal Procedure Code discontinued the criminal prosecution, because this act is not a criminal offence and there is no reason to forward the case. A complaint against the resolution in question was filed on behalf of the persons affected, i.e. I. G., R. H. and M. K., by their authorized representative on 4 January 2008. On 19 February 2008, the Supervising Prosecutor of the Regional Public Prosecutor's Office in Košice by resolution pursuant to Section 193 para. 1 letter c) of the Criminal Procedure Code rejected the complaint in question as unfounded. The investigator's resolution to discontinue the criminal prosecution in this case is valid. The investigation gathered all the available evidence necessary to establish the facts of the case and clarify the facts relevant to the decision. The results of the investigation showed that no violent sterilization or other attacks on the reproductive freedom of Roma in Slovakia were detected, and no sterilization was performed with the intention of preventing the birth of children in the Roma ethnic group in Slovakia. In this context, reference should be made to the report of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights of 29 March 2006 (CommDH(2006)5): „33. Allegations of violent and forced sterilization of women of the Roma origin in Slovakia were considered a possible serious violation of human rights and were therefore taken very seriously by the Government of the Slovak Republic. Considerable efforts have been made to thoroughly review them. Beyond the framework of the criminal investigation, a professional medical inspection from institutions providing health care was set up and an expert opinion was requested from the Medical Faculty of Comenius University in Bratislava. It was not confirmed that the Government of the Slovak Republic supported an organized discriminatory sterilization policy. The government has taken legislative and practical measures to address the administrative shortcomings identified during the investigation and prevent similar situations from occurring in the future. Women allegedly injured by sterilization have the right to apply for compensation in Slovak courts and, according to the Slovak authorities, the existing

legislation offers them sufficient opportunities to obtain compensation. In the event of new cases of forced sterilization, anyone has the opportunity to turn to investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies and file a criminal complaint with the police or the public prosecutor's office. There are no provisions of the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code in the legal system of the Slovak Republic that would discriminate against women in any way and treat women and men unequally in their access to justice.

69. The Slovak Republic has the Act on the Creation of Legal Regulations and on the Collection of Laws, which regulates the public participation in policy-making, i.e. if a legal regulation is created with an impact on children, the organizations dealing with their agenda comment on the proposed legal regulation. The requirements of the draft legislation include a clause on selected impacts and analysis of impacts, including the impact on marriage, parenthood and the family (especially the impact on the family environment, mutual cohesion of family members, child upbringing, parents' rights towards children, basic principles of the Family Act, conclusion of marriage and the disposable income of households of families with more children. The draft legislation is obligatorily published for the comment proceedings on the portal www.slov-lex.sk so that the possibility of using comments from the public is also ensured. A comment may suggest a new text or recommend that the text be amended, supplemented, changed, deleted or clarified. Through an amendment to the Act on Offences, which entered into force on 1 January 2016, the Slovak Republic emphasized the illegality of all violent acts that affect the physical integrity of a close person and a person entrusted to care or upbringing, including a child. The amendment also emphasizes the illegality of psychological restraint, verbal attacks and other forms of offensive behaviour against a close or entrusted person, including a child. All illegal actions must be punished accordingly. In accordance with the amendment to the Criminal Code of 2005, any re-commission of such offences is considered a criminal offence of battering a close and entrusted person. In accordance with the applicable legal regulations, these proceedings cannot be legitimized by the exercise of parental rights and obligations.

70. The Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic in connection with the adoption of Act No. 204/2013 Coll., which amended and supplemented Act No. 300/2005 Coll. the Criminal Code, as amended, established an obligation for the healthcare provider in Section 79 para. 4, letter a) of Act No. 578/2004 Coll. as follows: "A provider who is a holder of a permit or a license to perform independent medical practice is also obliged to immediately notify investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies 55ja) and the office of labour, social affairs and family as a body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship according to special legislation, 55jb) in whose district the minor resides, suspicion of sexual abuse 55jc) or other abuse 55jd) of a minor, rape 55je) of a minor, sexual violence 55jf) against a minor, sexual exploitation 55jg) of a minor, intercourse between relatives, 55jh) which involves a minor, battering 55ji) or neglect 55jj) of a minor".

71. With effect from 1 April 2014, Annex No. 11 of the Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic No. 74/2014 Coll., which establishes the list of reports to national

health registers, their characteristics, details on the content of national health registers, procedure, methods, scope of reporting units and deadlines for reports to national health registers, established to perform Reporting of persons with suspected neglect, battering, abuse and perpetrators of violence. By publishing in the Bulletin of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, the Professional Guideline of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic on symptoms and diagnostics of neglect, battering or misuse of a minor and on the procedure of healthcare providers in reporting suspected neglect, battering or misuse of a minor published by investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies came into force. In particular, it recommends the healthcare provider to provide in the notification such information that describes damaging of the physical or mental health and the development of the child, the likely mechanism of the occurrence, the severity of the injury or damage and the expected duration of any hospitalization. It recommends that the attending physician who reported the suspicion records this circumstance in his medical records and send an extract from the medical records to a paediatrician who provides general outpatient care for children and adolescents.

72. The education in the area of child rights, child protection and communication was implemented by the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic within selected minimum standards of further education of health professionals. An amendment to the Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic of 18 November 2013 No. S08305-OL-2013 amending the Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic of 17 September 2010 No. 12422/2010-OL, which lays down minimum standards for specialization study programmes, minimum standards for certification study programmes and minimum standards for lifelong learning study programmes and their structure, as amended. The area of early identification of minor victims of crime has been added to the content of theoretical knowledge of minimum standards of further education intended for health professionals who come into contact with children in health care in the exercise of their profession (paediatrician, paediatric surgery and gynaecology and obstetrics), nurse – (nursing care in paediatrics), midwife – (midwifery and care for women in the family and community), and psychologist – (clinical psychology, counselling psychology). Over the last three years, we have registered 469 graduates in the above-mentioned specialized study programmes in the relevant medical professions. Another procedure for the early identification of violence against children is the implementation of the “Standard of Examination of Psychomotor Development of Children during the 2nd to the 11th preventive examinations“. The standard enables by examining the psychomotor development to obtain valid data on the level of developmental functionality and to supplement diagnostic procedures identifying the child’s health problems and to enable the timely provision of widely effective comprehensive inter-ministerial care for the child and his or her family. The aim is to optimally develop the potential of physical and mental development of children and the interaction of doctors and parents, including the prevention of violence.

73. The National Unit for Combating Illegal Migration of the BBFP PPF (hereinafter referred to as the “NUCIM”) is an executive, organizational, coordinating and conceptual unit responsible for the prevention, detection, documentation and investigation of organized,

repeated and serious crime in the field of combating illegal migration, trafficking in human beings and other cross-border criminal activities operating throughout the Slovak Republic. Children are also among the victims of this crime. The NUCIM has specially trained members in operational-search activities and investigators equally specially trained to clarify the above criminal activity. The process of detecting and subsequently clarifying criminal activity takes place in accordance with and within the limits of the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code

74. In 2017, a separate job position of coordinator for the protection of children from violence was created and embodied. Since October 2017, coordinators have been working in 46 districts within Slovakia. Preparation for the work of the coordinator consisted in systematic training on fine skills, theoretical knowledge of the issue and competencies of cooperating ministries. An example of coordination: the case of epidemic spread of syphilis in the Trebišov district in connection with suspected child sexual abuse, based on multidisciplinary cooperation, helped to stabilize the situation and assistance for hundreds of families, stop epidemic spread of syphilis, treatment and primary prevention, as well as several criminal reports on suspicions of sexual abuse. Based on the measures taken in this case, preventive meetings were held in endangered districts with a similar population composition and risks of socio-pathological phenomena - where syphilis could occur and spread in the event of population migration (Michalovce, Plavecký Štvrtok). Based on this activity, the numbers of sexually transmitted diseases in selected regions are regularly monitored for the possibility of early identification and intervention. In the Report on the Activities of the Commissioner for Children for 2018, the Commissioner for Children presented several proposals for remedies, specifically in connection with the hygiene standard for children from MRC and specifically in the Trebišov community in close cooperation with MRC residents and local self-government representatives (town authority and town council).

75. Another area is the world of digital technologies, which are evolving and advancing at great speed. Partial relocation of survival and social contacts is a major challenge for the effectiveness of work with vulnerable children. Since 2018, a Concept has been prepared focused on the digital environment and safe use of the Internet not only in connection with sexual abuse, extortion, etc. The National Concept for the Protection of Children in the Digital Space was approved by the Government Resolution No. 63/2020 of February 2020. Like the National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Violence, this material is also the result of inter-ministerial cooperation and tasks of several ministries, the General Prosecutor's Office of the Slovak Republic, non-governmental organizations and other entities, and its administrator is the National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children.

76. European as well as global trends are increasingly promoting and supporting the principle of coordinated multidisciplinary cooperation in the fight against violence. These principles are formalized differently within individual countries; in Slovakia we want to support and provide legal certainty for this type of cooperation precisely by embodying coordination as a competence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. As of 1

November 2019, the amendment No. 300/2019 of Act No. 453/2003 Coll. came into effect on state administration bodies in the field of social affairs, family and employment services and on the amendments to certain acts, which legislatively embodies the competence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic as the central state administration body for coordinating state policy in child protection against violence and coordination of tasks in this area. Through its specialized unit, the National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children (established on the basis of the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2014), the Ministry of Labour, through the National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children, directs and methodically manages the coordination of child protection against violence, creates conditions for mutual cooperation and exchange of information between state administration bodies, the Police Force, schools, school facilities, municipalities, higher territorial units, healthcare providers, and other entities operating in the field of protection of children from violence. The aim of the mentioned legal regulation is to strengthen legal certainty in mutual cooperation and cooperation of entities, as well as a significant improvement of access to quality services of assistance to children at risk of violence throughout the territory of the Slovak Republic. In cooperation with relevant partners, i.e. representatives of the Ministries of the Interior, Health, Education, Science, Research and Sports, Culture, Justice and representatives of non-governmental organizations as well as others involved in child protection, a unified procedure of all entities in the field in question is developed. The amendment to the act in question is indeed an important milestone in addressing the issue of violence against children throughout the Slovak Republic.

77. The SLPCaSG body is obliged to play the role of coordinator if cooperation of other entities is necessary in the implementation of measures or the provision of assistance to children who are battered, sexually abused, neglected or in respect of whom there is a reasonable suspicion of battering, sexual abuse or neglect. For needs of crisis intervention, non-stop (24-hour) availability of employees of the office of labour, social affairs and family is ensured.

On the basis of any notification that the child is neglected, abused, battered, bullied, or his or her rights are otherwise violated, SLPCaSG assesses the life situation of the child and his or her family and determines the child's risk in the family (no risk, low, medium and high risk), depending on the severity of the situation, they take measures to improve the child's life situation in cooperation with family, municipality or accredited entity, proceeding according to a jointly developed plan of social work with the family.

When choosing and applying SLPCaSG measures, it is necessary to plan social work. The basic purpose of social work planning is to create the conditions for active participation of the child and his or her family in solving the social situation arisen and to create the conditions for systematic intervention of entities participating in solving the client's social situation.

78. To the above-mentioned, we supplement the information on the existence of a regular platform operating on a quarterly basis to services provided for victims of trafficking in human beings (programme, assisted voluntary returns of victims of trafficking, national

hotline), which is attended by NGOs and representatives of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, as well as invited other ministries or other bodies/institutions, depending on the current problems addressed. In addition, the NGO regularly informs the administrator, which is the IC MI SR, about the services provided to individual victims within the programme (quarterly), statistical summaries of services on the national hotline (monthly) and services of assisted voluntary returns of victims of trafficking in human beings (annually). In the process of public procurement for the provision of services for victims of trafficking in human beings within the programme, the organization submits professional competence for the provision of social, legal and psychological services, as well as a contractually defined number of its own beds. As part of the public procurement for national hotline services, the organization submits the minimum standards for the operation of the national hotline.

79. The Criminal Code precisely defines the term “child” and regards him as a protected person, a dependent person, a defenceless person. The definition of the facts of criminal offences and criminal sanctions with regard to the manner in which they are committed, which include several forms of sexual abuse of children, is crucial for the protection of children from sexual abuse:

- performing intercourse with a person under the age of fifteen or another way in which a child is sexually abused (Section 201 of the Criminal Code),
- proposing to a child under the age of fifteen, through an electronic communication service, a personal meeting with the intention of committing the crime of sexual abuse or the crime of producing child pornography, not being a child himself (Section 201a of the Criminal Code), abuse of a child under the age of fifteen years with the intention of inducing sexual satisfaction through his participation in sexual activities or sexual abuse, although such a child may not be directly involved in or allowing such abuse (Section 201b of the Criminal Code),
- forcing of a child, entrusted to other persons who supervise him, care for him, support him, raise him, to extramarital intercourse or otherwise sexually abuse him, while such persons misuse their recognized position resulting from trust, authority or influence on the child (Section 202 of the Criminal Code).

80. The Criminal Code establishes specific definitions of child prostitution, child pornography and child pornographic performance, which brings about the harmonization of states in the same view and understanding of these concepts, as well as for their correct interpretation.

Child pornography and child prostitution are punishable in the following provisions of the Criminal Code in the framework of criminal offences:

- Section 179 of the Criminal Code - trafficking in human beings,
- Section 367 of the Criminal Code - procuring,
- Section 368 of the Criminal Code - production of child pornography,
- Section 369 of the Criminal Code - dissemination of child pornography,
- Section 370 of the Criminal Code - possession of child pornography and participation in child pornography performances.

81. We consider the setting of a limitation period to be a step towards increasing the criminal legal protection of children. Art. 15 para. 2 of Directive 2011/93/EU and Art. 9 para. 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU were transposed into the provision of Section 87 para. 5 of the Criminal Code, which oblige Member States to take the necessary measures to ensure that the limitation period for the criminal prosecution of acts referred to in the Directives expires long enough after the victim of crimes has reached the age of majority. Therefore, the legislator stipulates that for selected crimes committed against children relating to trafficking in human beings, sexual violence, sexual abuse, production of child pornography and battering of a close person and an entrusted person, the prosecution will expire at the earliest fifteen years after the person reaches the eighteenth year of his life.

82. As part of the implementation of a multidisciplinary approach and especially the principles of divergence of individual regions, the system of increasing professionalism of professional employees who come into contact with children at risk of violence has changed. The National Coordination Centre, through the regional coordinators for the protection of children from violence, provides education in a selected, regionally determined topic. In 2018 and 2019, 220 multidisciplinary training activities were implemented to support the professionalism of the performance. In 2018, 2,300 participants from participating entities completed education and in 2019 there were 2,532 participants (Office of the Commissioner for Children, SLPCaSG bodies, SLPCaSG facilities, town and municipal police, police force, healthcare providers, teachers and educators, other pedagogical staff, prosecutors, representatives of municipalities and higher territorial units, district courts and other non-governmental and church organizations). The topic is mainly the identification of all forms of violence, but also crisis intervention, possibilities of communication with the victim, communication with the perpetrator or the victim's family.

83. Awareness-raising and prevention activities are also taking place at regional and national levels. The aim is to increase the readiness to perceive cases of violence, but also to respond correctly. In the years 2018-2019, a total of 108,560 participants took part in preventive and educational activities. The National Coordination Centre for Addressing Violence against Children in accordance with the tasks arising from the National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Violence in 2018 prepared, in cooperation with expert guarantors from the Department of Forensic Science, Psychology and Victimology, a plan and at the same time also a programme for training and support of employees who work with perpetrators of crimes against children. The syllabi have been developed on the basis of the identified needs of the Centres for Children and Families and non-governmental organizations, as well as on the basis of foreign contexts.

84. Since 2019, an educational programme has been implemented: Work with perpetrators of violence against children, including child perpetrators to the extent of 112 hours of full-time education and self-study and home preparation. Education also continues in 2020. Education deals with working with children who commit violent behaviour and do not yet

have criminal liability. Such a comprehensive programme for juvenile offenders and children without criminal liability is unparalleled in Europe.

The result of the educational programme is

- developing long-term strategies to prevent repeated criminal activities (or violent non-criminal activity),
- support and control of perpetrators of violence as a tool for safe integration into society,
- protection of potential victims from other psychologically and physically harmful consequences of violence by minors/adolescents,
- counselling support for the family and/or social environment of the juvenile offender in order to enable a constructive solution to the crime.

85. By the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 337 from 3 July 2019, the draft Action Plan for Digital Transformation of Slovakia for 2019–2022 was approved, in which tasks of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic were accepted for elaborating a study of digital transformation impacts and recommendations at the national level in employment, qualifications and forms of work and support for increasing competences of young people for the digital era as part of the formal education. In the school year 2018/2019, IUVENTA implemented a pilot project “School without Hate”. It is a self-evaluation of the school, based on its result, primary and secondary schools will be awarded a quality standard, whose school climate and decision-making processes at the school support, inter alia, the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying, hate speech and various forms of intolerance. The first year will be announced in the school year 2019/2020. In 2018, the EU Kids online research was carried out in the Slovak Republic. This research concerns selected risky activities of children and adolescents in the online space. The findings are based on a questionnaire survey conducted in households from 30 April to 12 June 2018. The respondents in the survey were 969 children and adolescents who use the Internet. The report contains findings from the area of social network use and excessive use of the Internet and social networks. The research is based on a sample of 969 children and adolescents aged 9–17 who use the Internet. 51% of boys and 49% of girls were represented in the sample. The individual age cohorts were represented as follows: 9–11 years (30.5%), 12–14 years (32.7%) and 15–17 years (36.8%). The mean age was 13.2 years ($SD = 2.6$ years). The report presents the results from data that were statistically weighted to correspond to the distribution of children and adolescents in terms of age and gender in the entire population of the Slovak Republic. The research used a questionnaire tool created for the needs of the EU Kids Online IV project, which collects data in other European countries. The main wave of research was preceded by a pilot survey on a sample of 290 respondents aged 9–18 years from schools in the Ružomberok district. The creation of a representative sample from the basic group of children aged 9–17 years who use the Internet was carried out by random selection from the register of municipalities and cities of the Slovak Republic. The basis for this selection was the official statistics from the 2011 census. The sample had a range of 200 territorial sampling units, in which households were selected at random (according to pre-established rules). Data collection took place from 30 April 2018 to 12 June 2018 in households with a child or adolescent of the required age. The Computer Assisted

Personal Interview (CAPI) method was used for data collection. The tool used for field data collection was the online field survey tool Nfield. Older children filled in the questionnaire without their parents present. A necessary condition for conducting research interviews was to obtain the written consent of the child's legal representatives and the oral consent of the child or adolescent, which took place directly in the household. The questionnaires were anonymous and personal information from the parents was obtained only for the purpose of possible control of the interviewers and was archived only for a period of six months. For each answer, the respondent could choose "I don't know" or "I'd rather not answer".

