



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

GlocalEAST

Developing a new curriculum in Global Migration, Diaspora and Border

Studies in East-Central Europe

Project number: 2020-1-SK01-KA203-078263

GlocalEAST

National Report on Migration Policies and Dynamics - Slovakia

Date: March 2021

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OVERVIEW OF KEY DATA IN NATIONAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In its modern history, Slovakia has been rather a country of emigration. Between the late 17th and 18th century, Slovak people migrated mostly southwards within Austro-Hungarian Empire and inhabited the territories of current Hungary, Serbia (Vojvodina), Romania, and Croatia, in which they were granted the status of autochthonous national minorities. Since the late 18th century, around one million people have left Slovak territory (former Austro-Hungarian Empire and later Czechoslovakia) in several mass movements driven by poverty and political repressions (mostly to the USA, Canada and Western countries) (Koník, 2015). Migration has, however occurred also within the Czechoslovak state. Approx. 10 000 Slovaks have left for the Czech Federative Republic yearly since 1975, making Slovaks the biggest national minority in the Czech Republic after Moravians (1,4% in 2011).

Emigration has remained significant until present and peaked mainly after the country's accession to the EU in 2004. While the official statistics based on permanent residence largely underestimates the overall numbers, records from the health insurance registry show that still more Slovaks emigrate from Slovakia than return back. Between 2010 and 2017, on average 41 900 Slovaks emigrated yearly, while 29 000 on average returned (Rizman & Sacherová, 2018). The main drivers for recent emigration are economic, reflecting the restructuring of the economy and the downfall of several industrial areas after the change of the regime in 1989, which has led to increased unemployment. The host countries are stably the Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, the UK and Hungary (Divinský, 2017). According to estimates, 300-350 000 Slovak citizens currently reside abroad, while this number is deemed to be underestimated (the World Bank projected the number of Slovak emigrants to be 600 000 in 2013, which would make 10,9% of population) (*Ibid.*). According to a study on Slovak emigration, around 15 000 Slovaks emigrate yearly and out of the 300 000 Slovaks who have emigrated between 2000 and 2015, more than half were young people with university diploma, who search mostly for jobs adequate to their education and expectations (Haluš, Hlaváč, Harvan & Hidas, 2017).

The brain drain of young people represents a growing challenge for the national economy marked by the demographic crisis and increasingly aging population. More than 30 000 Slovaks study abroad (70% in the neighbouring Czech Republic), ranking Slovakia among the three EU countries

with the highest rate of students abroad (14% in 2015)¹. Even every 10th graduate from Slovak universities leaves abroad, mostly medics (Rizman & Sacherová, 2018). While only 23% of students plan to return to Slovakia after studies, those preferring to stay abroad would change their mind in case of wage increase, growth of order and prosperity in Slovakia, and change of their family situation (Kremský, 2015). The state is increasingly aware of this problem; however, the initiatives to support the return of highly qualified Slovak experts from abroad have a low return rate so far (see below). As a consequence of continuing emigration and unfavourable demographic development, state policies have increasingly recognised the usefulness of immigration for saturating the needs of the job market.

The number of foreigners immigrating to Slovakia started to rise mainly after Slovakia's accession to the EU and the Schengen Area and the opening of its labour market (Divinský, 2017). Previously, Slovakia was rather a homogenous country, in which foreigners have made less than 1% of the population, partly due to international isolation during communism (1948-1989). Even now, Slovakia maintains a relatively low number of migrants compared to other EU countries (2,75% of the population, which is the fourth lowest in the EU), yet a rather high growth rate. The number of foreigners intensified up to 7 times since 2004, from 22 108 to 150 012 in 2020. As a result of increased immigration, for the first time since 2000 (except for 2009 due to the financial crisis), Slovakia had a positive migration balance in 2016 and 2017, largely thanks to migration from other EU countries (Rizman & Sacherová, 2018).

In recent years, Slovakia has become increasingly interesting also for non-EU citizens. Since 2018, their number for the first time exceeded the number of foreigners from other EU countries (mostly Czechs, Hungarians, and Romanians) and has grown since then. Out of 150 012 foreigners residing in Slovakia at the end of 2020, 90 806 were third country nationals, mostly with temporary residence (PPZ ÚHCP, 2020, see Table 3). The biggest group are citizens from Ukraine (42 162 at the end of 2020) and from Serbia (16 005), whose number grew dynamically mainly in the last three years. The following countries of origin are Vietnam, Russia and China. The third-country nationals are coming mainly for employment and entrepreneurship, family reunion but increasingly also for studies (university, but also high school). They make 57% of all foreigners

¹ Eurostat, http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Europe_2020_indicators_-_education

employed in Slovakia (see Table 4) and reside mainly in regions with the labour shortage, reflecting the insufficient mobility of the domestic labour force.

In the area of forced migration, Slovakia is a country of transit rather than destination. The number of asylum applications in Slovakia culminated in 2004 (11 395 applications) and has been decreasing since to 282 in 2020. The number of persons granted international protection remains very low - Slovakia granted 874 asylums between 1993 and 2020, mostly to people from Afghanistan and Iraq. Since 2007, Slovakia granted subsidiary protection to 792 persons, making it a more common form of international protection (see Table 5). The low rate of both applications and positive evaluations is the result of several factors: very strict asylum policy, unsatisfactory integration policies, and prospects for good quality of life (employment), as well as the attitudes of Slovak population and the low number of migrants' diasporic communities.

Slovakia is a rather homogenous country, where 81% of the population identifies as Slovak. According to the census in 2011 collecting data through self-identification, the largest national minorities are Hungarian (8,49%), Romany (1,96%), and Czech (0,6%) (see Table 7). However, studies based on the subjective consideration of others estimate that there are 418 000 (8%) of Romany population in Slovakia², which is closer to the reality. Traditional minorities from five neighbouring countries together with Bulgarians, Croats, Russians, Serbs, Jews, Germans, Ruthenians, and Roma people belong to 13 officially recognised national minorities and ethnic groups, which are entitled to state support of their language and culture, as well as the right for education in their own language.