86. The Centre implements SLPCaSG outpatient or field measures. The implementation of these SLPCaSG measures in the centre can be ensured by the SLPCaSG body. A description and details of the implementation of individual SLPCaSG measures carried out in the centre in outpatient or field form are given in the centre's programme. The aim of the application of new forms of work is to ensure the availability of services for clients, make professional assistance available to clients who are not actively seeking it themselves. The expected benefit is also a reduced number of court decisions on the imposition of institutional care for children and their removal from the original family environment, an increased number of children returning to their biological families, and the prevention of crisis situations. In residential forms, the centre provides the child with a safe environment in individually arranged groups, which temporarily replaces his natural environment. Child care is based on an individual and integration approach, so that the rights and opinions of the child are respected in order to actively cooperate with the child's family and closed persons. Education is based on strengthening and activating the child's strengths and fulfilling his needs depending on the current life situation and his physical and mental condition. Through systematic and consistent planning in the individual plan of the child's personality development, which also includes an educational plan, the child's future is directed towards his independence, self-development, identity and active participation in the co-decision process and in matters affecting his or her life. The basic starting point for planning is the diagnostics of the family environment and also the comprehensive diagnostics of the current physical, psychical, mental and health condition of the child. In accordance with the points of the Decree, the Centre's programmes contain detailed and unambiguously regulated internal procedures, rules and obligations related to rights, and at the same time a defined use of educational means, so as to ensure the highest possible quality of care provided. When implementing measures, it is prohibited to use all forms of corporal punishment of a child and other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment of a child that causes or may cause physical or psychological harm to the child. It is also forbidden to use as an educational means a ban on contact with parents and other closed persons, social exclusion, requiring inappropriate physical performance, interference with appearance and wearing degrading clothing, unjustified interference with diet and other educational means and work practices that may cause humiliation to the child and may unduly interfere with his or her human dignity. It is forbidden to use any educational means against a child only because it is part of the same group of children as the child in whose upbringing the educational means is to be used. The child must not be responsible for deciding or determining the means of education for another

child (Section 7, para. 3). The basic principle in care is respect for children's rights and equal opportunity for all children in all comparable independently organized groups, groups and in professional substitute families in accordance with Act No. 305/2005 Coll. on the social and legal protection of children and on social guardianship and on the amendments to certain acts. Childcare in facilities respects the European Quality Standards for Assistance to Children Living Outside Their Own Family.

86A. The whole system of state policy, especially in the field of family and social policy, is focused on support and assistance to families. The system of state benefits, the system of aid in material need, the system of compensation of disability, the system of social services, as well as some other programmes such as FEAD fulfil the purpose of support, assistance to families and ultimately to prevent the taking of children or abandoning them after childbirth. The centres for children and families can create conditions for the implementation of measures in the residential form also for a pregnant woman and this woman after childbirth and her baby up to 24 months of age. At the same time, the possibilities of professional help with a focus on psychological help and social work were specified.

86B. In the field of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, the level of education - qualification prerequisites of employees of the department of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship of the Labour, Social Affairs and Family Offices, employees of centres for children and families, accredited entities, is regulated by law and it should be stated that high demands are placed on qualification requirements. It is not appropriate to set qualification prerequisites for the performance of foster care - the performance of substitute parents, just as it would probably not be appropriate to set qualification prerequisites for parents. Applicants for foster care and adoption must undergo training and the focus is on applicants, inter alia, also for foster care, for the assessment of their personal and family preconditions and the subsequent help, support and accompaniment of foster parents.

86C. Outpatient educational measures (educational measures imposed by the SLPCaSG body and educational measures imposed by a court or other obligations imposed by a court pursuant to the Family Act, the so-called "outpatient educational measure") have a significant preventive importance in the overall design of measures to prevent the placement of children in substitute environments. Outpatient educational measures have also found their use in situations of parental conflicts, in situations where it is necessary to provide the child with conditions for adaptation to a new situation, in behavioural disorders and problematic behaviour of children, etc. For this reason, the Centre for Children and Families (CCF) also implements measures to prevent the emergence, aggravation and recurrence of crisis situations of the child in the child's family environment or substitute family environment and developmental disorders of children due to educational problems, social problems and other problems in the family environment, substitute family environment, in a wider social environment and interpersonal relations. The CCF can provide this form of assistance in the necessary intensity or, if it is necessary to implement measures for a child and his or her family in the residential form, the CCF is able to provide this possibility (the so-called

voluntary stay) for this purpose. If all these measures are not effective and the child is taken away, then the priority of the CCF is to maintain contacts of children placed in facilities with their biological families and closed persons. In accordance with this, the centres create spatial conditions so that they can ensure undisturbed contact with the child's family, if this contact cannot be ensured in the original environment of the family. The Centre for Children and Families creates conditions for the implementation of professional methods of working with a child and his or her parent, a person who personally takes care of a child, another close person or an applicant for alternative family care that require such persons to stay in the centre for a certain period of time or their repeated short-term stays. The professional method of work with a child and these natural persons forms part of the measures carried out for the child in the residential form (Section 46 para. 11 of Act No. 305/2005 Coll. on the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship and on the amendments to certain acts).

86D. One of the principles of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship is, if the child cannot be cared for by the parents, the formal care by relatives takes precedence over other alternative forms of childcare, i.e. alternative personal care as required by family law. It is the duty of the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship to consider, when choosing measures for the child, primary measures aimed at keeping the child in the care by the parents and, if this is not in the interests of the child, measures aimed at providing care by the child's relatives. One of the elements that must be considered and taken into account in determining the best interests of the child is the preservation of the family environment and the maintenance of relationships. According to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, just preventing a child's separation and preserving the family is an important element of the child protection system. It is enshrined by Art. 9 para. 1 of the Convention, which requires that "a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and proceedings, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child". If separation becomes necessary and unless it is contrary to the best interests of the child, not only e.g. maintaining the child's ties with his or her parents and siblings must be guaranteed, but also the child's relations with his or her family (relatives and persons with whom the child has a strong personal relationship). This principle is also in line with the general principle No. 3 Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (United Nations, 2009): "First and foremost, efforts should be made to keep children in, or to return them to, the care of their parents or, if possible, close relatives"

87. Regular and individual monitoring is carried out on each child who is excluded from the care of biological parents on the basis of a court decision and entrusted to the system of substitute care. The competent court shall examine at least once in six months whether the reasons for the exclusion of the child from the biological family persist and whether it is possible to return the child to his or her original family. At the same time, the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship of each child determines the level of risk to the child (for children excluded from biological families, the level of risk to the child is logically set high) and then examines possibilities of help, takes and implements measures to reduce the

risk of child, thus focusing on providing support and assistance to families for the purpose of their rehabilitation and the return of abandoned children.

88. New tools have been introduced to help individuals who have children in substitute care, such as the provision of social counselling or other professional counselling, the implementation or ensuring the implementation of measures to facilitate the resolution of educational or family problems or when exercising the child's legal rights.

90. The ordering of institutional care is an exceptional measure of the court and it is possible to approach it if the legal preconditions are fulfilled only if it is not possible to entrust the child to substitute personal care or subsequently to foster care (i.e. the priority of care by relatives and persons close to the child - substitute personal care, and if such an option is not so foster care and only institutional care as a last resort). The focus of solving the child's situation is still on educational measures that are time-limited (maximum 6 months) and can be repeated if it is shown that changing the educational measure or repeating will improve the child's situation.

It is exhaustive that the court may order institutional care only if the child's upbringing is seriously endangered or severely impaired, it is not possible to entrust the child to substitute personal care or foster care, and

- a) the child is adoptable and cannot be entrusted to the care of future adoptive parents or to the care of a natural person according to special legislation,
- b) the child's parents do not live or are prevented from caring for the child by a serious impediment,
- c) the educational measure imposed has not remedied it; or
- d) the child's parents are deprived of the exercise of their parental rights.

91. The body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship shall continuously monitor the performance of substitute personal care and foster care and report to the court at least every six months on the quality of childcare in substitute or foster care, including whether parents can take over the minor child into personal care. The CCF's competences for the provision of social counselling to young adults after the end of substitute care (including foster care) have been extended, thus significantly expanding possibilities of providing professional assistance to natural persons after the end of any form of substitute care. Each centre performing measures in a residential form is required by law to have its programme developed. The requirements of the centre's programme are regulated in a decree and include, inter alia, a description of the child's rights and duties, description of the parent's rights and duties, the way how the child can turn, even without the knowledge of the centre, to the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, ombudsman, commissioner for children, court, public prosecutor's office, ... as well as conditions for mail delivery, access to the Internet and telephone use. It is the legal obligation of the centre to inform the child and the parent about the centre's programme, including their rights and obligations, when admitting the child. In the decision, the court takes into account all the decisive circumstances and identifies that facility that is best placed to provide care of the child, taking into account the geographical location of the facility in relation to the biological

family. The Slovak Republic has established several mechanisms “friendly“ to children placed in institutional care, whose role is, inter alia, hearing the child and resolving children’s complaints. They are the Ombudswoman, the Commissioner for Children, the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, the prosecutor, the judge, the body of social and legal protection of children and families, self-help groups, peer groups, etc. The centres for children and families actively use various favourable criteria in the selection procedures for employees, such as knowledge of the language of the national minority, ethnicity. In communication with the child, his or her mother tongue is preferred. However, in connection with the child’s education system - fulfilment of compulsory school attendance, natural attention is focused on the language in which the child is educated at school. The institution of the Commissioner for Children must be accessible to children and there must also be a mechanism to ensure direct contact with children. When in contact with the Commissioner for Children, the child may use his or her mother tongue and communicate in a form accessible to the child. The petition to the Commissioner for Children can be submitted in writing, orally in the minutes, by fax or electronic means or via the web portal of the Commissioner for Children www.komisarpredeti.sk, by e-mail info@komisarpredeti.sk. It is also possible to use Slovenská pošta, a. s. (Slovak Post Office), which delivers any submission marked “For the Commissioner for Children”, without such submission being provided with a postage stamp or in an envelope. At the same time, the Office of the Commissioner for Children has set up the non-stop line 0950 439 342, which can be contacted by people (including children) who need help.

92. The process of mediating foster care and adoption, i.e. the process of mediation of substitute family care for a child is initiated if two basic conditions are met - parents do not or cannot provide personal care for the child and the child cannot be entrusted to substitute personal care (formal care of the child’s relatives and close persons). In April 2018, an amendment to the Act on SLPCaSG entered into force, the aim of which is, inter alia, by increasing and improving the availability of professional assistance to children and their families, strengthen prevention before taking any measures leading to substitute care. The expected benefit is also a reduced number of court decisions on the imposition of institutional care for children and their removal from the original family environment, an increased number of children returning to a biological family and the prevention of crisis situations. The core of these provisions is not only the establishment of a new type of facility (following the agreement of representatives of state and non-state facilities of SLPCaSG, a new type of facility (i.e. the Centre for Children and Families) was established, instead of former children’s homes, crisis centres and resocialization centres) but especially a fundamental change in the conditions of facilities - the CCFs create conditions for the development of outpatient and field measures and at the same time offer the possibility of the so-called voluntary stays of children and children with their parents.

93. Results of Coordination and Methodological Centre (CMC) activities since its inception:

a) Coordination of helping professions and institutions.

The aim of the CMC was to create such conditions in institutions and organizations for the effective support and protection of women experiencing violence, in order to prevent secondary victimization by professionals who provide help or come into contact with them. Therefore, the CMC specified the preconditions for systemic education based on quality standards (in the material Draft Quality Standards for Further Education in the Field of Violence against Women). Comprehensive education for the professions concerned includes e-learning courses on violence against women and 6 training manuals supplemented by handbooks, which are designed specifically for specific professions. CMC conducted 50 trainings in the field of violence against women, where a total of 485 people performing helping professions were trained, including field social workers operating in marginalized Roma communities. In the field of domestic violence, CMC organized 28 trainings, which were attended by 540 professionals. The aim of further education for organizations providing specialized support services for women experiencing violence and their children was to exchange good practice and unify procedures. During 13 educational events, 115 employees were trained. In the field of domestic violence, the CMC organized 4 trainings for organizations dedicated to victims of domestic violence, which were attended by 35 employees. The CMC also conducted two rounds of monitoring service providers, which showed that support for NGO projects from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism significantly increased the compliance of the provision of services in the field of support and the protection of women experiencing violence and their children and victims of domestic violence with the Council of Europe minimum standards.

94. b) Police and legal professions.

In cooperation with the Police Academy and the Presidium of the Police Force of the Slovak Republic (PF SR), the CMC carried out a Mapping of Procedures and Attitudes of Police Force Investigators in Cases of Violence against Women. The results were used in the development of methodologies for investigators, as well as for the first contact police. The methodological Guideline for Estimating the Risk of Violence against Women has been developed, which the police use in the process of assessing the risk of violence against women and their children. In cooperation with the Presidium of the Police Force of the Slovak Republic, a draft of the New Methodology of Procedure in the Case of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was prepared, and 247 police officers attended related lectures.

95. c) Psychology (counselling and expertise)

In the field of counselling, the CMC cooperates with the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. A professional handbook for psychologists working in the departments of counselling and psychological services of the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family was created for this area. In the expertise department, two analyses of the current situation have been conducted, including proposals on how to reduce the risk of repeated and secondary victimization in litigation with an emphasis on expertise, impartiality and quality of expert evidence in line with current knowledge on violence against women and its consequences for children. Recommendations from the analyses are addressed not only to the Ministry of

Justice of the Slovak Republic, but also to a wide expert community and clients of expert opinions, especially investigators, public prosecutor's office and judges.

96. d) Auxiliary professions and LGBTI

The CMC, in collaboration with relevant NGOs, conducted a Study on the Incidence of Domestic Violence against LGBTI People and developed a methodology outlining ways to approach victims of domestic violence, as well as a relevant manual and handbook for helping professions.

97. e) Programmes for work with perpetrators of violence against women The CMC material Standards and procedures for the introduction of social intervention programmes for perpetrators of violence against women proposes a system of implementation and accreditation of these social intervention programmes, which aim to reduce the risk of repeated (tertiary) victimization of women. The material was the basis for the preparation of the methodology, which was handed over to the Prison and Judicial Guard Corps of the Slovak Republic.

98. f) Trainers for helping professions CMC would not be able to manage its training activities without the involvement of experts from non-governmental organizations, who have worked as external lecturers in many trainings. In order to strengthen the teaching capacities of CMC, a coaching training was held at the beginning of the project for both psychosocial and legal professions. The total involvement of trainers in the training activities of the project represents 1084.5 hours for the area of violence against women.

99. g) Multi-Institutional Cooperation (MIS) This cooperation is one of the key activities of the CMC. Joint meetings of representatives of the institutions concerned took place in all eight regions. The starting documents of the CMC for the coordination of the MIS are the Methodology for the Functioning of Partnerships of Multi-Institutional Cooperation in the Field of Violence against Women and the Manual of Multi-Institutional Cooperation. In the field of crisis intervention and first contact with women, these are the Methodologies and Standards of Procedures of Parties involved of Multi-Institutional Cooperation in the First Contact with Women Experiencing Violence and Their Children. In the field of education, CMC organized a workshop for MIS coordinators from all over the Slovak Republic, as well as 7 workshops of regional Partnerships of multi-institutional cooperation (73 participants), where CMC presented its activities in RPN and DN (Violence and domestic violence issue solving), prepared a plan of activities or analysis of educational needs for the future. CMC has developed a training plan for regional teams and seminars with relevant manuals, e.g. Prevention and reduction of violence against women, with particular emphasis on multi-institutional cooperation.

100. h) Cooperation with the Council of Europe

In the area of police, public prosecutor's office and courts training, a "Fact finding mission" was carried out, on the basis of which a Training Manual for Trainers for the Police, Public Prosecutor's Office and Courts was developed. The manual is used in trainings for potential

new trainers from the ranks of the police force, the pedagogical staff of the Police Academy, as well as lawyers providing counselling to victims of violence against women. In cooperation with experts from the Council of Europe, the CMC organized a trainer's training based on the mentioned manual.

101. i) Cooperation with the Norwegian partner institution The CMC worked closely with the Norwegian Centre for Research on Violence and Traumatic Stress in the preparation and implementation of qualitative research Relationship mother-child in the context of partner violence against women (Očenášová, Smitková, 2017) and two representative surveys: Sexual Violence Against Women (Očenášová, Michalík, 2017) and Representative Survey on Domestic Violence in Slovakia (Filadelfiová, Gerbery, Vittek, 2017). As part of the exchange of knowledge and experience of the Norwegian police with the police in the Slovak Republic, the key speaker was a Norwegian investigator - a specialist in cases of violence against children and domestic violence.

102. j) Education system and primary prevention For the needs of public education, CMC prepared an Analysis of available educational programmes from kindergartens to universities, in which it proposed changes in education in the field of gender equality and violence against women for pupils as well as students of specialized subjects at universities. In cooperation with the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, amendments to methodological sheets and recommendations for pedagogical staff of primary and secondary schools were proposed. In cooperation with the Methodological Pedagogical Centre, workshops were also prepared in all regions of the Slovak Republic, as well as a professional handbook The Situation of Children, Witnesses of Domestic Violence, Challenges and Intervention Options. In the field of primary prevention, lectures were given at secondary schools throughout Slovakia on the need to prevent and eliminate gender-based and domestic violence for both teachers and pupils. 5,022 persons took part in 145 hours of training.