The dispersion of the Slovak diaspora community reflects the main emigration waves in the past three centuries. In Europe, the largest proportion lives in the Czech Republic, Great Britain, Hungary, but also in Germany, Serbia and Romania. Overall, the largest Slovak diaspora remains in the USA (see Tables 8 and 9). Since the status of 'Slovak living abroad' facilitates return, education and employment in Slovakia (for specific conditions see part 2), Slovakia remains the goal destination for people from traditional diasporas. In 2020, 11 228 people with the status of 'foreign Slovak' received residence in Slovakia (PPZ ÚHCP, 2020).

² Atlas rómskych komunit 2019, <https://www.minv.sk/?atlas-romskych-komunit-2019>

The number of Slovak returnees from abroad has been rather steady in the past years – according to Rizman & Sacherová (2018), on average 29 000 Slovaks returned yearly between 2010-2017 and the ratio between Slovak emigration and returns is significantly decreasing. Out of the large emigration wave between 2000 and 2012, on average half of Slovak emigrants returned until 2015 (*Ibid.*).

Apart from natural incoming and outgoing migration in border regions due to family ties and job opportunities, the migration from neighbouring countries (Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Austria) contributes largely (by 48,4%) to the overall number of foreigners residing in Slovakia (PPZ ÚHCP, 2020). Cross-border migration is further facilitated by the language proximity (mainly to the Czech Republic and Ukraine, but also of Slovak Hungarians to Hungary).

Despite the fact that Slovakia shares almost 100-kilometre Schengen border with Ukraine, the number of illegal migration is not large-scale. Since Slovakia's entrance to the EU, the number of foreigners' illegal crossings or stays on Slovak territory has been on the decline – from 10 946 in 2004 to 1 295 in 2020.³

The outgoing migration is largely defined by work and study opportunities in neighbouring countries. Slovakia heads EU countries in cross-border mobility – approx. 138 000 Slovaks (5,5% of all employed) commute regularly for work abroad, mostly from Central and Eastern Slovakia to Austria, Czech Republic and Germany.⁴ While men work mainly in the construction sector, women are involved in health services, mostly in Austria. Slovak caregivers, typically middle-aged women, represent around one third of all carers in Austria (23 300 at the end of 2018).⁵ For many, this is a long-term life strategy, a response to unemployment, and low wages. This is despite the fact that in recent years, such professions (carers, nurses) are in short supply also in Slovakia. Another significant direction of the cross-border migration are more than 20 000 Slovak students studying in the Czech Republic (mostly Brno and Prague) due to the higher quality of universities.⁶

³ IOM, Migration in Slovakia, <https://iom.sk/en/migration/migration-in-slovakia.html>

⁴ <https://www.teraz.sk/ekonomika/analyza-za-pracou-do-zahranicia-cest/459833-clanok.html>

⁵ https://www.sav.sk/index.php?doc=services-news&source_no=20&news_no=8040

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/slovakia/news/dataeu_pocet_studentov_v_zahranici_sk

Several studies point at a rather ethnocentric understanding of the Slovak nation, which results in a reserved position towards people with different cultural backgrounds (Vašečka, 2009, 2009a; Gallová Kriglerová & Kadlečíková, 2012). Even though cultural diversity in general is received positively, it implies adaptation to the culture and values of the majority and requires that the manifestation of other cultural, ethnic, or religious identities remains limited to the private life. Such attitudes relate also to Hungarians and their language rights and particularly strongly to Muslims (almost 70% of Slovaks think that the state should not allow them to practice their faith) (Gallová Kriglerová & Kadlečíková, 2012).

Studies measuring the social distance between various social groups and minorities show that Slovaks keep the most antagonistic position to Roma people (in the long term, around 80% of respondents refuse having a Roma family as their neighbour), but also to Muslims (32%) and immigrants (21%).⁷ Foreigners are generally accepted as fellow inhabitants or workers, yet almost 60% of Slovaks refuse foreigners to hold important political functions (Gallová Kriglerová & Kadlečíková, 2012), pointing at the exclusivist notion of Slovakia as 'country of Slovaks'.

The Slovak public, in general, perceives migration rather negatively. Most people perceive it as a problem rather than opportunity: immigrants are deemed to be a burden on the social system, to worsen criminality and to take jobs (Special Eurobarometer 469, 2018, see Figure 5-6). In comparison with the rest of the EU, Slovaks have a significantly lower understanding of immigrants as a benefit for the national economy, innovations, or cultural enrichment (*Ibid.*) According to Standard Eurobarometer 86 (2016), immigration of third country nationals evokes negative feelings for 79% of Slovaks. Such negative attitudes reflect the low levels of intergroup contact – many Slovaks still do not know or interact with a foreigner personally (Bozogánová, 2020, see also Figure 2). A national survey in 2020 revealed that almost one half (47%) of Slovaks does not know any foreigner living in Slovakia personally (Rapoš Božič, 2020). Even when it comes to the general awareness of publicly known foreigners, the rate is rather low, except for sport (*Ibid.*). Such little awareness and lack of personal ties result in low level of trust to foreigners, which, however, needs to be seen in the context of the overall absence of interpersonal trust in Slovakia.

⁷ <https://www.minv.sk/?extremizmus&subor=175896>

Interestingly, since the migration crisis (and despite its negligible impact on Slovakia), immigration and terrorism are deemed to be the most important issue the EU is facing today in the eyes of Slovaks (Standard Eurobarometer 86, 2016 and 92, 2019). However, national surveys indicate that Slovaks see migration as mostly an EU problem, since at the national level, they prioritise issues such as improvement of living standards and health system, unemployment or corruption (Baboš, Világi & Oravcová, 2016).