103. k) Information, education and awareness-raising activities As part of the CMC project, the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities launched a national media campaign BECAUSE I SAY NO on 11 April 2017, aimed at preventing sexual violence in intimate relationships among young people by raising awareness and information about this serious problem. The main goals of the campaign were to increase perceptiveness and awareness of sexual violence, reduce public tolerance towards sexual violence and open public debate. The primary target group was young people aged 15-25, the secondary target group was professionals who work with young people and/or come into professional contact with victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence. The main source of information was the website zastavmenasilie.sk, which underwent a major content and visual reconstruction. The campaign took place in the traditional media, in the online space, on social networks, in cinemas and at secondary and higher education institutions until the end of 2017. The campaign in the first phase was launched by two key visual themes and two related creative spots, which were placed on television, cinemas (reach: 295,687 spectators) and online space, taking into account the knowledge of the preferences of the target group. The aim of the two creative spots was to totally promote young people's self-confidence and sensitivity through a

clear message about the right to a true equal partnership in intimate relationships, as well as the right to reject stereotypical expectations in relationships and strengthen their ability to recognize and reject any forms of coercion and violence, especially sexual violence in intimate relationships. The first spot, which targeted girls and young women as the most frequent potential victims of sexual violence in intimate relationships, emphasized the clear expressive value of disagreement, whether clearly articulated or implied, with any sexual practice under any circumstances and at any stage of the relationship. The aim of the second spot was to warn boys and young men that by pressure on involuntary sexual practices they are committing not only undesirable and unacceptable behaviour and humiliation of their partner, but also a criminal offence. This spot breaks the damaging stereotypes associated with the connection between masculinity and uncontrollable sexuality and violent behaviour through the creative processing of the apathetic viewer effect ("bystander effect"). Gradually, personalities known to the target group expressed their support for the campaign through videos on social networks or in other creative ways close to them. The campaign also continuously communicated in a creative and accessible way key messages and statistics on violence against women, especially on the social networks Instagram and Facebook (F: Zastavme násilie (Let's Stop Violence)). During the campaign, accompanying events took place in the form of audiovisual educational lectures for students of secondary schools and later also universities throughout the Slovak Republic, which were attended by more than 4,100 students. The form of audiovisual lectures has proven to be an effective form of informal education of the target group, as the dynamics of the lecture correspond to the current rapid trend of young people's lives and use their ability to receive more information and stimuli very quickly at once. The CMC, through methodological support and the offer of proposals of standard procedures for helping and affected professions, provides conditions for effective and efficient protection and support for women experiencing violence and their children. The activities of the CMC are aimed at promoting the effective protection and support of women experiencing violence and their children and victims of domestic violence through the promotion and organization of multi-institutional cooperation and through the drafting of standard procedures. By supporting the activities of multi-institutional cooperation partnerships, which are organized at the regional level, it creates suitable conditions for combating violence as a cross-cutting social problem, in the solution of which both public institutions and NGOs must be involved. By 2018, the CMC ensured the creation of more than 20 professional materials containing methodological guidelines and recommendations concerning recommended procedures for cooperation between public institutions and non-governmental organizations, as well as procedures and work of institutions, e.g. in cooperation with the Presidium of the Police Force, procedures for estimating the risk of danger at the first contact were developed, the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic received a proposal for changes in the organization of expert activities for cases of domestic violence and an analytical study on aspects of expert activities in these specific cases was prepared for experts in psychology and psychiatry. For the needs of specialized counselling for women experiencing violence, methodological materials were developed in the Institute for Labour and Family Research □ Standards of providing specialized support services for women experiencing violence and their children (for the social area) □ Methodology of

providing specialized support services for women experiencing violence and their children (for the social area)

104. 1) Non-discrimination training

An important role in strengthening the gender equality agenda is played by the obligation to apply the so-called ex-ante conditions of “equality between women and men“ and “non-discrimination“, which make the use of the European Structural Funds (hereinafter referred to as the “ESF“) conditional on Member States by creating an adequate institutional mechanism for applying gender equality and the training of key actors. Closing the gap between women and men, with a particular focus on the labour market and education, is an integral part of the Operational Programme Human Resources. Education and training of entities involved in the implementation of ESF are also based on the Education Strategy, which aims to ensure a continuous system of education of administrative capacities involved in managing authorities to approach and understand the principles of gender equality and equal opportunities and their application in the overall process from planning and preparation of calls, projects, their evaluation, management, implementation up to evaluation and publicity. Training on basic principles and concepts is provided through a central coordinating body within the central training of administrative capacities for the ESF Management System. The basic module lasting 1.5 h contains basic information. The professional guarantor of this education is the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic as an administrator of horizontal principles of the equality between men and women and non-discrimination (hereinafter referred to as the “Administrator HP EMW and ND”). The next level is specific full-time training focused on specific areas of application of horizontal principles in individual operational programmes. The aim of this training is to approach non-discrimination, equality between men and women, disability and horizontal principles and to demonstrate the practical procedure, how to follow the principles of non-discrimination and equality between women and men in programmes and projects and how to integrate them into the overall process from call planning through project preparation, their evaluation, management and implementation up to evaluation and promotion. This training takes two days. The following number of administrative capacities was trained in specific education in 2018: Table Number of trained administrative capacities by the administrator HP Implementing Agency OP Environmental Quality OP Integrated Infrastructure OP Human Resources INTEREG Total Men 8 47 28 17 8 108 Women 35 67 21 50 17 190 Total 43 114 49 67 25 298 Source: 1 HP administrator internal reports

	Implementing Agency	OP Environmental Quality	OP Integrated Infrastructure	OP Human Resources	INTEREG	total
Men	8	47	28	17	8	108
Women	35	67	21	50	17	190
Total	43	114	49	67	25	298

105. The Centre for Children and Families may re-admit a young adult who, after reaching the age of majority, has not requested continued care if he or she so requests within one year -

a response to a situation where a young person recklessly leaves the facility after reaching the age of majority even though he or she is not ready for independent living. In order to intensify support for ensuring of housing, they were a reason to change the regulation of support for young adults. The CCF pays an independence allowance of 10-multiple of the amount of the subsistence minimum for a dependent child. The contribution can be paid in kind, in financial form or in a combined form. Unlike in the previous period, a young adult who is continuously provided with social services in a social service facility is also entitled to this allowance. A new support tool is a contribution from the municipality. The municipality, as well as the facility, provides an allowance for independence to those young adults who are entitled to an allowance to facilitate independence in the centre, in the amount of 30% of this allowance. The provision is, similarly to other allowances for young adults, linked to the application (within 30 days after the end of the implementation of measures in the centre) and the condition is that the young adult (as a child) has a permanent residence in the municipality at the time of placement. At the same time, the municipality can decide in what form it will provide the contribution, and also that it provides it in several parts (in the interest of youth security, the full amount of the contribution is provided no later than half a year from the legal validity of the decision), thereby improving the fulfilment of the purpose of funding provided by municipalities.

106. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic approved on 30 December 2015 under number 2015-17815/63477:4-10A0 with effect from 1 February 2016 Framework curricula and educational standards of education for attaining lower secondary education according to Section 30 para. 5 and Section 42 para. 4 of the Education Act. The framework curricula also include the Framework Curricula for schools with the language of instruction of the national minority in full-time study. Based on the Statistical Classification of Fields of Education, the letter F denotes lower secondary vocational education attained by completing the two-year educational programmes of secondary vocational schools (former vocational schools, fields of study with specially adapted curricula). Such schools must respond to needs of individuals, many of whom have not continued their vocational training after completing compulsory schooling. They must also be flexible and enable individuals to be able to reconcile their educational responsibilities with work and family responsibilities (placement of children of studying parents, etc.). An applicant who has not completed the primary school education programme in the last year or has not successfully completed the last year may be admitted to the 1st year of the lower secondary vocational education programme. Through compensation, early school leavers are offered opportunities to be reintegrated into the education and training process, for example in the form of a second chance. During studies in such a field of apprenticeship study, it is also possible to take a course to complete lower secondary education, thus removing the obstacle to progressing to full-time study at secondary school, either within fields of apprenticeship study (secondary vocational education) or fields of study (full secondary vocational or general education). More detailed information is given in the material “Proposal of steps for a conceptual solution to support the mechanism of supplementation of basic education“, which contains, inter alia, the Framework Curriculum for schools with the Slovak language in full-time study, the Framework Curriculum for schools with the national minority language as a

language of instruction in full-time study, and the Framework Curriculum for 2-year fields of study, the Framework Curriculum for 2-year fields of study with the national minority language as a language of instruction.¹⁰

Statistical data from the Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information

Education to obtain lower secondary education. Number of pupils who completed the course in a given year (as of 15 September of the following school year)

School year	Number of students		
	Primary schools	Secondary schools	Total
2015/2016	131	718	849
2016/2017	110	880	990
2017/2018	55	815	870

107. The Healthy Regions organization plans to continue implementing the activities of the National Project Healthy Communities in 2020–2022 under the name Healthy Communities 2B. The main goal of the continuation of the project is the implementation and development of health mediation for the inhabitants of MRCs. The main activity of the project is to improve the situation of MRCs in the area of social determinants of health. It is an activity based on the previous long-term successful practice of the so-called health mediation, which engaged and educated lay people from target communities to carry out systematic work at the community level with a programme emphasis especially on education, prevention and assistance in bridging barriers in the access to health care services. In their work, the HEAs have so far focused specifically on educational and awareness-raising activities aimed at increasing health literacy and the level of personal and communal hygiene, as well as preventive activities focused on postpartum care, breastfeeding, narcotic substance abuse, preventive examinations, compulsory vaccination, early identification of infectious diseases and assistance activities aimed at increasing mutual trust and improving relations and communication between the MRC residents and healthcare providers. As in the previous phases of the project, these types of interventions will form a substantial part of the main activity in phase 2B. Part of the activities is implemented through cooperation with a wide network (a total of 852) of healthcare providers (providers of general care for adults, providers of general outpatient care for children and adolescents and providers of institutional health care). Eight HEAs operate in five institutional health care facilities. Cooperation with hospitals is ensured in the contractual form. Of particular importance, an individual form of cooperation with the network of field assistants is approached to patients at the National Institute of Tuberculosis, Lung Diseases and Thoracic Surgery (Vyšné Hágy). The Regional Public Health Offices in the Slovak Republic, primary

¹⁰ <https://www.minedu.sk/20598-sk/uzitocne-odkazy/>

schools, kindergartens, community centres, field social work, Emergency Medical Service Operations Centres and other relevant institutions and helping professions also participate in cooperation within other National Projects financed from the European Structural and Investment Funds. The results show an increase in the positive attitude of marginalized Roma communities while using health care provision.

108. Foster care is one of several temporary measures which, in accordance with the legal order of the Slovak Republic, we classify as substitute care. The conditions for the provision of allowances by which the state supports substitute care of the child and their amount are regulated by Act No. 627/2005 Coll. on allowances for the support of substitute childcare, as amended. Under that law, the foster family is provided with several types of allowances, including a one-off allowance for a child when he or she is entrusted to substitute care, a one-off allowance for a child on cessation of substitute care, a repeated allowance for a child entrusted to substitute care, a repeated allowance to a substitute parent and a special re-allowance to a substitute parent. In relation to the provision of professional assistance to foster families we state that children entrusted to foster care are provided, in accordance with Act No. 305/2005 Coll. on the social and legal protection of children and on social guardianship and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended, with protection and care through the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, the Centre for International Legal Protection of Children and Youth, a municipality, higher territorial unit, or through an accredited entity. The body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship or the facility where the child has been placed or an accredited entity provides assistance and social counselling, if necessary and with their consent, to the child for whom substitute family care has been intermediated and to the natural person to whom the child has been entrusted to substitute family care, facilitate fulfilling the purpose of substitute family care. Similarly, a natural person to whom a child has been entrusted to substitute personal care or a natural person who has submitted a proposal to entrust a child to substitute personal care has the possibility to request the preparation for performing substitute family care. The preparation of this natural person for the performance of substitute family care is carried out by the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship or an accredited entity that performs the preparation for substitute family care.

109. In order to provide professional assistance to substitute parents, the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship shall propose to the natural person to whom a child is entrusted to substitute personal care, the foster parent or guardian who personally cares for the child if he or she needs professional assistance to facilitate the provision of a substitute family environment for the child and the provision or ensuring the provision of social counselling or other professional counselling, the implementation or provision of the implementation of measures to facilitate the resolution of educational or family problems, or in the exercise of the child's legal rights. The body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship shall continuously monitor the performance of substitute personal care (the formal care of the child's relatives and close persons) and foster care and report to the court at least every six months on the quality of childcare in substitute

personal care or foster care, including whether the parents can take over the minor into personal care.

110. The National Programme for the Development of Education System (NPDES) determines the direction of the Slovak education for the next ten years (2018–2027). The document, which also includes six sub-objectives for regional education system, contains measures developed into an implementation plan, which consists of five two-year consecutive action plans. The first action plan for the period 2018–2019 and the second action plan for the period 2020–2021 also contain measures included in the programme statement of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the years 2016–2020 (hereinafter referred to as “PSG 2016–2020”).¹¹ The NPDES is focused, inter alia, on strengthening the inclusion and integration of the educational system in the Slovak Republic as a whole, from pre-primary education to further adult education. It proposes to increase the inclusiveness of our schools in relation to pupils with special educational needs (hereinafter referred to as “SEN”), health disadvantages and pupils from the SDE.

The NPDES aims to increase the degree of integration of pupils and students with SEN. However, the resulting model does not take into account the complete dissolution of special schools or with full integration of pupils and students with SEN.

111. Regarding the implemented and planned steps aimed at creating inclusive educational conditions of the regional education system, we present:

In order to improve the level of the educational environment for pupils with disabilities in regional education system, the Minister of Education has approved the material “Model of objectification of the number of professional staff in the school”. It contains measures to make the education of pupils with SEN more effective without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunities in the inclusive education system. Based on this material, the Education Act implemented an obligation in 2017 for primary and secondary schools that are not special schools and educate more than 20 individually included pupils with disabilities, except for pupils with disabilities educated in special classes to employ a professional employee - a school special teacher, school speech therapist, school psychologist or medical teacher. The introduction of this obligation also follows from the Programme Statement of the Government 2016–2020, in which the Government of the Slovak Republic undertook to increase the number of professional employees at schools. Schools have the opportunity to employ these professional employees from a higher coefficient per pupil, which will be credited to them within the budget. Since 2016, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic has announced a call within the Operational Programme Human Resources for the submission of demand-oriented projects entitled At primary school more successful (with an allocation of EUR 50 million from the European Social Fund) and since 2018 also a call At primary school more successful II (with an allocation of EUR 11.2 million from the European Social Fund). The priority objective of the implementation of the calls is to reduce and prevent early school leaving by promoting access to quality education in the regional education system, including formal, informal and common learning pathways, leading to the reintegration of unsuccessful pupils into education and vocational training. The specific

¹¹ <https://www.minedu.sk/17786-sk/narodny-program-rozvoja-vychovy-a-vzdelavania/>

objective of the calls is to increase inclusiveness and equal access to quality education and to improve the outcomes and competences of children and pupils. The obtained funds can be used by primary schools to create jobs for teaching assistants, teacher assistants and an inclusive team (special pedagogue, school psychologist, social pedagogue). Since 2019, the MPC has been implementing the National Project “Assisting Professions in the Education of Children and Pupils” (with an allocation of EUR 40.6 million from the European Social Fund) aimed at implementing the principles of inclusive education in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools through support for teaching assistants, assistants for pupils with disabilities and members of an inclusive team (school psychologist, special pedagogue and social pedagogue) at schools. The project follows on from the Project “School Open to All”. Every year, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic also announces calls to support development projects aimed at debarrierizing schools in the regional education system and increasing the effectiveness of the education of pupils with disabilities at schools.

112. In 2016 and 2017, education programmes for pupils with disabilities were updated and approved (Section 94 para. 2 of the Education Act), which are part of the SEP (Section 6 of the Education Act); on the basis of practical suggestions, they were changed by amendments regulating the conditions for compulsory teaching of subjects of special pedagogical support for pupils with disabilities educated in the school integration by introducing the obligation to indicate (recommend or not recommend) the need for special pedagogical support by an educational facility of counselling and prevention that also identifies specific or particular subjects to apply the need for special pedagogical support. The aim of this regulation was to improve the conditions of education of pupils with disabilities in the school integration through individual assessment of the need to complete subjects of special pedagogical support, and thus prevent the obligation of pupils with disabilities to complete specific subjects for pupils due to the nature of their necessary and to create the conditions for the efficient use of funds earmarked for that purpose. Further regulate the use of individual educational programmes in the education of pupils in the form of school integration and the use of reports from diagnostic examinations performed in school facilities of educational counselling and prevention.

113. From the first and second implementation action plan of the NPDES (for the period 2018–2019 and 2020–2021) we draw attention to measures in the field of inclusive education of the regional education system, which are continuously implemented from the level of the regional education system section:

1. Measure: Developing a strategy for the gradual development of inclusive education in Slovakia

Method of implementation:

- Establishment of a permanent working group consisting of important actors of education at all levels, experts from practice and academic environment, including foreign experts from countries with developed inclusive education and experience in successful implementation of pro-inclusive changes in the education system, as well as experts from all relevant sectors (health care, labour and social affairs, home affairs, justice, defence).

- Elaboration of a strategy for the development of inclusive education and upbringing in the Slovak Republic at all levels of education.

2. Measure: Creation of material and technical conditions to ensure the fulfilment of needs of children and pupils with special educational needs

Method of implementation:

- Providing funding for development projects aimed at debarrierisation and increasing the effectiveness of the education of pupils with disabilities.

3. Measure: Increasing the number of professional staff at schools, especially teacher assistants, social educators, school psychologists and special educators

Method of implementation:

- Coverage of the demand of school founders for teacher assistants for pupils with disabilities.

- Ensuring the sustainability of the challenge funded by the EU funds - At primary school more successful. Creation of jobs for assistants for pupils with disabilities and members of inclusive teams (school psychologist, special pedagogue, social pedagogue).

- Ensuring the sustainability of the National Project "School Open to All". Implementation of the model of inclusive education in the environment of kindergartens and primary schools, support of informal education of children from MRCs and children who are outside the school system. Creation of jobs for professional employees.

- Systematic provision of school psychologists at schools.

4. Measure: Improving the activities of school facilities for educational counselling and prevention

Method of implementation:

- Ensuring uniform methodological guidance of state and private CPPPaPs and Special-Pedagogical Counselling Centres (hereinafter referred to as "SPCC") in all areas of their activities. Departments of SPCC established as part of the school - they will become independent entities. Taking local and regional requirements into account when networking. Ensuring the provision of comprehensive care from the level of one legal entity - the legal regulations will regulate the possibility of combining CPPPaP and SPCC. Establishment of the conditions for the establishment and operation of CPPPaP, SPCC with the number of at least 5 full-time professional employees. Introduction of uniform financing of state CPPPaP and SPCC, including non-state advisory facilities.

- Ensuring a unified software solution for the registration of clients, professional and methodological activities in connection with the departmental information system (financing) in CPPPaP and SPCC.

- Strengthening the personnel capacities of school facilities for educational counselling and prevention.

- Provision of appropriate testing tools designed for the correct diagnostics of the special educational needs of children and pupils, including any special educational needs of pupils resulting from their development in a socially disadvantaged environment. Use of culturally and language-neutral test batteries in MRC environments.

5. Measure: Elimination of two-shift operation at primary schools, especially in localities with a high concentration of marginalized Roma communities

Method of implementation:

Securing financial resources from the budget chapter of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for the elimination of two-shift operation at primary schools.

Within the creation of the system/concept of inclusive education in the conditions of Slovak education system and investigating the relationship between the type and level of bilingualism and executive functions in children from the SDE/MRC and from the common environment, the aim is to determine the level of understanding in the mother tongue and Slovak language and the relationship with executive functions in bilingual children from MRC (local variants of Romani) and bilingual children from families with higher socio-economic status in preschool and early school age.

Current status of the solution: The developed verbal - pictorial methodology (speech comprehension and executive functions) was tested on a sample of clients of the children's centre of the research institute. It is probable that the ceiling effect occurs in children with standard development at the age of 6 years. Theoretical findings were processed into a study of executive functions and their relationship to bilingualism and other areas of psychological development.