Migration has not been an important part of the political debates for a longer time, since Slovakia did not face a significant inflow of immigrants. Even almost 10 000 applications for asylum yearly between 2001-2004 due to conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Chechnya did not provoke significant public attention. Migration has become politicised only during the 2015 “migration crisis”, which has developed in the context of the upcoming parliamentary elections, the rise of the disinformation media and increasing mobilisation of extremist political parties and movements. Political reactions to migration have been often connected with anti-Muslim rhetoric, which has laid ground for the change of the Law on registration of churches and religious societies in 2017, increasing the threshold for registration from 20 000 to 50 000 adult members with permanent residence in Slovakia and Slovak citizenship. This was deemed to be directed mainly against the Muslim community, despite the fact that the number of Muslims in Slovakia is approx. 5 000, while only around 1 000 would be eligible for such conditions. Nevertheless, anti-Muslim rhetoric has become a source of political mobilisation, reflecting popular attitudes.

Another aspect is connected to labour migration – even though national policies reflect the growing need of foreign labour force, and recent legal amendments have contributed to ease conditions for foreigners’ employment, strong anti-immigration rhetoric prevails. Politicians rarely talk openly about migration’s benefits for the country and highlight rather the protection of Slovak interests and workers. As a result, migrants living and working in Slovakia remain invisible in the political discourse and practical policies on both national and regional level.

While over 1 million persons applied for asylum in EU countries in 2015, Slovakia received only 330 applications and granted 8 asylums in the same period. Hence, Slovakia has not been truly touched by the ‘migration crisis’, yet the public perception was heavily influenced by the disinformation campaign and hostile rhetoric across the political spectrum. Security of the

national borders and population, as well as economic and cultural threats assigned to migration became dominant in the domestic political discourse. The politicians highlighted the country's inability to provide effective solutions and put the main responsibility on the EU countries at the external Schengen border instead. They advocated for solutions, which would keep the asylum seekers beyond Slovak/Schengen borders, such as greater (personal and financial) contribution to the protection of Schengen borders and the most burdened countries, setting up retention centres for asylum seekers in the border states, or supporting stabilisation of countries of origin. The largely securitised anti-migration sentiment has become the leitmotif of the national election campaign in March 2016 and brought success to parties with strong anti-migration rhetoric - the incumbent party SMER-SD confirmed its election victory; even the extreme right wing party (K-LSNS) gained seats in the Parliament for the first time with 8,04% of votes.

One of the most salient topics for Slovak politics during the 'migration crisis' has been the decision of the European Council to introduce the obligatory quota for distributing asylum seekers among the EU members. Slovak politicians across the political spectrum strictly opposed such a solution, mainly due to the perceived lack of sovereignty in decision-making on the EU level. Moreover, some of them justified the negative attitude by the alleged country's inability to accept and integrate refugees of different cultures and religions (underlined by the largely unsuccessful integration of the Roma minority in Slovakia (Chudžíková, 2016). Very often, the politicians did not discern between migrants and refugees, downplaying the nature of the crisis and omitting its humanitarian context.

Instead of the obligatory EU distribution mechanism, Slovakia advocated for voluntary distribution of asylum seekers and for 'flexible solidarity', which would leave the decision on the specific form of contribution up to EU member states, taking into account their experience and potential. As an expression of such solidarity, Slovakia has offered temporary accommodation for approx. 1 200 asylum seekers whose asylum applications were assessed in Austria in 2015, in order to relieve Austrian facilities. At the same time, it has voluntarily resettled 149 asylum seekers from Iraq, which have settled in Nitra.⁸ Since 2016, 16 persons (women with children), have been voluntarily relocated from hotspots in Greece into the Slovak Republic (The Migration

⁸ From 149 Iraqi Christian refugees resettled, only around 60 people have remained in Nitra as of 2019, while others decided to return to refugee camps in Iraq. The refugees integration was coordinated by a non-profit organization "Pokoj a dobro" (Peace and Good) with the support of Bishopric Nitra and the Ministry of Interior.

Office, 2019). In addition, Slovakia increased its offer of scholarships to foreign and refugee students. Nevertheless, the issue of the obligatory quota system has marked Slovakia's relation with the EU and even nowadays, many politicians continue using it as a source of mobilisation to demonstrate their opposition to 'EU dictate' and protection of national interests.

In relation to COVID pandemic, several measures have been adopted to address the challenges created by the extraordinary situation declared on March 11, 2020 and the emergency state currently in force (as of February 2021). The Slovak Parliament has approved an amendment to the Act on the Residence of Foreigners, which extends deadlines regarding foreigners' residence by the period of the crisis (and longer in some cases) and thus prevents forced departures.

Besides the overall impact of the pandemic on the labour market, the extraordinary situation requiring closing certain activities and services has influenced mainly migrants having their business in gastronomy and services. The state has offered a series of financial measures to help businesses that had to close or limit their operation, or lost their turnover.⁹ However, due to the pandemic, the number of foreigners working in Slovakia declined by approx. 9 000 between February and December 2020 and is expected to decrease.¹⁰

The extraordinary situation has also displayed the absence of systematic information services for foreigners on the national/regional level. Frequent changes of preventive measures and conditions for free movement have led to information chaos mainly for foreigners without sufficient knowledge of the Slovak language. Only gradually, the governmental website on coronavirus has adopted various language mutations to increase awareness among foreigners.

NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION AND MIGRANT INTEGRATION

For a long time, Slovakia lacked a proper 'migration doctrine' that would communicate the state's position towards migration in line with interests of the state, migrants and the EU. Only in 2005, in the context of Slovakia's accession to the EU, Slovakia adopted the first national *Concept of*

⁹ <https://www.mic.iom.sk/en/news/637-covid-19-measures.html>

¹⁰ See for example <https://finweb.hnonline.sk/ekonomika/2173604-cudzincov-u-nas-ubuda-pre-slovensko-to-moze-byt-dobra-sprava> and <https://ekonomika.pravda.sk/ludia/clanok/575338-pocet-pracujucich-cudzincov-na-slovensku-stale-klesa-najviac-je-ukrajincov/>

Migration Policy, which served as a ‘manual’ of migration management in line with the EU’s migration and asylum policies. However, it has remained rather vague and legalistic, revolving around the need to protect the state, its stability, and national interests, yet avoiding the definition of concrete aims and actions. As a result, the migration agenda has lacked clear priorities, proper division of responsibilities between state actors, and attention from the political or media discourse.

As a transit country, only recently changing into a migrant-receiving country, Slovakia has prepared its first comprehensive migration policy in 2011 entitled *Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic: Perspective until the year 2020*¹¹. This document gave the most attention to the issues of legal migration and integration, preventing illegal migration, harmonisation with the EU migration policies and migration-development nexus. While the EU standards represent one axis of the Policy, another one is the utilitarian perspective on economic migration, reflecting needs of the economy, labour market, and demographic development. The key criterion for enabling immigration was the potential of economic migrants for the development of Slovak economy and society, favouring migrants with qualifications necessary for shortage professions and from culturally related countries.

The Migration Policy outlined also the migrant integration measures as a means for the development of national economy and demography. The integration is understood as a ‘continuous, long-term, and dynamic mutual process that includes both the aliens staying in the receiving country legally and inhabitants’. However, there is a certain paradox: while foreigners’ communities are considered an integral part of the society who contribute to all areas of life, the SR ‘inclines to an integration model based on the full acceptance by migrants of the current situation in the Slovak Republic’, indicating rather an assimilation model. Such an approach has received critical appraisal by the expert community, pointing to the utilitarian perception and securitisation of migration, as well as an essential understanding of culture leading to assimilation tendencies.

¹¹ https://www.emn.sk/phocadownload/documents/migration_policy_sr_2020_en.pdf

The Migration policy has been complemented by Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic¹² adopted in 2014, which set up a broader framework for integration mainstreaming in various national policies. The Policy is based on the principles of equality, justice, and respect for human dignity and it recognises the importance of the successful integration for the development of the SR as a country that supports and respects diversity. **Integration is understood as a dynamic two-way process** that requires the accommodation of foreigners, on the one hand, and the creation of conditions for their integration, on the other. The integration policy put emphasis on the regional and local levels in which the integration occurs, as well as on the employability of foreigners, their inclusion in the system of social and health insurance, enabling equal access to education, language abilities and housing.¹³ Equally, it recognised the need to apply positive (affirmative) action to redress the disadvantages of vulnerable groups, particularly applicants and holders of international protection, children, women, the elderly, etc.

However, both policies lack proper instruments for implementation, mainly adequate funding and clear mandate and division of work between respective state authorities. While the Migration Policy envisaged creation of the Immigration and Naturalization Office, an interdepartmental unified body, which would allow and ease full-scale implementation, evaluation, and review of Migration policy from one centre, such office has not been created as of 2020, despite the recommendations of the expert community. Slovakia also still lacks the State's Integration Programme for Beneficiaries of International Protection (envisaged by the Government since 2015), which would foster the creation of a systematic national integration framework for refugees. The current integration services for beneficiaries of international protection are project-based and time-bound, funded largely (75%) by the EU Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

As regards the international protection, Slovakia awards asylum and subsidiary protection (since 2007) in line with the UN Geneva Convention. Moreover, Slovakia is also engaged in resettlement of asylum seekers from third countries through humanitarian transfers based on trilateral treaties

¹² <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/integration-policy-of-the-slovak-republic>

¹³ For the specific living conditions for foreigners, see <https://www.employment.gov.sk/en/information-foreigners/living-conditions-foreigners/> and <https://www.mic.iom.sk/en/>

between the government, the UNHCR, and the IOM. Between 2009 and 2018, it has resettled 1047 persons, mostly from Palestine, Afghanistan, Somalia, Eritrea and Lebanon to USA, Canada, Norway or Sweden (The Migration Office, 2019). Within EU migration burdensharing, the Slovak Republic implements aid programs relocating aliens with international protection from the most burdened countries (*Ibid.*). However, Slovakia remains reluctant when it comes to the obligatory reception of asylum seekers on the EU level (see below).

In 2018, the Slovak Government has adopted the (historically first) *Strategy on Labour Mobility of Foreigners in Slovakia*¹⁴, which represents a key change in the area of legal migration. The Strategy reacts to labour market shortages and negative demographic trends with measures that make the system of employment of migrants from third countries faster, more effective, and flexible, mainly in professions with labour shortage (mostly high-skilled and low-skilled). Besides the easing of several administrative procedures, a list of sectors with labour shortages is being published quarterly in districts with unemployment under 5%. Several other strategic documents highlight that the inflow of qualified labour force is crucial for upholding Slovakia's competitiveness and to prevent barriers for its economic growth (e.g., Strategy of Economic Policy of Slovak Republic until 2030).

As of 1 December 2019, the *Act on State Citizenship* simplified the administrative process for third-country nationals applying for citizenship.

At the end of 2020, a new *Migration Policy with Outlook to 2025*¹⁵ has been presented and brought several improvements, such as understanding integration as '*a process of mutual respect and reciprocal recognition of rights and duties of both groups*', improving the efficiency of informing foreigners and of the services of the Foreign Police. However, it has not avoided flaws from the past – it lacks concrete division of tasks between respective authorities, and sufficient funding

¹⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/slovak-ministry-of-labour-publishes-new-strategy-on-labour-mobility-of-foreigners#:~:text=Slovakia%20just%20adopted%20the%20new,and%20Family%20in%20September%202018.&text=Acco,rding%20to%20the%20strategy%2C%20migrants,contribute%20to%20the%20overall%20economy.>

¹⁵ <https://www.slov-lex.sk/legislativne-procesy/-/SK/LP/2020/385>

mainly for integration activities, which are key for foreigners' dignity and peaceful coexistence with the majority.