114. An important change in the support of care for disabled children who depend on the help of another natural person is the extension of possibilities of financial contributions for personal assistance (fully financed from the state budget) from 2018 from the system of financial contributions to compensate for social consequences of severe disability.

The purpose of personal assistance is to activate, support the social inclusion of a natural person with a severe disability and support his or her independence and ability to make decisions and influence the fulfilment of family roles, performance of work, training and leisure activities. Personal assistance cannot be conditioned on the type of disability, the degree of disability or the severity of disability.

The financial contribution to personal assistance can also be granted to children for whom measures are carried out in the centres for children and families in a residential form on the basis of a court decision and to young adults (young people who were placed as children in a facility on the basis of a court decision and the facility continues, based on their application, in providing assistance in a residential form), namely

- for children with severe disabilities placed in professional substitute families (it is not possible for personal assistance to be provided by a professional substitute parent)
- for accompanying a child to and from school if the school is outside the premises of this facility.
- for young adults to promote their autonomy and independence.

115. In April 2018, an amendment to the Act on SLPCaSG entered into force, the aim of which is, inter alia, by increasing and improving the availability of professional assistance to children and their families, strengthen prevention before taking any measures leading to substitute care. The expected benefit is also a reduced number of court decisions on the imposition of institutional care for children and their removal from the original family environment, an increased number of children returning to a biological family and the prevention of crisis situations. The core of the new provisions is not only the creation of a

new type of facility (following the agreement of representatives of state and non-state facilities of SLPCaSG, a new type of facility - the Centre for Children and Families - was created, instead of former children's homes, crisis centres and resocialization centres), but especially a fundamental change in the conditions of the performance of facilities - the CCF create conditions for the development of outpatient and field measures and at the same time offer the possibility of the so-called voluntary stays of children and children with parents. At the same time, a space was created for support and assistance for families with children with disabilities or with another disabled family member (parent). Outpatient and field measures for these families include e.g. skills training, programmes to adapt to a new situation (sudden change in health status, admission of a child with a disability, etc.) in the family, at home. Current tasks also include improving the availability of measures for families in the form of accommodation (training, adaptation ... in agreement with the parent and on the basis of a recommendation from the SLPCaSG body).

116. In 2018 and 2019, the amount of the financial contribution for care was repeatedly and significantly increased. If the care is performed by a person of working age, the amount of the contribution currently equals the amount of EUR 430.35 per month for the care of one person with a severe disability, which corresponds to the level of the so-called net minimum wage in the SR. When caring for two or more persons with severe disabilities, the current amount of the contribution is EUR 572.36. If a natural person with a severe disability is a dependent child, the above-mentioned amount of the contribution is increased by EUR 100 per month. At the same time, dependent children have a higher income protection threshold than other dependent persons, three times the amount of the subsistence income (per family member). If the care is performed by a person who already has an income in the form of a pension, the amount of the financial contribution is currently EUR 215.18 per month for the care of one person with a severe disability and EUR 286.18 for the care of two or more people with a severe disability. At the same time, the rate for one hour of personal assistance was increased for the purposes of the financial contribution to personal assistance. Personal assistance is provided by an assistant who is paid by a person with a severe disability. The amount of the financial contribution depends on the amount of assistance on which the person with a severe disability depends in individual activities. Currently, the rate for one hour of personal assistance is EUR 4.18. In the case of a financial contribution to personal assistance, in 2018 the possibility was introduced to provide this contribution also to a person for whom measures are carried out in a facility of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship on a residence basis based on a court decision in the home environment of the employee of this facility and also to the person who is provided with care after the end of the execution of the court decision by completing the age of majority in the facility of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship. In addition to expenditures on the above-mentioned financial contributions, the state also spends funds on the payment of selected types of insurance premiums under the health insurance and social insurance system, both for persons performing care and for persons performing personal assistance.

117. On 18 September 2019, the National Council of the Slovak Republic approved a bill amending Act No. 571/2009 Coll. on parental allowance and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended, which increased the parental allowance from EUR 220.70 to EUR 270, and up to the amount of EUR 370 for persons who were gainfully employed before the birth of a child, paid sickness insurance premiums or were covered by sickness benefits and, due to the care of the child, they were provided with maternity allowance. This will be a general increase in the parental allowance, which will also include families with children suffering from severe disabilities. We add that in the case of families with children who have long-term unfavourable health conditions, the parental allowance is provided up to the age of six, while for other families the duration of the parental allowance is limited to three years of age. Due to the fact that a person whose child has a long-term unfavourable health condition is provided with the parental allowance three years longer, the total amount of parental allowance received by this person is significantly higher than the total amount of parental allowance provided to persons whose child does not have long-term unfavourable health status.

118. Representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic regularly participate in seminars and conferences, at which they present not only the progress in the implementation of the Convention but also current issues that occur in the implementation of the Convention. We state as an example the following: - meetings of the Working Group High Level Group of Representatives of the Member States on Disability and the Working Group of the European Commission on the European Accessibility Act - April 2016, May 2016, June 2016, September 2016, November 2016, December 2016, February 2017, December 2017, - 14 to 15 March 2016 meeting of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (hereinafter referred to as the “CLSAF”), at which representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic presented the processes of implementation of the Convention, - 13 May 2016 - Beneficium (Slovak Sclerosis Multiplex Association), a panel discussion on rights of persons with disabilities in the context of the Convention, - 26 to 27 May 2016 - training of employees of administrative capacities of the Horizontal Principles Equality between Men and Women and Non-Discrimination, - 7 to 9 July 2016 - Pohoda Festival, within the information stand of the Operational Programme Human Resources (hereinafter referred to as “OP HR”) representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic presented the progress in the implementation of the Convention in the conditions of the Slovak Republic, - 27 October 2016 - conference organized under the auspices of Smile as a Gift, whose representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic presented measures from the National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities aimed at children with disabilities and their life in society, - 16 to 18 January 2017 - CLSAF meeting, at which the representatives presented the Report on the implementation of measures resulting from the National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for 2014–2020 and a proposal for its update, - 22 to 23 June 2017 - Conference on the Implementation of the Convention, - 5 October 2017 - Nonhandicap Incheba BA, representatives presented the final recommendation of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the conference “Current state and perspectives of

exercising the rights of persons with disabilities“ organized by the National Council of Disabled Citizens in the SR, - 26 to 27 November 2017 - conference in Košice on the topic Personal Assistance, a proven way of integrating people with disabilities. The material The Final Report on the Implementation of Measures Resulting from the National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for 2014–2020 will be the third summary report, documenting the fulfilment of tasks for 2018–2019 and work on its preparation will begin in early 2020.

The education of health professionals is carried out in accordance with valid legislation, especially pursuant to Act No. 578/2004 Coll. Section 42 para. 1 and 2 “A healthcare professional is obliged to participate in lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is the continuous renewal, deepening and maintenance of acquired professional competence in accordance with the development of the relevant fields of study throughout the performance of the medical profession. The participation of a health professional in a professional-scientific event, which is focused on the presentation of a pharmaceutical product with the participation of drug manufacturers, is not considered as lifelong learning. Lifelong learning for health professionals of the relevant health profession is provided by the employer, professional companies of the Slovak Medical Society and the chamber in which the health professional is registered.

(Section 62 (2) to (12)), alone or in cooperation with educational establishments or other internationally recognized professional societies or professional associations and providers, unless otherwise provided for in paragraph 4.“

According to para. 5 of the cited Act “Evaluation of lifelong learning is performed by the chamber responsible for keeping the register (Section 62 paras. 2 to 12). The Chamber may carry out this assessment independently or in cooperation with an internationally recognized organization for the allocation of credits for lifelong learning of health professionals in the relevant health profession. The Chamber continuously monitors and evaluates the level of non-accredited training activities, either separately or in cooperation with an internationally recognized organization for evaluating the level of non-accredited training activities of health professionals in the relevant health profession. According to the requirements of the Accreditation Commission (Section 40 para. 1), the Chamber also co-participates in the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the level of further education of health professionals.“

According to the Concept of Health Care in the Field of Paediatrics, the Concept of Health Care in the Field of General Care for Children and Adolescents, the Concept of Health Care in the Field of Neonatology, the Concept of Health Care in the Field of Paediatric Surgery and in others, in relation to the paediatric patient, lifelong learning and cooperation are ensured at the national as well as international levels. The concepts of the specialized fields of study in question are published in the Bulletin of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic. Paediatricians work closely with international professional associations of doctors and health professionals, are members of the European Academy of Paediatrics in the Union of Medical Specialists and the European Society of Outpatient Paediatricians, in whose annual meetings they regularly attend.

119. With effect from 1 January 2019, the “Standard Prevention Procedure for: Care for the newborn and the mother according to the principles of the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative - support of relationship and lactation” was approved (hereinafter referred to as “SP - BFHI”). The document is conceived as a methodology for the implementation of ten principles for successful breastfeeding within the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative project in Slovak hospitals. SP - BFHI is based on the document of the World Health Organization (hereinafter referred to as the “WHO”) for BFHI, revised in 2018. In addition to monitoring infant feeding, this standard specifies the monitoring of other indicators of compliance with the principles of the SP BFHI. With effect from 1 June 2019, Act No. 139/2019 Coll., amending Act No. 578/2004 Coll., the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic has a mechanism for verifying and evaluating their compliance with standard procedures for prevention, standard diagnostic procedures and standard therapeutic procedures and compliance with the internal patient safety assessment system and minimum requirements for the internal patient safety assessment system, which is a clinical audit.

120. Since 2018, the Healthy Regions organization has launched the HEA pilot project for members of the MRC in hospitals as one of the activities of the National Project Healthy Communities 2A within the framework of cooperation in a total of six hospitals. This pilot project also includes the prevention of cases of ill-treatment in obstetrics. Activities at hospitals are focused on the intermediation of information - streamlining communication between the patient and hospital staff, or between the patient’s relatives and hospital staff, providing information, improving knowledge and supporting patients’ skills and motivation to comply with clinical and public health recommendations; improving the knowledge and skills of the patient in the field of health services - orientation in the health system; helping the patient follow clinical recommendations outside of hospital; assistance to the patient in overcoming the psychosocial burden associated with a stay in an institutional care medical facility; bridging communication barriers, spreading health education, increasing health literacy. Based on the implementation of activities in practice, we record positive reactions from clients from MRCs, positive reactions from hospitals, the presence of some AOZN in maternity wards, exchange of good experience between hospitals in the use of AOZN in wards and cooperation between AOZN and HEA in the field as well as other field workers. In 2020, we plan to expand the activity to other institutional health care facilities. A special programme for 8 municipalities and towns, Healthy Communities 3A, is being implemented in the Bratislava Region, financed with the amount of EUR 303,557.00. A total of EUR 13,232,112.00 was spent on the National Project Healthy Communities 2A in 2018 alone.

121. In relation to this recommendation, we state that local programmes to fight infectious disease - tuberculosis are developed by experts for certain smaller territorial units (e.g. HEAs) if the given area has a high incidence of tuberculosis and/or MDR-TB, coincidence of HIV/TBC. The tasks and goals of the programme are adapted to the conditions (social, cultural, economic) in the given area. They use local possibilities and involve local authorities, experts and the public in the fight, while providing assistance from higher levels (mainly professional, financial). Surveillance of the occurrence of infectious diseases and the adoption of effective measures to protect the population against them is provided by the

Public Health Office in cooperation with health professionals. It monitors changes in the nature of the disease, its occurrence, treatment results, etc. ECDC provides tuberculosis surveillance in the EU. It collects data through the individual national centres, which send the data obtained electronically via the TESSY system. In the fight against tuberculosis (part of the 7th priority task), the Slovak Republic proceeds in accordance with the goals, tasks and instruments of the State Health Policy and it uses as a basis the goals of international programmes and strategies as well as WHO recommendations for national tuberculosis programmes. Slovakia is one of the best in the world in terms of protecting its citizens from tuberculosis, but we nevertheless have areas and risk groups where we must be careful not to get tuberculosis out of control. The public health authorities of the Slovak Republic as well as in cooperation with other departments (e.g. neonatology workplaces) organize and perform vaccination against tuberculosis, its control and solution to complications after vaccination, if vaccination is ordered by the regional public health office in emergency situations. They are actively looking for patients for pulmonary and non-pulmonary tuberculosis and people at increased risk for tuberculosis. They ensure mandatory reporting of newly diagnosed tuberculosis diseases, recurrences and reporting of tuberculosis treatment according to international valid regulations and perform epidemiological analysis of tuberculosis and non-specific diseases of the respiratory system through regional experts and the chief expert of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic. Specialized outpatient clinics implement an outpatient, directly controlled phase of antituberculous treatment in pulmonary and extrapulmonary forms of tuberculosis. Patients ill and at risk of tuberculosis are treated for a specified period of time according to the methodical instructions. They indicate inpatient care for patients where hospitalization is required for diagnostics or treatment. Professional-methodical management of care in the field of pneumology and phthisiology is provided by the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic in cooperation with the main expert of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic. Data on tuberculosis in Slovakia (incidence, diagnostics, treatment and its results) are collected in the National Register of Tuberculosis Patients, which is located at the National Institute of Tuberculosis, Lung Diseases and Thoracic Surgery in Vyšné Hágy.



Source: Prof. MUDr. Ivan Solovič, CSc., WHO Consultant for TBC, Head of the First Department of Pneumophthisiology, National Institute of Tuberculosis, Lung Diseases and Thoracic Surgery, **Global Ministerial Conference on Ending the Tuberculosis Epidemic**

in the Era of Sustainable Development held on 16 to 17 November 2017 Moscow, the Russian Federation.

122. The implementation of the Healthy Communities 2A project contributes to the elimination of the incidence of infectious diseases, while outpatient paediatricians for children and adolescents and general practitioners for adults are also involved in the active support of patients. Newly detected cases of TBC of the lungs in the paediatric and adult population are mainly in the regions of the Prešov self-governing region, where hygienic conditions have not yet significantly improved. A significant benefit in the control of high-risk settlements is training activities and control over treatment and regular examinations of patients after discharge from hospitalization, carried out by trained HEAs. At the same time, HEAs invites patients for preventive examinations and vaccinations, we vaccinate at-risk groups at specified intervals against pneumococcal infections and influenza, which are covered by public health insurance. Through educational activities, assistants help remove prejudices and concerns of Roma about prevention and vaccination, and at the same time emphasize to patients the importance of the length of TBC pharmacotherapy after discharge from hospital, in an effort to prevent the development of resistant strains of tuberculosis. The development of the epidemiological situation in Slovakia confirms that so far we have tuberculosis as the most serious infectious disease under control. Preventive interventions and measures with the aim of eradicating infectious diseases in Roma communities of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic and the Public Health Office of the Slovak Republic are continuously addressed by the administration of action plans and projects. The issue of prevention and eradication of infectious diseases in Roma communities is not only an issue of the Ministry of Health, but is also a problem that needs to be addressed in a broader context.

123. The provision of health care provided to women in relation to reproduction is regulated in the scope of prevention, diagnostics and treatment, including planned parenthood and infertility treatment. The concept of health care in the field of gynaecology and obstetrics - Bulletin of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic Number: 28494-1/2006-OZSO of 3 January 2007. Within the scope of its competence, the Ministry of Health continuously addresses the care for the healthy development of the female population in the area of prevention, diagnostics, treatment and dispensarization of gynaecological diseases. It deals with physiological and pathological childbirth as well as supporting the fertility of women by evaluating the physiology and solving the pathology of a woman's reproductive system in all periods of her life and records the declining trend of teenage pregnancies, abortions of Slovak women and sexually transmitted diseases. It presents a suitable way of implementation of Art. 24 of the Convention. In the period 2020–2021, it plans to develop standard clinical procedures in the field of reproductive health of women and men in matters of control, diagnostics and treatment of infertility and planned parenthood, including new natural methods based on evidence. (Report of the 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, 16–19 September 2019)

124. From a professional point of view, we are of the opinion that there is no ideal contraception and none of the forms of contraception available today will guarantee absolute protection against conception. On a broader scale, contraception can be understood as a partial protection against unwanted pregnancy using contraceptive methods that are intended not only for women but also for men. Medicines that contain a substance preventing conception, getting pregnant as contraceptives are not included in the list of officially set prices or in the list of categorized medicines, as conception and pregnancy are a natural physiological condition that cannot be classified as ill. According to Section 8 letter a) of Act No. 577/2004 Coll. on the extent of health care reimbursed on the basis of public health insurance and on reimbursements for services related to the provision of health care, as amended, on the basis of public health insurance, health care is not reimbursed which is not indicated for health reasons. According to Section 7 para. 1 of Act No. 363/2011 Coll. on the scope and conditions of reimbursement for medicines, medical devices and dietetic foods on the basis of public health insurance, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 363/2011 Coll.”), the categorization of medicines takes into account the effectiveness of the medicinal product confirmed by medical trials conducted on the principles of evidence-based medicine in the following: saving lives, curing the disease, alleviating the symptoms of the disease, preventing serious health complications, preventing the disease from deteriorating or progressing to a chronic stage, effective prophylaxis against the disease, the efficacy and safety of the medicine confirmed under the conditions of common therapeutic practice, the benefit of the medicine in reducing pathological nature and mortality, recommended therapeutic procedures taking into account cost-effectiveness and the expected impact on public health insurance funds. According to Section 16 para. 4 letter e) of Act No. 363/2011 Coll., the list of categorized medicines may not include any medicine intended solely for the regulation of conception (contraceptives), a medicine for the treatment of erectile dysfunction, a medicine used for weight loss or quitting smoking, for the treatment of tobacco dependence, to moderate the urge to smoke or to alleviate the smoking withdrawal symptoms. According to data from the database of registered drugs at the State Institute for Drug Control, 387 types of hormonal contraceptives and 13 types of contraceptives for topical use that may be prescribed to a woman by a healthcare provider and collected by the woman based on the prescription in a pharmacy for full payment. The pharmacist will provide the woman with the necessary information about the product and how it is used. Contraceptives as well as other methods of contraception are available in the Slovak Republic and, if the use of contraceptives is medically justified, it is reimbursed from the public health insurance by the patient’s health insurance company. An individually assessed application for a specific method of reimbursement makes it possible to better consider the health risks of treatment and make efficient use of public resources for health care. Prescribing contraception indicated for health reasons is generally available and fully covered by public health insurance. All types of contraception and reproductive health care are available in the Slovak Republic. Pursuant to the Education Act, the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic publishes the state educational programmes for medical field of study preparing students for the exercise of the medical profession at secondary medical schools. The state educational programmes within general and vocational theoretical education contain thematic units focused on sexual education and reproductive health. Even during practical teaching and professional clinical

practice in treatment and assistance, students become acquainted, inter alia, with the issue of pregnancy at a young age and sexually transmitted diseases. As part of the further education of health professionals, the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic sets minimum standards for specialized study programmes, minimum standards for certification study programmes and minimum standards for lifelong learning study programmes. The extent of theoretical knowledge in the minimum standards for the relevant fields of study includes specific knowledge related to sexual health.

125. Methodological and legislative guidelines and recommendations of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic in accordance with the child's right to protection against physical, psychological and sexual violence is sufficient informing of the risk, ensured in an age-appropriate manner, that a child may become a victim of sexual abuse, exploitation and child pornography. In direct educational and training activities, emphasis is placed on reducing this risk, with a special focus on the risk arising from the use of the Internet and social networks. The content of education for marriage and parenthood (hereinafter referred to as "EMP") is set out in the curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic in 2010. EMP has a markedly interdisciplinary character, as it affects all areas and stages of human life. It integrates pedagogical, biological, psychological and sociological knowledge about adolescence, sexuality, marriage, family life and intimate relationships. For this reason, it is implemented through individual educational subjects according to the specifics and possibilities of the given school education level, e.g. in the subjects of Slovak language and literature, elementary sciences, natural sciences, homeland studies, biology, civics, ethical education and religious education. As of 1 September 2015, the innovated state educational programme for primary schools and the innovated state educational programme for grammar schools in which EMP is included among the cross-cutting themes are in force. The content of the EMP is based on the Concept of Education for Marriage and Parenthood prepared on the basis of the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 389/1996, which approved the Concept of State Family Policy, as well as the Comprehensive Programme for the Prevention of HIV/AIDS in the Slovak Republic, adopted by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 390/1996 and the National Health Promotion Programme approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 659/1991. This concept implicitly includes the issue of sexual education elaborated in the curricula for primary and secondary schools and represents a proposal acceptable to various opinion groups. An essential part of the preparation is to master sexuality in such a way that, in the sense of the definition of sexual health, it "enriches the personality, improves its relations with people and develops the capacity for love" (WHO Copenhagen, 1974). The process of EMP implementation is tied to the age category of students and the degree of their physical, mental and social maturity, as well as to the specific conditions of the school. An EMP coordinator is recommended at each school, who is responsible for its implementation in the school education. The educational programme of each school must be developed in accordance with the principles and objectives of the Education Act. The Ministry of Education does not support the teaching of such educational programmes that would favour, in a discriminating manner, the upbringing focused exclusively on the individual benefit of an individual, or on the denial of the basic

rights of the family. And not at all those that could endanger the moral education of children and adolescents.

125A. "On the basis of public health insurance, preventive examinations are fully reimbursed." Pursuant to Section 2 para. 1 of Act No. 577/2004 Coll. Annex No. 2 "Contents of preventive examinations. The preventive gynaecological examination includes a thorough anamnesis and expert advice on contraception, hormone replacement therapy, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and instruction ... ". Section 3 para. 11 of this Act "Public health insurance fully reimburses health care in connection with the performance of a preventive examination. In the Slovak Republic, all types of contraception and health care in the field of reproductive health are available, including fertility control, as well as prevention, diagnosis and treatment of infertility. Deciding on the price and reimbursement of medicines from public health insurance falls within the competence of the Member States and it is part of the national health system. Prescribing contraception indicated for health reasons is generally available and fully covered by public health insurance. Ensuring that every person, including minors, has access to sexual and reproductive health, who, under the national law and the Convention, is considered to be a person under the age of 18, whose interest is a primary consideration in decision-making, in particular the level of childcare, in particular the level of childcare, ensuring the conditions for creating and developing of a relationship with both parents and the protection of their physical, mental and emotional development is provided by the Family Act; it also provides for respect for the right of parents/legal representatives in the protection and upbringing of their children. The informed consent of a parent/legal representative is based on this premise and is required for all medical procedures, including the case of abortions, prescriptions, etc. In order to protect the child's health, the informed consent is issued by the court if the parent refuses. In accordance with the provision of the Convention Art. 24 "1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to using health and rehabilitation facilities. States Parties shall endeavour to ensure that no child shall be deprived of his or her right of access to such health services." we believe that the current legislation of the Slovak Republic corresponds to the Convention and that it promotes the healthy physical and mental development of adolescents. In cases of medical indication, the costs of contraception are covered by health insurance. We consider a change in legislation according to 41.c) of the recommendations to be in conflict with the informed consent of the parent as a protective factor in the health of children and adolescents. Zero implementation of the proposed recommendation

126. In assessing possibilities and scope of implementation of 41.d) of the Recommendation, the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic relied on valid legislation and binding documents: The Convention "The States Parties to the present Convention,

- Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,
- Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded

the necessary protection and such assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,

- Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child, have agreed as follows:

Art. 1 “For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means any human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”

Art. 6 of the Convention: The child’s inherent right to life and development. According to the provisions of Article 15 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, everyone has the right to life and human life is worth protection even before birth. The responsibility of parents for the all-round mental and physical development of their children and their proper upbringing, which is declared in the Family Act, is also indispensable. Act No. 36/2005 Coll. on the family and on the amendments to certain acts, Section 43 para. 3 letters a) to c) “The child is further obliged to cooperate with his or her parents in the care and upbringing of him or her, fulfil his or her educational duties commensurately with his or her abilities and avoid a way of life that could be endangering him or her, especially the use of substances that harm his or her physical and mental health.”

127. Pursuant to Act No. 576/2004 Coll. “The attending healthcare professional is obliged to inform about the purpose, nature, consequences and risks of providing health care, about possibilities of choosing the proposed procedures and risks of refusing to provide health care (hereinafter referred to as the “to provide information”), unless this Act provides otherwise for a person to whom health care is to be provided or for another person designated by that person, a legal representative, carer, guardian, a natural person other than a parent who has a minor child entrusted to personal care, a person who has a child in substitute personal care, a person who has a child in foster care, a person who is interested in becoming a foster parent and has a child temporarily entrusted to care, a future adoptive parent, a person who has a child entrusted according to special legislation, 4a) or a statutory representative of the facility in which a court decision to order institutional care is carried out, the court decision to impose an urgent measure, the court decision to order an educational measure or the court decision to impose protective education 5) (hereinafter referred to as the “legal representative”), if the person to whom health care is to be provided is a minor, a person deprived of legal capacity or a person with limited legal capacity (hereinafter referred to as “person unfit to give informed consent”) and, in an appropriate manner, also a person unfit to give informed consent.” “In the case of a minor, the condition of performing an abortion shall be, in addition to the written informed consent referred to in paragraph 1, also the written informed consent of the legal representative of a minor after prior instruction. Such informed consent shall include the date of its grant and the signature of the legal representative.” “If the legal representative refuses to give informed consent, the provider may apply to the court if it is in the interest of the person unfit to give informed consent to whom the health care is to be provided. In this case, the court’s consent to the provision of health care replaces the informed consent of the legal representative. Until the court decides, only such medical procedures may be performed as are necessary to save the life of this person. The Slovak Republic solves the issue of abortions with its abortion legislation; it ranks among the states that recognize the right of a woman to decide for herself about her motherhood. The legal system therefore sets the age of sixteen as

the limit for a woman's free choice in abortion. We consider a change in legislation according to the proposed recommendation to be in conflict with the informed consent of the parent as a protective factor in the health of children and adolescents. Zero implementation of the proposed recommendation.

128. The Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, when assessing possibilities and scope of implementation of 41e) of the Recommendation relied on legislation in force.

Pursuant to Act No. 576/2004 Coll. Section 4 para. 4 "Informed consent is required for the provision of health care".

Section 6b para. 1 and 2 of the cited Act "The condition for performing an abortion is written informed consent after prior instruction. Such informed consent must include the date of its grant and the signature of the woman requesting the abortion or of her legal representative.

Section 6b para. 2 letters a) to d) Instructions prior to the informed consent must be provided in the manner provided for in Section 6 para. 2 and must include information on the purpose, nature, course

and consequences of abortion, physical and psychological risks of abortion, current developmental stage of the embryo or foetus whose development is to be terminated, and of her right to obtain a sonographic examination record, alternatives to abortion, in particular the possibility of

1. secrecy of her person in connection with childbirth (Section 11 para. 11, 6a)

2. adoption of a child after birth, 6b)

3. financial, material or psychological assistance during pregnancy provided by civic associations, non-profit organizations, foundations, churches and religious societies."

Decree of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic No. 417/2009 Coll., which lays down the details of the information provided to the woman and the report on the provision of information, the model of written information and determines the organization responsible for receiving and evaluating the report

The conscientious objection is established by the Code of Ethics of the Act on Healthcare Providers, Health Professionals and Professional Organizations in Health Care

on the amendments to certain acts, as amended. Healthcare professionals may not be required to perform or participate in the performance if it is contrary to their conscience, except in cases of imminent danger to life or health. Although a healthcare facility accepts a reservation on the conscience of its staff, there is no healthcare provider who does not perform or prohibit abortion. Legislative secrecy exists in connection with childbirth in the Slovak Republic. According to the proposed recommendation, we consider a change in legislation regarding the secrecy of an adolescent girl to be contrary to the informed consent of the parent as a protective factor in the health of children and adolescents. During the monitoring activities of the Commissioner for Children, it was found out that there are problems with the provision of dental care for children with severe psychiatric diagnoses (lack of dentists who provide care for this target group) and the provision of orthodontics for children from financially disadvantaged groups.

129. Act No. 578/2004 Coll. Annex No. 4 point 3 CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL "A healthcare professional may not be required to

perform or participate in a practice that is contrary to his or her conscience, except in cases of imminent danger to the life or health of persons. If a healthcare professional exercises a conscientious objection, he or she is obliged to inform his or her employer and, when applying a conscientious objection in the provision of health care, also his or her patients.“ Based on the application of reservations in the conscience, there is no refusal to provide health care in the network of health care facilities. Zero implementation of 41.f) of the Recommendation.

130. In relation to the 41.g) of the Recommendation, we rely on the fact of health promotion, access to health care and education within projects and programmes, for example: National Project Healthy Communities 2A National Immunization Programme in the Slovak Republic National Anti-Drug Strategy in the Slovak Republic for 2013–2020 National Action Plan for Alcohol Problems for 2013-2020 Update of the National Health Promotion Programme in the Slovak Republic Action Plan for the Environment and Public Health of the Slovak Republic Population (NEHAP IV.) National Action Plan in the Prevention of Obesity for 2015–2025 National Programme for the Development of Care for Patients suffering from Rare Diseases in the Slovak Republic for the period 2016–2020 of the National Transplant Programme for 2014–2018, with the outlook for 2022 Update of the National Mental Health Programme and Plan of the Implementation of Tasks of the National Mental Health Programme for the period 2019–2020 The Ministry of Health, within the competence of health professionals, implements the area of this recommendation within the scope of Act No. 577/2004 Coll. Section 2 para. 1 ”On the basis of public health insurance, preventive examinations are fully reimbursed.” Annex No. 2 ”Contents of preventive examinations. Preventive care for adolescents and adults “... preventive gynaecological examination, preventive urological examination,..”; Preventive gynaecological examination “part of the examination is a thorough anamnesis and professional advice on contraception, hormone substitute therapy, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and instruction ...”.

131. Based on the opinion of experts, the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic is of the opinion that the education of children and young people in the field of sexual and reproductive health is a topic requiring an approach in terms of promoting human fertility, responsible sexuality and responsible parenthood. In their opinion, it is essential that the sexual education of children and young people remains in the hands of experts and accredited educational institutions - teachers and psychologists, who present this topic appropriately to the age, scientifically accurately and strictly at a professional level, independent of any tendentious interests. In 2019, the Healthy Regions organization dealt with the subject individually within its capacities and human resources, secondarily also within the implementation of assistants in the hospital environment. Educational programmes in the field of sexual and reproductive health for the target group of children and youth are carried out by the Public Health Office of the Slovak Republic and the Regional Public Health Offices of the Slovak Republic. Educational and support programmes with the aim of protecting the rights of adolescent girls and boys and combating discrimination are implemented in the Slovak Republic on an ongoing basis and by several organizations. Integration means connection, support, understanding. Your association has long managed to unify children of different

ages, from different places, in different life situations. ”These are the words of the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic Miroslav Lajčák, who praised the work of the civic association Integration during the ceremonial opening of the 1st year of the event entitled European Integration of the Visegrad Group 2019. “This event has also an international dimension, as children from not only Slovakia, but also the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary meet here. I appreciate the vision of the civic association Integration to expand this project to all the Visegrad Four countries.

132. The basic strategic document in the field of Roma integration in the Slovak Republic is the “Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma Integration until 2020”. The “Strategy for Roma Integration“ is directly focused on solving the so-called Roma issues. The strategy is also focused on several target groups:

- Roma as a national minority,
- Roma communities,
- marginalized Roma communities.

Within the Operational Programme Human Resources (OP HR), two Priority Axes were allocated, namely the Priority Axis No. 5. Integration of marginalized Roma communities and the Priority Axis No. 6. Technical equipment in municipalities with the presence of marginalized Roma communities, which directly support the implementation of measures aimed at increasing the level of Roma integration. The dimension of equal opportunities and non-discrimination must be observed in the implementation of integration policies. The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, as the Intermediating Body for the OP HR, contributes to the fulfilment of objectives within the Priority Axes 5 and 6 of the Operational Programme Human Resources in part, by providing interventions in the areas of education, employment, health and housing. The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, as the Intermediating Body for the OP HR, contributes to the fulfilment of activities in the field of education with values from projects focused on the construction and reconstruction of kindergartens. Mentoring and tutoring programmes for students from MRC aimed at preparing for study at secondary schools and improving educational outcomes during their studies are supported under a call focusing on mentoring and tutoring.

133. The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, as the Intermediating Body for priority axis 5 and 6 for the OP HR, contributes to activities in the area of employment within the framework of financial instruments (SIH). The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic also contributes in the area of housing with values from projects focusing on self-built dwellings (SIH), construction/completion of roads, as well as removal of municipal waste or the subject of support for temporary housing.

134. Addressing the issue of Roma integration is the subject of the Slovak Strategy for Roma Integration until 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the “strategy”). Within the action plan of the strategy, one of the goals (health area) is to improve access to drinking water, where the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic is a responsible body in cooperation with the affected municipalities. The Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic

enters the issue marginally in connection with the possibility of providing support for Roma settlements. One of the purposes of Act No. 443/2010 Coll. on subsidies for housing development and on social housing, as amended, is the construction of technical equipment to increase the socio-cultural level of the Roma settlement. The subsidy can be provided to municipalities up to 80% of eligible costs of public water supply and water connection, public sewerage, sewerage connection and wastewater treatment plant, as well as local roads, including public lighting. Due to the efficient use of public funds, the subsidy is also limited by the cost of a specific indicator of the construction of technical equipment.

135. With the urban planning documentation, municipalities comprehensively address all requirements for the spatial arrangement and functional use of the entire territory of the municipality, including the area for housing. Within the regulations and principles, the land development plan does not address the buildings and housing itself, but only the requirements for the use of housing areas and proposes the necessary measures of a territorial and technical nature. The Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic within the framework of Act No. 226/2011 Coll. on the provision of subsidies for the drawing up of urban planning documentation of municipalities and its implementing decree provides subsidies for the drawing up of urban planning documentation. Through the evaluation criteria for the provision of subsidies, municipalities in the territory of which there is a marginalized Roma community, registered according to the Atlas of Roma Communities in Slovakia, are favoured. Out of the total number of 83 municipalities, which were provided with a subsidy for the developing of urban planning documentation in 2019, there is a marginalized Roma community in the territory of 24 municipalities (according to the Atlas of Roma Communities in Slovakia). Addressing the needs of substitute housing is fully within the competence of the territorial self-government. The Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic enters the issue by providing subsidies to municipalities for the construction of rental apartments intended for social housing.

136. In the current legislative situation, in addition to the legal representative, a school or school facility may also initiate diagnostic examinations of the child. We note that the diagnostic examination can be performed only with the informed consent of the child's legal representative, unless otherwise provided by law, e.g. Act No. 161/2015 Coll. the Code of Non-contentious Civil Procedure. Schools and school facilities are obliged to ensure that the informed consent of the legal representative is obtained in a verifiable, acceptable form, with appropriate instruction and the provision of the necessary information in a comprehensible manner, taking into account the specific situation in the educational process for which such consent is required. Care must be taken to ensure that the informed consent of the legal representative is obtained in all circumstances as a valid manifestation of his will carried out freely, seriously, intelligibly and in a certain way.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic recommends performing a rediagnostic examination of a child and pupil always when there is a reasonable assumption that the nature of his or her special educational needs has changed and that it is necessary to make adjustments aimed at optimizing his education, and at the same time to

observe a sufficiently long time interval between diagnostic and rediagnostic examination. Include rediagnostic examinations of children of zero (Section 19 para. 4 to 7 and Section 29 of the Education Act) and preparatory years (Section 97 para. 3 of the Education Act) at the end of the school year. The obligation to undergo a rediagnostic examination every two years proved to be ineffective. Frequency of rediagnostic examinations, at the moment, does not specify any generally binding legal regulation.

137. Since 2016 inclusive, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic has allocated funds for personal costs of teaching assistants for pupils with disabilities in the amount of EUR 80,221,847.

Funding for personal costs of teaching assistants for pupils with disabilities is increasing every year. In 2016, EUR 14,600,633 was allocated for this purpose, in 2017 EUR 15,869,025, and in 2018 funds in the amount of EUR 23,378,480 were provided. In the Report on the Activities of the Commissioner for Children for 2018, the Commissioner for Children pointed out that despite the stated increase in funding for personal costs of teaching assistants (in that year) spent from the chapter of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, these are not sufficient for covering needs of children with special educational needs. Already in 2018, the Commissioner for Children asked the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic for an urgent solution to the situation with allocating funds to pupils with special educational needs in as many cases as the experts state in the reports from the diagnostics of the pupil from the centres of pedagogical and psychological counselling and prevention and the centres of special pedagogical counselling. The Commissioner for Children recommended financing teacher assistants from the state budget - chapters of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.

138. In connection with the recommendation “Revise the financing of education so that enrolment in special education systems is not financially motivated ...” we draw attention to the fact that schools for children with disabilities and pupils with disabilities only admit, based on diagnostic examinations and with the consent of their legal representative, children or pupils with demonstrable health disadvantages who, due to their health disadvantage, cannot successfully complete education in a mainstream kindergarten or primary school. Before admitting a child with a disability or a pupil with a disability to a school, the school facility of educational counselling and prevention shall carry out a diagnostic examination of the child; its conclusions are part of the basis for the decision to admit a child or pupil to the school.