To address the continuing brain drain, the Slovak government has launched its first programme to support the return of Slovak experts from abroad through financial incentives in 2015. With the aim to enhance excellent research at Slovak institutions, 26 experts returned so far between 2015-2018.¹⁶ Several others have been attracted through LEAF's 'Slovak Professionals Abroad Programme'.¹⁷

Otherwise, there is no central authority providing services to Slovak nationals living abroad. The Office for the Slovaks living abroad¹⁸ (under the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs) is responsible for the overall policy towards 'Slovaks living abroad'. However, despite the diversification of the diaspora communities after 1989, it maintains its focus on strengthening national awareness and cultural identity mostly of the traditional Slovak diaspora (autochthonous Slovaks' in Central and Eastern Europe and Slovaks overseas) (Vašečka & Žúborová, 2020). The Office issues 'Certificate of foreign Slovak', a status confirming national identity (on the basis of Slovak nationality or Slovak ethnic origin and Slovak cultural and language awareness) and a possibility to return to Slovakia and obtain Slovak citizenship. Its holders can acquire temporary residence as well as citizenship under easier conditions (3 years of temporary residence prior to application for citizenship compared to 8 years for other foreigners); they are also exempt from applying for visa, work permission, and entitled to welfare services and benefits (*Ibid.*). The right to vote is exclusive for Slovak citizens (if they reside abroad, they can vote by post in case of parliamentary elections only).

Since 2010, Slovaks who acquire a second citizenship lose their Slovak citizenship (this was a reaction to Hungarian law, which simplified the granting of double citizenship to foreign Hungarians). As a consequence, up to 3 400 persons lost their citizenship until 2020. Since 2020,

¹⁶ <https://www.vedatechnika.sk/SK/o-scheme-navraty/Documents/Navraty%202020/Zaverecna-sprava-Navraty.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://spap.leaf.sk/o-programe-pre-partnerov/>

¹⁸ Act on the Slovaks Living Abroad and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Laws

<https://www.uszz.sk/sk/act-on-the-slovaks-living-abroad-and-on-amendments-and-additions-to-certain-laws>

this law is being revised to prevent unwanted loss of citizenship and enable people residing abroad long-term to keep double citizenship.

Despite the principled nature of the Integration Policy, it has not led to proper implementation in key policies such as housing, healthcare, education, employment, cultural, and political participation. This is mainly due to missing funding and the absence of a single authority responsible for the migration and integration agenda. As of now, it remains scattered among several state institutions (see below) and in practice, NGOs or private companies often substitute the state in providing additional services to migrants (Slovak language courses, legal or employment counselling, informing about rights and obligations, etc.). The integration services at the regional/municipal level are still largely missing, except for cities with a significant number of labour immigrants (such as Nitra).

The MIPEX ranking of integration policies (2020) classifies the Slovak approach to integration as “equality on paper” – while immigrants enjoy basic rights and security, they lack equal opportunities in several areas of life¹⁹:

- the labour market (administrative challenges mainly for non-EU citizens),
- education (missing integration strategies and targeted support for immigrant pupils),
- political participation (non-EU immigrants with permanent residence in Slovakia are allowed to vote and stand as candidates in local elections only, but do not have the right to join or form political parties or associations), and
- access to nationality (Despite the fact that the integration policy defines acquiring citizenship as the full-fledged inclusion of foreigners into the political community, the process of acquiring citizenship is rather restrictive and Slovakia belongs to countries with the lowest naturalisation rates in the EU.²⁰ Requirements include 8 years of permanent residence (which can be obtained after 5 years of residing in

¹⁹ <https://www.mipex.eu/slovakia>

²⁰ [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Naturalisation_rate_\(acquisition_of_citizenship_per_100_resident_foreigners\),_2018.png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Naturalisation_rate_(acquisition_of_citizenship_per_100_resident_foreigners),_2018.png)

Slovakia), clean record, and knowledge of Slovak language, while the criteria for assessment remain arbitrary).

The integration process of beneficiaries of international protection is more regulated through cooperation of the Migration Office and a contracted NGO that provides enhanced services. During the integration period of 6 months, the refugees need to attend Slovak language courses and are offered legal and psychological help, as well as assistance with finding a job. Formally, they have access to the labour market without a work permit, yet they often face difficulties in recognising their degrees and skills. The monthly allowance (approx. 300 EUR) paid during the 6-month integration period should cover all expenses. This is extremely difficult in big cities, which on the one hand offer a prospect for job opportunities, yet on the other hand have a higher costs of living. As a result, beneficiaries of international protection face several barriers in their integration process, such as little financial and social capital, absence of accessible housing, language barriers, and limited access to the labour market.

The responsibility for organisational and legislative framework of migration and integration policies is currently divided between three *national* ministries²¹:

- Ministry of Interior www.minv.sk,
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family www.employment.gov.sk,
- Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs www.mzv.sk.

The Ministry of Interior is in charge of the migration and asylum agenda.

Its **Migration Office** decides on the granting of international protection and is responsible for the reception and basic care of asylum seekers in three asylum facilities. Its services are supplemented by a contracted NGO (currently the Slovak Humanitarian Council), who provides additional care for asylum seekers and persons granted international protection. www.minv.sk/?migracny-urad-mv-sr

²¹ This part is based primarily on the Overview of organisation of migration and asylum system in the Slovak Republic prepared by the EMN in September 2020. Available online (Eng): <https://www.emn.sk/en/download/emn-documents/itemlist/category/31-emn-studies-and-policy-briefs>

Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Police Force Presidium is responsible mainly for border control, as well as for visa practice, foreigners' residence, checks, and returns. It is equally responsible for countering human trafficking, irregular migration including migrant smuggling. www.minv.sk/?uhcp

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family coordinates mainly the area of labour migration; it regulates the access and employment of foreigners on the labour market and oversees the national integration policy (employment, social security, and health care for foreigners). The *regional* labour offices under the Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family (www.upsvar.sk) decide on work permits for foreigners and the National Labour Inspectorate participates in measures against illegal employment of foreigners in Slovakia (www.safework.gov.sk).

The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs deals with the external dimension of migration and manages the consular agenda, including visas and applications for residence or citizenship. It coordinates development, cooperation, and humanitarian assistance and builds partnerships with the countries of origin of irregular migrants.