139. The Programme Statement of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the years 2016–2020 (hereinafter referred to as “PSG 2016–2020”) contains a commitment in the area of financing by increasing public resources for education and training so that the total volume of increase for the election period reaches EUR 2 billion and that the level of public resources invested annually in the education system at the end of the election period in 2020 is comparable to the average of EU countries. In the area of financing according to the Programme Statement of the Government 2016–2020, the government “will prepare a new act

on financing schools and school facilities, which will comprehensively address the issue of financing schools and school facilities in the area of transferred competencies and original competencies in order to increase its efficiency, extend transparency to all funds provided, support an increase in the quality of education and enable the grant support for innovative projects of schools and pedagogical staff.” The government “will maintain the norm method of financing schools and, on the basis of the analysis, will assess the possibility of its supplementing with new elements that will increase the efficiency of school financing, such as taking into account the necessary number of classes at schools, their occupancy, the length of practical experience of pedagogical staff and professional staff and in determining the norm, taking into account real costs of educational and training activities.” At present, funding for the education and training of children and pupils with disabilities is allocated in a normative way and can be used to finance costs of wages and salaries, including compulsory public health insurance premiums, social security contributions, old-age pension contributions, supplementary pension savings contributions, modernization of teaching aids, special teaching aids and compensatory aids and to deal with emergencies. As regards the financing of the education of children and pupils with disabilities, it is currently carried out on the basis of an increased coefficient per pupil with disabilities; and if there is the identical disability, the coefficient level is lower in a special school than its amount determined for the education of a pupil in a common primary school (Annex 8 to the Government Decree No. 630/2008 Coll., which lays down the details of the breakdown of funds from the state budget for schools and school facilities) (Classification of pupils with disabilities and general intellectual talent at special primary schools, special classes of primary schools and in primary school classes for the calculation of the personnel intensity coefficient).

140. The MPC National Project “School Open to All” (with an allocation of EUR 25.4 million from the European Social Fund) was implemented within the Operational Programme Human Resources (hereinafter referred to as the “OP HR”) in 2016-2019. The aim of this project was to support inclusive education and improve the professional competencies of pedagogical staff (hereinafter referred to as the “PeS”) and professional staff (hereinafter referred to as the “PrS”) in ensuring equal access to quality education and improving the results and competencies of children and pupils. In the primary school environment, the aim of the activities was also the implementation of an all-day educational system focusing on preparing pupils for teaching, the implementation of a model of inclusive education in the primary school environment through PeS and PrS; or the creation of an incentive programme aimed at acquiring knowledge, skills, habits, attitudes and values in the areas of hygiene and self-service habits and healthy lifestyles, communication and social skills, development of gross motor skills, prescribing and reading literacy (including fine motor skills and graphomotor skills), mathematical literacy, and artistic-expressive activities. Within the project, the educational programme “Cooperation of pedagogical staff and professional staff in the system of inclusive support for children and pupils” was accredited in 2017. In addition to providing inclusive education, the WWTP also included the development of local desegregation plans. At present, the Methodical Handbook for Prevention and Elimination of Segregation of Roma Pupils is used in practice, by the authors - Jarmila Lajčáková, Vlado

Rafael, Michal Zálešák, Jozef Miškolci, Alica Petrasová, issued by PrS of eduRoma to develop a desegregation plan.

141. The amendment to the Education Act as amended by Act No. 188/2015 Coll. Section 107 - education and training of children and pupils from the SDE has been significantly amended. The basic conditions were made precise for education and training of children and pupils from the SDE and the embodiment of the principle of equal treatment defined in Section 3 letter d) for the needs of admission of children and pupils who, on the basis of a recommendation, were diagnosed with SENs resulting only from their development in a socially disadvantaged environment defined for the purposes of the Education Act in Section 2 letter p). A child or pupil whose SENs result exclusively from his or her development in a socially disadvantaged environment may not be admitted to a special school or to a special class of a kindergarten, a special class of a primary school or a special class of a secondary school (Section 107 (2) of the Education Act, effective from 1 January 2016).

142. By amending Act No. 597/2003 Coll. on the financing of primary schools, secondary schools and school facilities, as amended, with effect from 1 September 2017, Section 4e in para. 7 was amended, into which the part concerning the provision of a contribution to improving the conditions for education and training of pupils from the SDE was transferred from the Education Act. At the same time, Section 9f provided in the transitional provision: From 1 September 2017 to 31 December 2019, for the purpose of providing a contribution to the improvement of conditions for the upbringing and education of pupils from the SDE, a pupil who is a member of a household whose member is provided with assistance in material need and the pupil's legal representative shall prove this to the primary school principal. This contribution is beyond the normal norm per pupil. Subsequently, in terms of applied practice from primary schools, the "Procedure of pedagogical-psychological counselling and prevention centres in assessing school abilities of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and in their enrolment at primary school" was updated with the appendix METHODOLOGICAL INFORMATION for PrS of counselling facilities "Assessment of cognitive development of children from socially disadvantaged environment" (appendix to the guideline Procedure of centres of pedagogical-psychological counselling and prevention in assessing the school readiness of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds).¹² The update was prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 2 letter p) of the Education Act, because a child from the SDE means a child with special educational needs, for whom educational counselling, including diagnostics, is provided by the centre of pedagogical-psychological counselling and prevention.

143. According to the Research Institute of Child Psychology and Pathopsychology, the task is to provide primary school teachers with sufficient guidance on how to integrate Roma children into mainstream education and how to better involve Roma parents in cooperation with schools, and it resulted from the Kežmarok District Action Plan, point 8.4. - Government Resolution No. 45 of 10 February 2016. The aim of the task is to set up diagnostics and

¹² <https://www.minedu.sk/dokumentacia-a-materialy/>

rediagnostics processes using those methodologies that are available; it is primarily a matter of changing the purpose of diagnostics with regard to needs of an inclusive school so as to enable the improvement of the educational situation of Roma children from the SDE. Within the Inclusive School section, consultations, mentoring were held with the intention of increasing the motivation to change existing approaches in the educational process in the participating schools, as well as other activities. The selection and modification of the methodology for verifying the effect of using the El'konin method in the 0th year took place as well as testing of pupils of the current 1st year, to whom the method was/was not applied - in the primary schools Krížová Ves and Rakúsy; the results are currently being processed (documents are being prepared to compare the obtained results with the results of the given pupils during testing in CPPPaP in KK). The results of the activities so far show that the chosen procedures, areas of activities and contents (i.e. topics of seminars, lectures, etc.) have a very positive response from participants and help them in their work (testing children in counselling facilities; educational procedures in teaching). We assume that after the necessary adjustments, it is possible to apply the knowledge also in other regions of the Slovak Republic.

144. Within the educational area, VÚDPaP implemented 6 thematic trainings for 194 PeS and PrS, especially according to the requirements of target groups (PrS of CPPPaP/SPCC). As part of the solution of discrimination against the Roma, it prepared training for professional employees in the field of Diagnostics of Mental Development as a starting point for developing procedures in three regional trainings. As well as other training activities in this area to sensitize the topic of discrimination for the wider professional public (Living Library, Storytelling, and others).

145. In accordance with generally binding legal regulations of the Slovak Republic, an equal and inseparable part of the educational system of the Slovak Republic is the education and training of national minorities in the mother tongue, including its institutional provision by schools and school facilities with the educational language of the national minority and teaching the language of the national minority. In the upbringing and education of children belonging to national minorities, the democratic right of parents to choose the language of instruction of the school is applied and respected in the education sector.

146. With effect from 1 January 2018 in the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 630/2008 Coll., which lays down the details of the breakdown of funds from the state budget for schools and school facilities, as amended, were in Section 4 para. 3 modified norms in the educational process, i.e. increased norm from 108% according to letter b) of a primary school with a language of instruction other than Slovak to 113% of the corresponding norm and a new norm according to letter c) of a primary school teaching in the language of a national minority is 104% of the corresponding norm.

147. As part of the SEP for grammar schools with effect from 1 September 2017, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic approved the Framework Curriculum for Grammar Schools with four-year study with a national minority

language and the Framework Curriculum for Grammar Schools with eight-year study of national minority language. On 24 April 2017, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic approved, under number 2017-6170/18048: 2-10I0, as part of the Educational Programme for Pupils with Developmental Learning Disabilities ISCED1, ISCED2, valid from 1 September 2017 Framework Curriculum for Pupils with Developmental Learning Disabilities for primary education and lower secondary education with the language of instruction of the national minority. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic approved on 11 May 2017 under number 2017-7512/20194:1-10I0 with effect from 1 September 2017 starting with the first year Appendix No. 1, which amends the Framework Curriculum for Primary Schools Teaching the Language of a National Minority. As of 1 September 2017, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic has included a private primary school with Slovak and Russian as the language of instruction in Bratislava in the network of schools and school facilities. Based on the request of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, the National Institute for Education developed educational standards for the subject Russian language and literature for primary and lower secondary education for schools with Russian language teaching (approved by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic on 27 February 2018) and educational standards for the subject German language for primary and lower secondary education for schools with German language teaching (approved by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic on 19 March 2018 with effect from 1 September 2018.)

148. The Minister of Education signed on 11 October 2018, after the approval from the Accreditation Commission, the decision to open a study programme for the training of Romani language teachers in combination with another subject at the University of Prešov from the academic year 2019/2020. 15 Roma graduates have already applied (all of them have already graduated from the subject Romani language). It is a historical moment when the path for the training of Romani language teachers in combination with another subject is opening up in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. At the same time, this is a very unique fact in Europe.

The concept of teaching the Slovak language and Slovak literature at primary schools with the Hungarian language of instruction for the years 2018–2020, approved on 3 December 2018. Educational standard of the subject Ruthenian language and literature for upper secondary education for schools with the Ruthenian language of instruction and with the teaching of the Ruthenian language, approved on 30 August 2019 with effect from 1 September 2019.

149. "Implementation of the IKATIKA project – Bilingual digital educational content of education for kindergartens and zero grades of elementary school". The aim of the project was to increase the quality of education and training of children and pupils from the SDE and children of national minorities. In addition to the state language, individual lessons are also written in the mother tongue of the Ruthenian, Hungarian and Roma national minorities. At the same time, it is interactive, so it conveys the curriculum and new knowledge at school to children and pupils in an experiential form. As part of the digital content project, methodological ideas were issued for pedagogical staff working with a national minority.

Teachers have received professional training on how to work with digital content. A total of 123 teachers from both kindergartens and primary schools completed these trainings.¹³

150. IUVENTA co-organizes the Human Rights Olympiad (HRO) for secondary school youth. It is organized in written and oral competition forms: tests, knowledge-attitude presentation of theses, solving model cases/situations, defending written works and solving final assignments. The aim of the Human Rights Olympiad is to contribute to human rights education, education for democratic citizenship, the overall cultivation of the knowledge and attitudes of studying youth and thus to the strengthening of the basic pillars of democracy.

151. In the field of teacher education for democratic citizenship and human rights, including children's rights, the National Institute for Education organized professional and methodological events for primary and secondary school teachers. Their preparation was based on the most modern trends (methodologies) of teaching human rights (HR), the rights of the child (RC) and his or her best interests:

Methodical seminars for the implementation of iSEP (the innovated State Education Programme) for teachers in individual regions of Slovakia with special emphasis on the application of human rights and the rights of the child in education and training and also in the framework of extracurricular activities at school. Seminars for ethical education teachers in regional cities of the Slovak Republic have been organized by the subject commission for the subject of ethical education at the National Institute for Education since 2018 under the title NEW TRENDS IN THE TEACHING OF ETHICAL EDUCATION (The Road to Decency and Responsibility). They are part of the activities connected with the Club of Teachers of Ethical Education at the National Institute for Education, which seeks to improve the teaching of ethical education with an emphasis on educational support of human rights and children's rights issues in accordance with key recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (including the most serious violations of children's rights in Slovakia and in the world).

152. The National Institute for Education organized a full-day seminar for teachers of civics and ethics of primary and secondary schools on the topic "Ethical and civic dimension of corrupt and fraudulent behaviour at schools", which in workshops focused on violating children's rights in the school environment and comparing them with the topics of children's violations in the world. (children's rights, the involvement of children in armed conflict). The organizers of the event reflected the call of the ETINED platform of the Council of Europe related to the topic "Freedom from Corruption". The seminar with workshops with an international reach, which was attended by teachers from all over Slovakia, was organized thanks to the financial support from the Council of Europe on the basis of a signed Grant Agreement between the Council of Europe and the National Institute for Education.

The National Institute for Education prepared an analysis entitled The state of education and training for human rights and the rights of the child in the regional education system - in SEP/iSEP and textbooks. The analysis was presented at a meeting of the Committee on

¹³ <http://www.ikatika.sk/>

Research, Education and Training in the Field of Human Rights and Development Education. As an aid and inspiration for teachers of various subjects, the National Institute for Education has set up a methodological portal, which contains examples of lessons on human rights and the rights of the child with an emphasis on new trends in teaching didactics.

153. The Fund for the Support for the Culture of National Minorities in accordance with Section 15 para. 1 of Act No. 138/2017 Coll. on the fund for the support for the culture of national minorities and on the amendments to certain acts (hereinafter referred to as the “Fund Act”) provides funds pursuant to Section 2 letter a) to support projects in the following fields:

- a) cultural and educational activities and training activities,
- b) publishing activity,
- c) activities of theatres, artistic ensembles and cultural institutions,
- d) artistic creation,
- e) science in the field of culture, life and history of national minorities,
- f) leisure time activities and use of free time,
- g) foreign presentation of the culture of national minorities,
- h) promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding,
- i) promoting the identification and recognition of common cultural values and traditions,
- j) support for exchange programmes, stays and joint educational events, knowledge and art competitions for children and young people,
- k) protection, professional processing and digitization of the cultural heritage of national minorities,
- l) creative industries,
- m) support for the development of the use of languages of national minorities

The amount of funds for individual sub-programmes within the support activities of the Fund is determined by expert councils established in accordance with Section 7 of the Fund Act. Within the structure of the Fund’s support activities, the sub-programme 1.4 - the support for education and training of children and youth in the field of national minority rights - is specifically designed for children and youth, in 2018, 6 projects were supported under this sub-programme (2 for Roma, 2 for Hungarian and 2 for Jewish national minority) with the amount of EUR 25,320, and in 2019 6 projects (2 for the Roma, 2 for Hungarian and 2 for Jewish national minority) with the amount of EUR 24,260.

Other sub-programmes of the support activity structure (apart from the sub-programme 1.5 support for adult education and training in the field of national minority rights) are intended for both adults and children and young people. For this reason, it is not possible to submit a specific list of all projects aimed only at children and young people (but, for example, most projects, also supported under the sub-programme 1.1 hobby arts and leisure activities, are aimed at children and young people).

154. An important and sustainable tool for the protection of cultural rights of national minorities is the system of specialized museums within the Slovak National Museum (organizations under the founding competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic). These are collection-creating workplaces focused on the history and culture of

national minorities living in Slovakia (Museum of Czech Culture in Slovakia in Martin, Museum of Croatian Culture in Slovakia in Bratislava, Museum of Carpathian German Culture in Bratislava, Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia in Bratislava, Museum of Roma Culture in Slovakia in Martin, Museum of Ruthenian Culture in Prešov, Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava). These museums are specialized documentation, scientific-research and methodological workplaces that systematically search, acquire, preserve and professionally process material and spiritual documents about the history, culture, traditions of relevant ethnic groups in today's Slovakia and present the results of their activities to the public through publishing, educational-upbringing activities, exhibitions and cultural events aimed at presenting the public with a rich cultural heritage.

In 2016, the Holocaust Museum in Sereď was opened within the SNM-Museum of Jewish Culture, which participates in training activities and programmes aimed at preventing manifestations of anti-Semitism, racism, extremism and radicalization in society.

155. The founding competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic is the organization Dance Theatre Ifjú Szivek, which is a state professional art institution with nationwide competence in the field of processing and interpretation of folklore. The organization creates artistic, educational and training programmes that follow the traditional culture of citizens of Hungarian nationality living in the Slovak Republic and preserves, documents and presents the manifestations of traditional folk culture of Hungarians and other nationalities. The organization places great emphasis on addressing children's viewers with its stage activities. The theatre's repertoire always includes at least one performance that adapts the traditional dance and music culture of Central Europe in a form that is close to the today's child. In 2018, the organization held 23 performances focused on child viewer, which were watched by more than 4,600 primary and secondary school pupils and students.

156. As regards financial support from the Audiovisual Fund (hereinafter referred to as the "AVF"), it establishes the structure of the AVF's support activities each year, based on a decision of the AVF Council. In 2017, 2018 and in 2019, the sub-programme 1.3 is created within the framework of Programme 1 - Creation and Implementation of Slovak Audiovisual Works. Animated audiovisual works with a majority creative and production share of the Slovak producer, within which it is possible to apply for support for the development and production of animated audiovisual works and the sub-programme 1.4. School and training audiovisual works, within which it is possible to apply for support for the production of audiovisual works by university students with a focus on film art and for support for the preparation and implementation of audiovisual education and training programmes in the field of film art and audiovisual culture.

One of the priorities of Programme 2 - Distribution and other showing of audiovisual works to the public was in 2018 and is in 2019 the distribution of cinematographic works intended for child viewers in the Slovak Republic (including the production of the Slovak version).

157. RTVS works to improve programmes for children and youth, while approaching programmes for children and youth specifically according to the age of the audience for whom the programme is intended. In principle, it applies the following three approaches:

For preschool children, they choose more fun and creative treatment focused on the child's right to self-expression, the role of parents and their mutual understanding, in the cyclic programmes *Fidlibum*, *Dwarves* (focused on tolerance of otherness, different skin colour, persons suffering from hearing impaired, child's right to safe and private place, the right to preserve identity, protection against cyberbullying) and in the *Miracle Studio*, where children are also present directly in the studio. Here they have space to express their views on the topic of their rights. The processing has a rather playful form, which corresponds to the perception of programmes by children of this age. The series *Mimi* and *Líza* dominates the animated work for preschool children, which touches on the rights of the child. Just because the protagonist is visually impaired and gets to know the world around her despite her disability through her friend's eyes. The child viewer thus perceives that the world is diverse, that every child has his or her right and values. With the help of this series, the child viewer learns tolerance, but also exercising their right to the own identity.

The second approach is aimed at older school-age children. Issues related to the rights of the child also appear in the *Give-Time* entertainment competition programme. Children from different regions of Slovakia perform in it and hosts discuss with them.

The third approach is aimed at young people from the age of 12. In the *Park* programme, the topics of children's rights are processed in the form of discussions with young people who are still looking for their place in society. Their views are confronted directly with experts or representatives of various organizations. Topics such as otherness, tolerance, bullying appear here.

This year, in order to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Convention adoption (20 November 2019), RTVS is preparing a series of short, stand-alone video clips in which children use simple animation to express the four basic principles of children's rights - right to life, survival and development, best interests of the child, non-discrimination and the right to respect the views of the child. They featured children of various ages representing national minorities living in Slovakia, Roma children, and children with disabilities.