Office for the Slovaks Living Abroad is in charge of the overall policy towards Slovaks living abroad and sets directions for their support. <http://www.uszz.sk/sk/>

Other actors

International organisations and non-governmental organisations provide many key services for foreigners, conduct research, awareness-raising activities and advocacy to improve the situation of migrants in Slovakia.

International organisations

- International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Slovakia - deals with the comprehensive migration agenda, services and campaigns. Through its Migration Information Centre, it provides reliable information, helpline, free consultancy and

services for migrants www.iom.sk, bratislavaInfo@iom.int; www.mic.iom.sk, mic@iom.int

- UNHCR in Slovakia – is a liaison point between the Slovak government and the UNHCR, monitoring and advocating for the situation of asylum seekers, refugees, and stateless persons www.unhcr.sk

Non-governmental organizations

- Human Rights League, <http://www.hrl.sk/en>; hrl@hrl.sk
- The Slovak Humanitarian Council, <http://www.shr.sk/>; shr@changenet.sk
- Marginal, www.marginal.sk; info@marginal.sk
- Centre for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture, <http://cvek.sk/en>; info@cvek.sk
- Milan Šimečka Foundation, <http://www.nadaciamilanasimecku.sk/>; nms@nadaciams.sk; info@fjuzn.sk
- Institute for Public Affairs, <http://www.ivo.sk/106/en/home>; ipa@ivo.sk
- Slovak Catholic Charity, <http://www.charita.sk>; mind@charita.sk
- Nitrianska komunitná nadácia <https://www.nkn.sk/>; nkn@nkn.sk
- Mareena www.mareena.sk; info@mareena.sk
- Človek v ohrození <https://clovekvohrozeni.sk/>; info@clovekvohrozeni.sk

Good practices in local or regional contexts concerning migration management

- COMIN Nitra – the first Community centre for labour and knowledge mobility created with the support of Nitra Municipality and Nitra Community Foundation. The Centre's aim is to support social cohesion, overcome barriers for foreigners' integration, and to promote coexistence between newcomers and locals. www.comin.sk
- Project KapaCITY – innovative education tool for municipalities and organisations working with foreigners <https://www.kapacity.sk/>
- Intercultural guide for foreigners: <http://cvek.sk/intercultural-guide-for-foreigners/>
- Community organisation Mareena – assisting foreigners in integration through volunteering programme, courses, counselling, and community events for foreigners and

locals in Bratislava, Kosice and Nitra www.mareena.sk; <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/intpract/community-project-mareena>

- <http://www.multikulti.sk> – website spreading information and opinions on cultural diversity, human rights, minority and migration issues
- The Migration Information Centre (MIC) of the IOM in Bratislava – helps the integration of third country nationals through assistance and guidance on legal and social issues www.mic.iom.sk
- Soup festival in Kosice – presenting the national and cultural diversity of Kosice through community cooking <https://www.facebook.com/polievkac/>
- Fjuzn festival - aimed at raising awareness on migration and promoting intercultural dialogue between various communities in Slovakia <https://www.fjuzn.sk/>

For more, please see the European website on Integration <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/integration-practices?sort=area&dir=desc&page=23> pages 22, 23, 24

READINESS OF HEI GRADUATES FOR WORK IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION AND MIGRANT INTEGRATION

For mapping the readiness of HEI graduates, we conducted 8 semistructured interviews with experts from state institutions (2), NGOs (3), international organisations (2), and research institutions (1), who all work directly with issues of migration and migrant integration.²² The respondents are based in Bratislava, but the work of their organisations is not limited to the capital and includes various target groups - asylum seekers in asylum facilities, migrants across the country, municipalities, teachers, and students. The variety of interviewees allowed us to cover key areas of work in the migration field – from developing and implementing state policies, through research and analytical work, to direct work with clients. At the same time, most of these organisations engage in inter-institutional cooperation across the state and non-state sector, including the EU level. During online interviews, we asked them mainly about their own experiences in their positions and about their expectations of candidates aspiring to work in this field.

In general, most interviewees acknowledged that their university studies (in Slovakia) have not prepared them sufficiently (or at all) for their current position. While it has allowed them to familiarise with the general framework (law), specific methodologies (sociology, anthropology), or approaches (social work), it did not offer specific training on issues of migration and integration. Rather, they were often left to “learning by doing” in their workplace, and to invest in self-study to complement their knowledge in the specific area.

Nevertheless, the interviewees were able to identify several areas connected to university education that have been beneficial and formative for their later career: internships or work experience abroad, volunteering/internship/cooperation with local NGOs or research groups, and lectures of practitioners, which have been a source of inspiration and motivation. The experience of studying/working/living abroad as well as familiarity with the target group and field work were particularly appreciated since this experience brought them novel perspectives, and closer

²² The names and organisations of the interviewees are not given for the purpose of keeping their anonymity.

understanding of the situation of foreigners/migrants. Several interviewees noted that at present, graduates often lack a realistic view on migration and integration issues due to the absence of such practical experience.

Most interviews revealed that candidates are required mainly to show interest and the basic understanding of the migration topic; the specific knowledge and skills are trained usually at the beginning of the job or on-the-job to familiarise the candidate with the key tasks. Interestingly enough, most interviewees stated that more than knowledge, the graduates are expected to have skills and attitudes that are necessary for work in migration and integration. While specific knowledge can be acquired gradually, the respondents appreciate candidates who have skills that enable them to work independently, to learn quickly and think critically. At the same time, positions in the field of migration require a set of soft skills, mainly communication and team work. Equally, they expect candidates to have genuine interest and enthusiasm for the topic, to have 'the right attitude', often referring to recognition of human rights and dignity, equality, and open-mindedness to diversity. Since work in the migration and integration areas requires these humane qualities, the technocratic approach is not sufficient. Rather, it requires a flexible approach based on partnership, professionalism, and self-reflectivity.

Knowledge, skills and attitudes of HEI graduates desired for work in the field of migration and migrant integration

Knowledge. Even though most interviewees did not consider knowledge to be the most important asset for work in the migration area, all of them expected that the candidates have at least a basic orientation in the field. For some, however, awareness of the situation in Slovakia and the basic 'knowledge package' was a significant added value upon which the graduates can build later on in their work. More specifically, these main areas of knowledge were identified as useful for people working in the field of migration:

- Migration in general:
 - o What is migration, what are its types and main reasons

- History of migration
- System of international protection in Slovakia and the EU (Dublin regulation, etc.)
- Globalisation and migration
- Understanding the target group:
 - Understanding socio-political and cultural background of migrants and refugees
 - Basics of geopolitics (and knowledge specifically of the situation in countries of origin of asylum seekers)
 - Migrants' rights and legislative context
 - Understanding the phases of the adaptation process of foreigners in the host countries (cultural shock, etc.) and its consequences in practice (e.g., education needs of foreigners' children, information campaigns)
- Slovak context:
 - Understanding the legal context in Slovakia and in the EU, division of competences
 - Migration and integration policy framework, institutional organisation in Slovakia
 - Asylum policies
 - Types of residency
 - Rights and obligations of foreigners in Slovakia
- Related issues:
 - Theories of ethnicity and nationalism
 - Education for tolerance, ethical education, and multicultural education
 - Intercultural competences
 - Basics of social sciences, including psychology (many related professions require direct work with clients)
 - Social work with migrants as a specific group

Most interviewees underlined that building up knowledge in the field of migration requires an interdisciplinary approach – combining sociology, economy, and law, since single disciplines offer a rather narrow perspective. Knowledge from multiple disciplines could lead to a better understanding of the migration issues in their complexity.

Skills. Many interviewees highlighted that they appreciate if candidates have practical experience in the migration field (internship, volunteering, etc.). Such experience can decrease stereotypes and increase tailor-made solutions (legislative proposals, etc.) and as one respondent put it, it can be more formative than education itself. At the same time, it develops many skills that are desired for work in the migration field, such as:

- Research & analytical skills
 - Ability to listen, to lead interviews focused on the people and their needs
 - Objectivity: the ability to separate personal attitudes and emotions from the research
 - Ability to search for information and analyse them independently
 - Data processing
 - Writing skills (publications, reports, assessments...)
- Work with clients
 - Ability to work with people of different cultures and social groups
 - Open and active attitude to foreigners
 - Intercultural skills (sensitivity to the barriers foreigners face; reflectivity on one's identity and culture)
 - Empathy
 - Legal counselling
 - Professionalism: client-centred approach, ability to keep one's boundaries and manage expectations
- Work with partners (state and non-state)
 - Advocacy
 - Networking (important for sharing experiences, communication with partners in the field)
 - Be accepted and trustworthy among the partner institutions
- Communication skills and team work
 - Active listening and openness to other opinions
 - Team-player
 - Ability to give and receive feedback, to take initiative

- Conflict management
- Crisis communication
- Presentation skills (webinars, roundtables, conferences, ...)
- Determination, ability to deal with challenges
- Project management
 - Organisational skills
 - Time management, project management, budgeting
- Other
 - Ability and willingness to learn
 - Critical thinking
 - English language is a must for most positions, while other languages are an asset
 - Interpreting in the languages of clients (in SK, mostly Farsi, Persian, Georgian, Kurdish language)

Attitudes:

- Having ‘the right attitude’ – be interested in the topic of migration, but also sensitive about the migration reality (social, sociological, and psychological perspective on migration rather than a technocratic approach)
- Openness towards diversity and multicultural society, respect for cultural differences
- Human rights-based approach
- ‘The good official’s qualities – positive and determined mind-set; service-oriented, law-abiding
- Dutifulness, responsibility
- Self-reflection and openness to other opinions
- Personal motivation (and vision of personal development in the field) and ability to take initiative

The needs of NGOs for further education in the field of migration and migrant integration

The majority of the interviewed experts reported that their organisation/institution offers some form of (online / offline) training, especially if they are part of the EU/international platform. Mostly, it is focused on developing the specific skills they need in their work – both soft skills (such as communication, presentation skills, assertiveness), and training to develop further expertise (e.g. work with vulnerable groups, clients, or interpreters, resettlement, development assistance, new trends in migration, management of human resources or project management). Moreover, a couple of organisations offer possibilities of stays abroad – for example short-term placements in reception centres in the EU border countries or project-based visits to organisations in other countries. Several interviewees mentioned that experiences from abroad and the possibility to see the practice from other countries are a major source of learning and motivation for further work.

However, three respondents (two from NGOs and one from the state sector) informed that they have no internal trainings due to the lack of capacity (time, personal, financial). When asked about their needs for additional learning, the interviewees' answers reflected on the specific position and situation of their organisation/institution. Some noted that they would welcome training that would offer a complex perspective on migration, including the economic/sociologic perspective. Others would take advantage of education that would allow them to go deeper into topics related to migration and to keep up with current migration trends and the global perspective (including knowledge about the countries of migrant's origin, and their cultural background, basic geopolitics, etc.). The common motivation for such education was to allow workers in both the state and NGO sectors to step out of their everyday working routine and to see the real human stories behind the paperwork, and to grasp the complexity of the migration experience. Moreover, several respondents highlighted that workers in the area of migration (especially those holding their positions for many years) would need the opportunity of lifelong learning to prevent burnout and to keep up with the dynamically evolving situation and needs in this field. Equally, they stressed the need to provide for supervision given the demanding nature of the helping professions (social workers, psychologists, lawyers).

Besides the desire for broadening their knowledge, the respondents from the NGO sector reflected the needs related to the sustainability of their organisations, where they need to be 'mini experts for everything'. Therefore, they would welcome support in areas such as strategic planning,

project management including project monitoring and evaluation, advocacy, and communication with the media.