158. Unaccompanied minors, i.e. children who are not citizens of the Slovak Republic and are staying in the territory of the Slovak Republic unaccompanied by a parent or other adult natural person to whom the child could be entrusted to personal care have, on the basis of international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, which the Slovak Republic has undertaken to fulfil, and in particular the relevant generally binding legislation, universal rights, as the other citizens; in addition, they have rights as children and special rights as asylum seekers, taking into account their current social position of separation

158A. The Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic pursuant to Article 19 of Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (hereinafter referred to as the "Reception Directive") and in accordance with Section 22 para. 5 of Act No. 480/2002 Coll. on asylum and on the amendments to certain acts. as amended (hereinafter

referred to as the “Asylum Act”) reimburses necessary health care for asylum seekers, while the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic provides appropriate health care for minor asylum seekers accompanied by parents who are victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation, torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or who have suffered from the consequences of armed conflict. The Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic pursuant to Article 30 of Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for supplementary protection (hereinafter referred to as the “Qualification Directive”) ensures that persons with granted with international protection were entitled to health care to the same extent as the Slovak citizens. The asylum seeker has public health insurance in the territory of the Slovak Republic in accordance with Section 3 para. 3 letter c) of Act No. 580/2004 Coll. on health insurance, as amended, and the person with supplementary protection provided has health care reimbursed by the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic to the extent of public health insurance in accordance with Section 27c para. 3 of the Asylum Act, i.e. to the same extent as the Slovak citizens. The Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic provides education to minor asylum seekers accompanied by parents in accordance with Art. 14 of the Admission Directive by including them in the fulfilment of compulsory school attendance as soon as possible. Pursuant to Art. 27 of the Qualification Directive, in the territory of the Slovak Republic, persons with granted international protection have the same access to education as citizens of the Slovak Republic.

159. As in most cases the Slovak Republic is not the destination country for the migration route of unaccompanied minors and for this reason the problem of frequent escapes of unaccompanied minors from facilities in which they are placed persists. Based on the analysis of the situation, as part of cooperation of the body of the SLPCaSG and the Centre for Children and Families Medzilaborce, some preventive measures have been taken to prevent “escapes” of unaccompanied minors, which consist in specific regime measures of the Centre for Children and Families, closer cooperation with the Police Force and the creation of preventive and protective conditions to prevent the causes of escapes. However, because the Centre for Children and Families is an open facility, some unaccompanied minors have left the facility without authorization after a certain time. After finding out that unaccompanied minors left the Centre for Children and Families without consent, the facility immediately reports this fact to the nearest Police Force unit, the court that ordered the urgent measure and the SLPCaSG body and, if an unaccompanied minor is an asylum seeker, also the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. The police begin the search process by writing a record of the person’s missing notice and then by declaring the missing person search in the information search system - PATROS, as well as by performing routine checks as part of the police search activity. The search procedure is standard and does not differ in any way from the search procedure for missing Slovak citizens. The Police shall keep the Centre for Children and Families informed of the search results. If an unaccompanied minor is traced abroad, the search process in the territory of the Slovak Republic is terminated and the notifier, i.e. the Centre for Children and Families, is also notified of this fact. Until the

SLPCaSG body is demonstrably informed about the discovery of an unaccompanied minor in a safe country and is provided with adequate care and protection of its rights and legally protected interests, or until the time when the return of an unaccompanied minor to the country of origin was confirmed to the SLPCaSG body, or his reunification with his family in another country, the unaccompanied minor remains in the records of the SLPCaSG body. To eliminate the causes and consequences of escapes, social and situational prevention measures were taken by the parties involved, which consist in specific regime measures of the Centre for Children and Families in Medzilaborce, closer cooperation with the Police Force and the creation of preventive and protective conditions to prevent the causes of escapes. In this context, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, in cooperation with the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, initiated the preparation and implementation of the research task “Identification of the causes of unaccompanied minors escapes/disappearances”, which was prepared by the Institute for Family Research in 2017. The report collects data on 119 unaccompanied young people who have been placed in the children’s home in Medzilaborce in recent years. The research task, based on the identification of risk and protective factors in the field of “escapes“ of unaccompanied minors, proposes preventive measures that will help prevent further escapes or disappearances and strengthen possibilities and conditions for adopting permanent solutions and integrating unaccompanied minors into society. Thanks to the measures taken, the number of unaccompanied minors that are “escaping“ from the Centre for Children and Families is gradually decreasing.“

160. The protection of minor children, their rights and legally protected interests, who are not citizens of the Slovak Republic, but are located in our territory unaccompanied by a parent or other adult natural person to whom the child could be entrusted to personal care, is provided in the conditions of the Slovak Republic in particular by the Act on the Social and Legal Protection of Children and on Social Guardianship. This Act regulates the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship as a set of measures that are implemented for the child, in particular through social work and other appropriate methods and procedures. Measures of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship are performed by state administration bodies, a municipality, a higher territorial unit, an accredited entity and a legal or natural person. The protection of life, health and favourable development of unaccompanied minors is ensured in practice mainly by labour, social affairs and family offices as a body of social and legal protection of children through their employees. By law, the offices of labour, social affairs and family also perform the function of carer or guardian, unless there is another natural person who could be appointed as the child’s legal representative. The staff of these offices must be able to understand the situation in which a unaccompanied minor finds himself or herself, be able to assess it correctly and intervene adequately if necessary. The offices of labour, social affairs and family implement measures of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship in such a way that the protection of the child’s life, health, favourable mental and social development is continuously ensured. In connection with unaccompanied minors, the Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family take measures during his or her stay in the territory of the Slovak

Republic to ensure care appropriate to the culture, language, religion and traditions of his or her country of origin.

161. The protection and representation of unaccompanied minor rights by the SLPCaSG body is already guaranteed from the stage of his capturing in the territory of the Slovak Republic. A representative of the SLPCaSG body is present at the discussion of the offence and the submission of an explanation at the Police Force department and supervises the securing of the rights and legally protected interests of an unaccompanied minor when submitting the explanation, or during the stay at the Police Force department (interpretation, instruction, food, hygiene, rest). At the same time, based on the court's decision on urgent measures, he or she ensures the placement of an unaccompanied minor in the Centre for Children and Families, which provides comprehensive care for the mental, physical and social development of unaccompanied minors until coming of age, or up to 25 years of age, if requested by the unaccompanied minor.

162. Members of the Police Force are among the first to meet with unaccompanied minors in our territory. If they find a person who is not able to prove their identity or legitimacy of residence, they will take them to the relevant police department in order to write the minutes of providing the explanation. Unauthorized entry of a foreigner into the territory of the Slovak Republic or his unauthorized stay, or departure from the territory is considered an offence under the provisions of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners. If a person declares that he or she is a minor during the initial actions or during writing the minutes of the explanation provision, this fact must be immediately notified to the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family in whose territorial district the unaccompanied minor was found. The obligation to notify the finding of a child is also associated with the subsequent obligation to immediately hand over such a person to an authorized employee of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. It is essential that the members of the Police Force act in accordance with the principle of the best interests of the child during the initial actions and are able to show empathy and understanding towards the unaccompanied minor.

163. Measures of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship for unaccompanied minors who are staying in the territory of the Slovak Republic are regulated in Act No. 305/2005 Coll. on the social and legal protection of children and on social guardianship and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended that guarantees the implementation of measures to every child who has a habitual residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic or is staying there unaccompanied by legal representatives, relatives or a person who is legally or custom-responsible for the child. The primary aspect in the selection and application of measures for the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship is the best interests of the child, for the determination and assessment of which the principle of the interests of the child under the Family Act applies. Measures of the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship for unaccompanied minors have been implemented since the announcement of the discovery of an unaccompanied minor in the territory of the Slovak Republic. The body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship performs urgent actions in the interest of the child until a guardian is appointed for the unaccompanied minor or an appointed guardian takes up his or her function. If it is not

possible to appoint a natural person as a carer, the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship performs the function of a carer under special legislation (Section 39 para. 3, Section 57 para. 4 and Section 60 of the Family Act) based on a court decision. And also according to Section 57 para. 3 of the Family Act, if it was not possible to appoint any natural person as a guardian, the court shall appoint the body of social and legal protection and social guardianship as a guardian for the unaccompanied minor. Measures of the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship for unaccompanied minors have been implemented since the announcement of the discovery of an unaccompanied minor in the territory of the Slovak Republic in accordance with the culture, language, religion and traditions of the country of origin. The body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship ensures the placement of an unaccompanied minor in a court decision execution facility and performs tasks according to special legislation (Asylum Act), if an application for international protection has been filed. At the request of an unaccompanied minor, legal advice and legal assistance is provided. The Centre for Children and Families is obliged to find out for unaccompanied minors, if it is possible due to the child's age and mental maturity, the child's opinion on all facts concerning him, in particular to find out the child's opinion on his transfer, family reunification, return to the country of origin, asylum, even before carrying out the acts for the purpose of his transfer, family reunification, return to the country of origin or before applying for asylum. For the purpose of ascertaining the child's opinion, the children's home will provide interpretation for unaccompanied minors into a language that the child understands. If an unaccompanied minor is granted asylum or subsidiary protection, he or she can be transferred to another children's home, where he or she will be placed together with Slovak children for the purpose of smooth integration (several opportunities to study, becoming independent, finding a job on the labour market, ...). The list of such homes is determined by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

164. The issue of determining the age is also regulated by the Asylum Act in Section 23 para. 8. If after evaluating all available information there are any doubts about the age of the minor asylum seeker, he or she is obliged to undergo a medical examination to determine his or her age. This requires the consent of a legal representative or carer in the case of an unaccompanied minor. The legal representative of the minor is informed about this possibility, in the language he or she understands, or the carer in the case of an unaccompanied minor, after the minor applicant enters the asylum proceedings. If the minor's legal representative or carer does not consent or the minor himself refuses to undergo a medical examination to determine his or her age, he or she shall be considered an adult asylum seeker. If on the basis of a medical examination it is not possible to determine whether he or she is an adult or a minor, such a person shall be considered a minor for proceedings under the Asylum Act. As for the principle of coming of age, if an asylum seeker could not be considered to be of legal age if he or she refuses to undergo an age review, in which case any applicant could refuse to undergo a medical examination and thus frustrate his or her age.

164A. If an unaccompanied minor expresses an interest in his or her reunification with a close person with whom it is related, who lives in another EU state, all actions are taken to

identify the search for this person. If there are no obstacles that would prevent the safe reunification, the reunification process itself takes place in cooperation with the Migration Office of the Slovak Republic. Based on the outputs of a case conference aimed at evaluating the current situation of the child, the SLPCaSG bodies prepare a plan of social work with the child and his or her family, which takes into account individual elements of the child's best interests with a focus on addressing the child's legal, but also overall life situation, not only from the current point of view, but especially from a long-term and sustainable point of view. Permanent solutions for an unaccompanied minor in the context of legislation focus mainly on the reunification of the child with the family, i.e. return of the child to the country of origin (if it is a safe country), reunification, i.e. merger of a child with his or her family staying in the territory of a third country or integration of unaccompanied minors in the territory of the Slovak Republic (e.g. in the form of granting asylum, subsidiary protection or acquisition of permanent residence, or citizenship). In this context, the SLPCaSG body participates in the search for parents or other members of the unaccompanied minor's family in order to reunite them, while the SLPCaSG body shall:

- notify the embassy of the country in which the unaccompanied minor has its habitual residence of the measures taken to return or transfer the unaccompanied minor and request his or her return or transfer to the country in which the unaccompanied minor has his or her habitual residence if it is clear that he or she has the habitual residence in a safe country, and is not covered by an international convention,
- propose their reunification to the embassy of the country in which the unaccompanied minor does not have his or her habitual residence and in which his or her parent or person personally caring for the child are staying, and shall notify of any measure taken with a view to such reunification,
- cooperate with the International Organization for Migration in ensuring the return of an unaccompanied minor to the country of origin or in the departure of an unaccompanied minor to a third country, if the unaccompanied minor has expressed an interest in such a return or departure,
- provide an unaccompanied minor with legal advice at his or her request and provide an unaccompanied minor with legal assistance in accordance with special legislation. (Section 24a of Act No. 327/2005 Coll. on the provision of legal aid to persons in material need.) In all measures taken by the SLPCaSG body, the child's opinion, interests, needs are fully respected, while unaccompanied minors are regularly informed about the possibilities of solving their life situation. When looking for a family, it is possible to ask for cooperation from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic and the International Organization for Migration, or other international NGOs that participate in the implementation of assistance to unaccompanied minors

165. Pursuant to Section 10 of the Asylum Act, the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic may provide asylum to the asylum seeker's parent or minor child, after meeting the conditions, for the purpose of family reunification or pursuant to Section 13b of the Asylum Act it may provide, after meeting the conditions specified in the law, the parent of a minor child who has been granted supplementary protection or a minor child whose parent is granted supplementary protection, with supplementary protection in the

territory of the Slovak Republic for the purpose of family reunification. The Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic can ensure the above search for parents only within the framework of the Dublin procedure, in accordance with the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EU) No. 604/2013 of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection filed in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (hereinafter referred to as the “Dublin Regulation”). Specific attention is paid directly in the Regulation if the applicant is an unaccompanied minor in order to ensure his or her reunification with the family, i.e. that his or her filed application be assessed in the country where the family member or sibling or relative or relative is legally resident, provided that it is in the best interests of the minor. However, this only applies at the moment when the minor is an asylum seeker, not at the moment after granting international protection.

166. The employees of the SLPCaSG bodies and court decision execution facilities are within the plan of their adaptation, functional and qualification education, or through working meeting and thematic trainings, regularly informed and methodically guided about children’s rights, national legislation, international conventions, conceptual, programme and professional starting points, as well as about appropriate procedures for working with unaccompanied minors. In addition, professional and educational employees of the Centre for Children and Families, who work in direct and daily contact with unaccompanied minors, are included in specific educational or training professional activities focused on specifics of working with unaccompanied minors, language training, psychological, social, or legal advice, etc. The procedure of SLPCaSG bodies in the area of unaccompanied minors care is regulated in the internal regulation “Implementation of measures of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship for unaccompanied minors”, which defines more details about the procedure of Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family in implementing SLPCaSG measures for unaccompanied minors staying in the territory of Slovak Republic. In connection with legislative changes, an update of the said internal standard has been prepared this year (at this time at the stage of the approval process. The CLSAF has prepared a working tool for this purpose: “Application handbook for the application of the principle of the best interests of the child in all procedures, measures and decisions taken in relation to an unaccompanied minor”. The individual parts of the handbook respond to the current legal situation and available professional experience and knowledge and represent a selection and offer of basic attributes of the interest of children, which must be respected and taken into account when working with an unaccompanied minor.

167. Access to the educational system in the regional education system (i.e. kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, including special ones) pursuant to Art. 27 para. 1 of Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council is secured under the laws in force in the Slovak Republic under the same conditions as for its own nationals. The education of foreigners’ children in the regional education system is legally secured by the Education Act in Section 146 with effect from 1 September 2008.

Children of foreigners with a residence permit in the territory of the Slovak Republic, children of asylum seekers and Slovaks living abroad are provided with education and training, accommodation and meals at schools according to the Education Act under the same conditions as to the citizens of the Slovak Republic. Basic and extended language courses of the state language are organized for children of foreigners to remove language barriers. The subsequent regulation is in Act No. 596/2003 Coll. on state administration in education system and school self-government and on the amendments to certain acts, as amended. Pursuant to Section 10 para. 12 departments of the education system of district offices in the seat of the region in cooperation with the bodies of territorial self-government organize and financially support language courses for children of foreigners with a residence permit in the territory of the Slovak Republic. Language courses for children of foreigners are financed through a conciliation procedure at the request of the founder.

School year 2018/2019 source Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical Information					
Schools	State	Private	Church	Total	of which girls
Kindergartens	520	226	15	761	337
Primary schools	2072	515	95	2682	1328
State kindergartens for children with special needs	5	0	0	5	2
State primary schools for children with special needs	32	0	0	32	11
Specialized secondary schools	10	0	0	10	2
G	398	351	60	809	409
Conservatories	39	1	1	41	19
Secondary vocational schools	548	126	5	679	265
Total	3624	1219	176	5019	2373

168. In 2018, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, through the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, received information that UNHCR had prepared materials for schools focused on refugees, asylum and migration offered by the Slovak Republic. This “tool“ includes material for teachers (exercises and videos for 4 age groups) and any necessary teaching aids for pupils. The target group is primary and secondary school pupils and students, while the age of the children is distinguished.

The aim of this aid, developed by UNHCR, is to help teachers create a suitable environment for the integration of refugees' children, as well as explain the meaning of the terms refugee, asylum, migration for children aged 6–18. The teaching also emphasizes the cultural differences, psychological and emotional state of refugees' children due to the circumstances of fleeing from the country of origin. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic has expressed interest and UNHCR has translated the materials into the Slovak language, so far at the age of 6 to 9 years and 9 to 12 years.¹⁴ On 5 and 6 June 2019, a training of trainers and 2 trainings for teachers took place in Bratislava, organized by UNHCR, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. In accordance with Section 19a para. 10 of the Asylum Act, the assessment of an asylum application shall be carried out by an authorized employee of the Ministry with adequate knowledge in the field of asylum; in the case of an unaccompanied minor, also with adequate knowledge of his or her specific needs. The Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic is competent only to decide on the application of an unaccompanied minor for asylum.

169. In the Slovak Republic, there are specialized judges (such as “family judges”) in larger courts. The intention of the current government is to deepen the specialization of such judges, which is carried out through their lifelong learning at the Judicial Academy of the Slovak Republic; the training takes place in the headquarters of the Judicial Academy of the Slovak Republic, but also in other regions of Slovakia, in order to ensure the best possible availability of continuous education within the specialization of each judge. According to the Act on Judges and Associates, a judge has the right to ensure the conditions for systematic and free training throughout the period of his or her term of office, to be provided with free legal regulations, professional literature and information necessary for the proper performance of the judge's function. Judges are trained by domestic and foreign educational institutions. The training of judges is also carried out through professional study stays in domestic and foreign judicial institutions, which can last for a maximum of one year. At the request of a judge, the President of the Court may, with the consent of the relevant Judicial Council and, in the case of qualification upgrading abroad also with the consent of the Ministry, issue a decision approving the upgrading of a judge's qualification, provided that such qualification upgrading is in accordance with function performance requirements.

170. In the autumn of 2018, the implementation of a national project of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic aimed at increasing the efficiency of the judicial system in dealing with the family law agenda began. This is a pilot project in selected district courts (Kežmarok, Prešov). The project is based on interdisciplinary cooperation. The court procedure in close cooperation with the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship according to the so-called Cochem Practice (Cochem Practice is a system of cooperation between professionals involved in parental disputes over a child to help parents find their own common solution) brought improved communication with parents, acceptance

¹⁴ <https://www.minedu.sk/ucebne-materialy-pre-ucitelov-a-ziakov-od-unhcr-learning-materials-for-teachers-and-learners-from-the-unhcr/>

of a unified procedure of the authorities with regard, in particular, to the interest of the minor child in the family and satisfaction of parents with an innovative way of solving their family crisis, or family breakdown. The goal is also achieved of ending court proceedings in matters of the care of the court for minors primarily before the court of first instance, i.e. before the district court, by concluding a parental agreement.

171. The Criminal Procedure Code recognizes special proceedings against juveniles. The juvenile must have a defender in the preparatory proceedings after the accusing. In the proceedings against a juvenile, the degree of mental and moral development of the juvenile, his or her nature, situation and environment in which he or she lived and was raised, his or her behaviour before and after the commission of the act he or she is accused of must be ascertained as thoroughly as possible, as well as other circumstances important for the choice of means appropriate to his or her correction, in particular to assess whether protective upbringing for minors should be ordered. The investigation of the juvenile's situation is also imposed on the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship and the municipality. In the case of a juvenile who did not exceed the age of fifteen at the time of the offence, it must always be examined whether he or she was able to recognize the illegality of the offence and whether he or she was able to control his or her conduct. An accused juvenile may be taken into custody only if the purpose of the custody cannot be achieved otherwise.

171A. The National Project Special Interrogation Rooms for Child Victims and Other Particularly Vulnerable Victims of Crime is being implemented by the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic. In order to protect particularly vulnerable victims against secondary victimization, the Criminal Procedure Code in the provisions of Section 134 para. 4 and Section 134 para. 5 regulates the special procedure of investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies when a particularly vulnerable victim is interrogated (conducting the interrogation in a considerate and content-related manner so that it does not have to be repeated in further proceedings; if a particularly vulnerable victim is interrogated on matters reviving in memory of which could - due to his or her personal characteristics, relationship to or dependence on the perpetrator, the nature and circumstances of the offence committed - adversely affect his or her mental and moral integrity or put him or her at risk of secondary victimization, a psychologist or expert shall be called in for the interrogation; conducting an interrogation with the use of technical devices intended for the recording of sound and images, so that it does not have to be repeated in further proceedings; in the case of the interrogation of a particularly vulnerable person who is the victim of a crime against human dignity, the crime of trafficking in human beings or the crime of battering of a close person and the person entrusted, the interrogation is usually conducted by a same-sex person). When interrogating child victims and child witnesses, special attention is also paid to compliance with the provisions of Section 135 para. 1 of the Criminal Procedure Code on the interrogation of a witness being a person under 18 years of age. A psychologist or expert shall be call in for the interrogation, who with regard to the subject of the interrogation and the degree of mental development of the interrogated person will contribute to the proper conduct of the interrogation, and a representative of the body of social and legal protection of children

and social guardianship, if the carer is not present in the interrogation pursuant to Section 48 para. 2 of the Criminal Procedure Code. If this can contribute to the proper conduct of the interrogation, the legal representative or teacher will also be called in for the interrogation. Before hearing a witness pursuant to the first sentence, investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies shall consult their method of the interrogation conducting with a psychologist or expert who will be called in for the interrogation and, if necessary, also with the body of social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, the legal representative or teacher, so that to ensure the proper conduct of the interrogation and prevent secondary victimization. Protection against secondary victimization is also the subject of regulation in Act No. 274/2017 Coll. on Victims of Crime and on Amendments to Certain Acts (hereinafter referred to as the “Victims' Act”). The Victims Act regulates the rights, protection and support for victims of crimes, relations between the state and entities providing assistance to victims, and financial compensation for victims of violent crime. The Victims Act defines a child (a person under the age of eighteen) as a particularly vulnerable victim. In the provision of Section 8 in para. 1 of the Act on Victims it is stipulated that the victim has the right to protection against secondary or repeated victimization, and at the same time in Section 8 para. 2 it is stated that investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies, the court and the victim support body shall act in such a way that their activities do not cause secondary victimization and shall take effective measures to prevent re-victimization. For this purpose, investigative, prosecuting and adjudicating bodies and the court shall use suitably adapted offices, if their spatial possibilities allow so

171B. We further state that the Criminal Police Office of the Presidium of the Police Force, in cooperation with the Academy of the Police Force in Bratislava, is implementing the project “Special interrogation rooms for child victims and other particularly vulnerable victims of crime“ (the project implementation from 2018 to 2021). The aim of the project is to create conditions for the elimination of repeated victimization and secondary victimization of child victims and other particularly vulnerable victims, including, for example, victims of crimes committed in connection with domestic violence and victims of crimes against human dignity (rape, sexual violence, sexual abuse). Within this project, it is planned to build a total of 15 special interrogation rooms located in the territory of the Slovak Republic, of which 1 special interrogation room has been built so far at the Academy of the Police Force in Bratislava, which is also used for teaching. The other interrogation rooms will be built on an ongoing basis in connection with the completion of the processes of individual public procurement. As part of this project, a system of accredited specialized training of police officers (police investigators and authorized members of the Police Force) has also been introduced at the Academy of the Police Force in Bratislava in the form of a 5-day course focused on work with particularly vulnerable victims. This training within the project started in 2019, and a total of 36 police officers have been trained so far. The target number of trained police officers within the project is 350. As part of this project, two educational documents were prepared in 2019, namely a methodological aid for work in a special interrogation room and a special form of instruction in the interrogation of child victims and other particularly vulnerable victims.

171C. The monitoring carried out by the Office of the Commissioner for Children revealed that the district directorates of the police force do not currently have any interrogation room of the model room type of the Academy of the Police Force. In all cases, district directorates set up interrogation rooms for vulnerable persons and especially for minors on their own. These are mostly ordinary offices that are located outside the standard performance of the service, if possible. In one case, the district directorate uses the room of an accredited entity. In principle, the district directorates correctly understand the layout of the interrogation rooms, but without sufficient financial coverage it is not possible to provide the necessary building modifications. The Commissioner for Children appreciates the efforts of the district directorates to deal operatively with the situation with interrogation rooms for minors, but without the central provision of technical and material equipment it is not possible to achieve the required standard. The main obstacles to the setting up of new interrogation rooms are insufficient funding for their setting up and the absence of public procurement for the technical equipment of such rooms. The interrogation of a minor is currently carried out directly in the investigator's office, if the district directorate does not have a special interrogation room for minors at all, or they are temporary interrogation rooms intended for the interrogation of a minor, which, however, can only partially fulfil their purpose with their equipment.

172. The Criminal Police Office of the Presidium of the Police Force, in cooperation with the Academy of the Police Force in Bratislava, is also implementing a system of basic training for police officers for work with particularly vulnerable victims (in addition to the project mentioned above). This is a nationwide retraining of the Police Force investigators and authorized members of the Police Force for work with victims of crime in the form of a one-day accredited course at the Academy of the Police Force in Bratislava entitled "Particularly Vulnerable Victims of Crime, Investigation and Approach to Victims". The implementation of this course began in the last quarter of 2018 and continues also in 2019. So far, about 1,800 police officers have completed this training. The planned total number of trained police officers within this course is about 3000.

173. As part of the development of the national reference mechanism, the IC MI SR implements trainings for several professional groups. The purpose is to deepen knowledge and capacity building in the area of trafficking in human beings and develop a national reference mechanism to provide adequate assistance to victims and facilitate the detection of the crime of trafficking in human beings. Just for this reason, for example in 2018 the participants included teachers from primary schools, special primary schools, secondary vocational schools and grammar schools, reeducation centres or centres of pedagogical-psychological counselling and prevention responsible for crime prevention at schools (approximately 90 persons). The aim of these trainings was to build capacities for the early identification of potential victims. The present persons were introduced to the issue of trafficking in human beings in an interactive form and provided with practical information aimed at identifying victims, as well as steps on how to proceed in the event of finding out any information related to the crime of trafficking in human beings. They also learned about

prevention options and activities through which they can make young people aware of how they can minimize risks and pitfalls. The trainings in question continued in 2019 (the implementation in question is partly related to the implementation of Recommendation 55. In terms of its general comment No. 6 (2005) on the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, the Committee urges the State Party to: (e) Ensure that all professionals working with unaccompanied children are regularly trained in children's rights and in appropriate procedures and communication;)

174. In 2018, trainings were also provided for employees of the National Labour Inspectorate and labour inspectors, employees of the Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, specifically for employees of the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship and also for members of NGOs (7 trainings, approx. 140 people). In 2016, the “Methodological Aid for the Procedure of Providing Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings with a Special Focus on Children and Foreigners“ was also amended, the procedures of which were also part of the individual trainings. The training participants also included representatives of non-governmental organizations who can come into contact with potential victims of trafficking in human beings among asylum seekers. In the previous period, specialist officers for work with Roma communities and field social workers were also included in the training schedule. In 2019, two trainings of regional coordinators of the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities took place in the area of trafficking in human beings identification. At the same time, these participants were trained as trainers in this area in order to build capacities and further expand the reference framework. Based on previous experience and training for various target groups of 2017, when the training programme also included employees of health care and teaching hospitals as well as employees of operational centres of emergency health services, in 2018 the IC MI SR staff were invited to give lectures for employees of the Regional Chamber of the Slovakian Chamber of Nurses and Midwives and about 130 nurses attended the lectures on trafficking in human beings. Since 2012, training activities in the field of trafficking in human beings identification for diplomats and employees of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic have been carried out every year (twice a year) as part of their attestation education. In 2018, as part of the pre-departure consular training, a training was provided on the issue of cooperation between the authorities of the Slovak Republic in assisting victims of trafficking in human beings. The training was attended by 24 employees of the sector prepared for deployment to embassies (hereinafter referred to as the “Embassy of the Slovak Republic”) in the position of consuls. Another 34 employees of the sector completed training as part of the attestation education to increase their diplomatic rank. The trainings help consular officers be better informed of the issue of assisting victims of trafficking in human beings and manage successfully specific cases in this area. The trainings in question continued in 2019.

175. As part of cooperation with the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force (hereinafter referred to as “BBFP PPF”), in fulfilling the tasks set out in the Schedule of Material and Time Performance of the Tasks of the Director of the BBFP PPF for 2018, the IC MI SR trained the staff of the individual directorates of the Border and

Foreign Police who, in the course of their employment, come into contact with third-country nationals, on the identification of victims of trafficking in human beings and on the obligation to inform them of possibilities of assistance if there is a suspicion that they have become victims, as well as on the procedures to be followed in relation to the suspicion of the occurrence of a victim of trafficking in human beings.

176. In 2018, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic implemented the “Good Advice Before Travelling Abroad for Work“ campaign and cooperation with airports in Bratislava, Košice and Poprad was started, as well as cooperation with public and private carriers (Slovak Lines a.s., Železničná spoločnosť Slovensko, a.s., Association of Bus Transport), EURES and RegioJet a.s. centres. In the form of leaflets (about 16,000 copies distributed) in a simple and understandable language, passengers had the opportunity to learn basic information about trafficking in human beings, possibilities to help victims of trafficking in human beings, where they can also find useful advice when looking for work and before travelling abroad, along with current contacts of the Slovak embassies and consulates abroad, as well as of the National Helpline for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings 0800 800 818. The IC MI SR also established cooperation with the private carrier RegioJet. In the October issue of Žlutý magazine, prepared and distributed by RegioJet, a preventive article with good advice before going abroad to work was published on the occasion of remembering the European Day against Trafficking in Human Beings. The magazine could be found on every RegioJet bus and train, as well as at the Student Agency branches. The October issue of the magazine was printed in 63,000 copies with a reach of approx. 500,000 passengers travelling in the Slovak Republic as well as in the Czech Republic.

177. As part of raising awareness of the issue of trafficking in human beings, a nationwide billboard campaign (28 places) was implemented in 2018 aimed at raising awareness of the existence of the National Helpline for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings 0800 800 818. The Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic concluded an agreement with Slovak Telekom, a.s. on the establishment of the National Helpline for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings - 0800 800 818, which is primarily intended to provide preventive information before travelling abroad, as well as to establish first contact with a potential victim of trafficking in human beings and to mediate relevant assistance (for calls from abroad - correct number: +421 800 800 818) already in 2008. The role of the free national hotline is to provide expert advice and information on trafficking in human beings. The campaign in question also took place in 2016 and will continue in 2019. In 2018, the IC MI SR prepared an updated leaflet for self-identification of victims of trafficking in human beings in six language versions for the purpose of their distribution among workers and foreigners of residence and detention camps, as well as places where such persons come into contact with authorities - police foreigner departments of the individual directorates of border and alien police.

178. The IC MI SR also participated and authored teaching material for an accredited course for members of the Police Force within the project of the Secondary Vocational School of the Police Force Bratislava for the implementation of a national project within the Internal

Security Fund entitled “Education of members of the Police Force in the field of prevention and identification of trafficking in human beings”, as well as it provided the author’s contribution to a teaching material within the project “Special interrogation rooms for child victims and other particularly vulnerable victims of crime” and to “Methodology of the police procedure in a special interrogation room”.

179. The Crime Prevention Department of the Office of the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic regularly carries out a wide-ranging education and training in the fight against trafficking in human beings. It regularly organizes experiential conferences on the topic of trafficking in human beings also within the framework of the National Project “Improving the Access of Victims of Crime to Services and Creating Contact Points for Victims”. In 2019, two trainings and experiential conferences were organized in Košice, focused on children from children’s homes, secondary school students and children and young people from marginalized groups of the population. Preventive tools available online with all the necessary contacts and information have been created (www.novodobiotroci.sk , www.anjelistradni.sk).

180. Since the ratification of the Optional Protocol, no complaint has been filed with the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic pursuant to Art. 127 para. 1 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. The Slovak Republic does not record any criminal offence of using children in armed forces or armed conflict, and no indications of the involvement of children in armed conflict have appeared in connection with the Slovak Republic in the UN reports either (UNHCRHR, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM), the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Crescent, in the reports of international or national non-governmental organizations, nor in the report of the Slovak Office of the Commissioner for Children.

181. The guarantee of compliance with the provisions of the Optional Protocol is given by fulfilling the cumulative condition of voluntariness and reaching the age of 18 years for service in the Slovak Armed Forces (Article 25 para. 2 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, the Act on Military Service, the Act on Civil Service of Professional Soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic). A secondary guarantee regarding the protection of children from their involvement in armed conflict is the criminality of conduct which we refer to in the legal order of the Slovak Republic as war lawlessness, and is regulated in Section 433 of the Criminal Code. The crime of war lawlessness is also a reference to Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The use of children in the armed forces is explicitly prohibited in Art. 8 para. 2 letter b) XXVI and Art. 8 letter e) VII. .

182. With regard to international legal guarantees, as well as the zero occurrence of the so-called child soldiers in the territory of the Slovak Republic, the Slovak legislation referring to the most complex international legislation appears to be a sufficient guarantee. The adequacy of this approach stems from the sophistication of the international system. In the Slovak Republic as the NATO and EU Member State, in the territory of which no armed conflict has taken place for more than 70 years. It is difficult to imagine a better jurisprudence and legislative basis for national legislation that could be a match for the quality of the Rome Statute, the Geneva Conventions, and other international instruments in this field. Explicit

national legislation on children in the armed forces is justified and characteristic of countries that have not ratified the Rome Statute, are outside the jurisdiction of multilateral international bodies and are known to prefer unilateral practices. At the same time, the Slovak Republic, as the EU Member State, is a contracting party to the International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 of 1999 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. This Convention in its Article 1 imposes on the contracting parties the obligation to take immediate and effective measures to ensure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, while pursuant to Article 3 the worst forms of child labour are also considered the forced or compulsory recruitment of children to use them in armed conflicts. Pursuant to Section 7 of the Criminal Code, which regulates the scope under international treaties, the criminality of an act is assessed under the Slovak Criminal Code even if it is stipulated by an international treaty by which the Slovak Republic is bound, which has been ratified and declared in the manner prescribed by law. The illegality and criminality of the conduct, which would be in conflict with the obligations under the Optional Protocol, is thus fully legally guaranteed in the conditions of the Slovak Republic.

183. By adopting Act No. 91/2016 Coll. on the criminal liability of legal persons and on the amendment to certain acts, many international obligations have been fulfilled. This law introduced direct criminal liability in the Slovak Republic relating to legal persons, including private security services or companies. In Section 2 para. 6 of this Act, a criminal offence under this Act is a criminal offence even if it is provided for by an international treaty which has been ratified and declared in the manner prescribed by law and by which the Slovak Republic is bound. Pursuant to Section 3 of this Act, criminal offences of legal entities are considered to be, inter alia, trafficking in human beings, endangering the moral upbringing of young people, money laundering, illicit armaments and arms trafficking, production, distribution and possession of child pornography, endangering morality. In the case of the involvement of children in private security services or military companies, the scope of the law should apply by analogy to these entities. In 2017, the Slovak Republic joined the Declaration of Safe Schools. It is a political document that was drawn up in response to the negative impact of armed conflicts on the educational process. The protection of children and their rights is one of the human rights priorities of the Slovak Republic, and therefore the Slovak Republic actively participates in related debates in the main UN bodies, supports the activities of the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Children in Armed Conflict and fully supports the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No. 2225 (2015) on children and armed conflict.

184. The committees of the National Council of the Slovak Republic also include the Committee on Defence and Security, which monitors compliance with the legality of the activities of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, the Police Force of the Slovak Republic and the State Material Reserves Administration of the Slovak Republic. This Committee discusses proposals, suggestions and complaints of citizens and organizations about their activities, as well as the activities of civil protection bodies that have reached the

National Council of the Slovak Republic If the Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic for Defence and Security detects a violation of legality in their activities, it is entitled to request the Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic and the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic to remedy it without delay.

185. Although the recommendations of the Council of Europe are not legally binding, the Slovak Republic, as a member state of the Council of Europe and a contracting party to the relevant human rights conventions, realistically addresses all recommendations and takes them into account when drafting its national legislation. The IC MI SR acts for the Slovak Republic as a national rapporteur for the European Commission in accordance with Art. 19 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, and regularly participates in meetings of the Informal Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanism (NREMs) for combating trafficking in human beings. We also cooperate with the Committee of the Contracting Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (2005) and the monitoring mechanism of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA).

186. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic cooperates with the Council of Europe in the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in the field of youth. In this process, we also focus on the implementation of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on young people's access to rights and the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on supporting young refugees in the transition to adulthood. In addition, a representative of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic is a member of the Council of Europe monitoring group, which evaluates the implementation of the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on access of young people from disadvantaged areas to social rights. Last but not least, the Slovak Republic continues to implement the Council of Europe's "No Hate" campaign even after its official termination. The main aim of the campaign was to increase the involvement and awareness of young people in the fight against hate speech on the Internet, which has become more widespread in recent years, and also to equip young people and youth organizations with the competences needed to recognize such human rights violations.