CONCLUSION

The results of the Report on HEI programs in Slovakia show that the issue of migration is covered rather scarcely and has limited reach. Only 6 out of 20 public universities offer related courses, reaching few hundreds of students each year at best (most courses are optional). The dominant part (8) of the 19 courses identified in the Report is at Law Faculties, focusing mainly on legal aspects of migration and asylum law. Another part is a mixture of Social Science disciplines (Political Science, Ethnology), Economy and Natural Sciences. Social work represents another area, including one (and the only) study programme specialisation on social work with migrants.

At the same time, these courses offer a rather limited geographical scope, focusing mostly on Slovakia or the EU. Given the feedback of our interviewees, the basic orientation in the national/European context is crucial for work in the migration field. However, a broader geographical (and historical) scope could be beneficial for understanding the migration phenomenon in its complexity, beyond the specific situation of Slovakia, which is only gradually becoming the destination country for immigrants.

Given the growing migration flows in Slovakia and in the EU, which increasingly influence Slovak politics and popular attitudes (as described in parts 1 and 2), we can say that there is definitely room to develop new curricula on migration. The concrete areas for developing desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes are mentioned in part 3.

Courses identified in the Report on HEI education cover mostly general theories, basic concepts, and classifications of international migration, while focusing mainly on trends relevant to the European Union and Slovakia (legal and illegal migration to the EU and within the EU, refugees and asylum, EU's common immigration, asylum, integration and border protection policies, the Slovak institutional and legal framework). Understanding these issues is, indeed important for work in the migration area, according to our respondents. However, given the limited reach of

these courses, the interviewees noted that graduates often lack the necessary general knowledge on migration and understanding for basic concepts. Therefore, there is a need to offer the basic 'package' on migration, which would allow graduates to acquire basic knowledge and orientation in the national and European context. Such curricula could be strengthened by having a strong interdisciplinary character based in sociology, economics, law, and social work. Availability of such courses for various disciplines could also increase its reach throughout the university/universities.

At the same time, since the courses build up mainly the theoretical knowledge, the practical perspective is largely missing according to most interviewees. Apart from legal clinics, which do prepare future lawyers for work in asylum law and require participation in real-life cases of clients, we lack information on whether the students have opportunities to build up skills necessary for work in the migration field. Nevertheless, there are many skills that the graduates need, from analytical and communication skills, the ability to work with a spectrum of actors (clients, partners, state institutions) to work on developing/implementing state policies. Development of such transferable skills could be a great asset for courses on migration, and a concrete added value for students aspiring to work in this field.

The interviewees offered several recommendations to improve the readiness of the HEI graduates for the work in the migration area.

Firstly, they commonly called for a more practical approach in education, allowing students to gain experience of direct contact or practice in the field and to develop awareness of the institutional context and needs of the target groups (asylum seekers, refugees, migrants). Therefore, they would welcome closer cooperation with universities so that they can participate in this practical part of education and 'prepare their own experts' through internships, volunteering, or other types of cooperation (asylum clinics). A different possibility for students to gain practical insights is to expose them to lecturers from the practice and to enable them to discuss the practical aspects of work in the migration field.

Secondly, many interviewees highlighted the necessity to have the 'right attitude' and passion to work on in the migration field, which is based on a genuine interest in the topic, but also an open and respectful attitude towards diversity. While such attitudes can be developed or strengthened by the practical experience from the field described above, university courses can also contribute to such students' qualities through offering a thorough and complex view on the migration phenomenon and situating it in our reality. In this context, little attention (only one course) is devoted to understanding emigration from Slovakia, despite the fact that it constitutes a significant aspect of overall migration trends both historically and nowadays. Moreover, respectful attitudes and awareness could be fostered through non-formal education on multiculturalism, diversity, or human rights. Such an approach could strengthen the students' self-reflectivity and understanding of the concepts of identity and culture, which are necessary for the sensitive approach to various migrant groups.

Thirdly, several experts reflected on migration as a cross-disciplinary topic and recommended that new curriculum is available for several disciplines (offered on the university level), whose graduates can potentially be interested in work in the migration area (such as lawyers, social workers, psychologists, sociologists, economists, political scientists, journalists). The new course could offer a solid basis for them to acquire core knowledge and basic orientation in key issues as well as for their informed decision whether they wish to pursue such a career.

Fourthly, the new curriculum could bring the missing international/global perspective into the Slovak context. Learning about the different conditions in Europe and the world, exposing students to different perspectives on migration dynamics and policies could bring added value in understanding the migration context and broaden students' horizons.

Finally, several interviewees appreciated the project's aims and expressed support for creating such a course/study programme that would produce graduates with solid knowledge in migration topics. They also noted that they were open for cooperation in the form of internships for students, or even offering feedback on the curriculum.

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STATISTICAL APPENDIX

Key facts and figures describing the situation of migrants and migration trends in Slovakia during the last decade (2010-2020).

Table 1: Total population, immigrants and acquisition of citizenship 2010-2020

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total resident population (persons)	5 390 410	5 392 446	5 404 322	5 410 836	5 415 949	5 421 349	5 426 252	5 435 343	5 443 120	5 450 421	5 457 873
Immigrants (stocks):											
Foreign citizens (persons)	65 894	69 607	70 727	72 925	59 151	61 766	65 840	69 695	72 883	76 116	78 936
Foreign citizens %	1,2%	1,3%	1,3%	1,3%	1,1%	1,1%	1,2%	1,3%	1,3%	1,4%	1,4%
Foreign-born population (persons)	64 422	68 135	156 883	158 164	174 908	177 624	181 642	186 217	190 308	194 389	198 429
Foreign-born population %	1,2%	1,3%	2,9%	2,9%	3,2%	3,3%	3,3%	3,4%	3,5%	3,6%	3,6%
Immigrants (flow):											
Number of immigrants *	5 272	4 829	5 419	5 149	5 357	6 997	7 686	7 188	7 253	7 016	-
Number of citizenships granted	239	272	255	207	234	309	484	645	721	-	-

* Provisional data for 2012-2019

Notes and sources:

Total resident population - The number of persons having their usual residence in a country on 1 January of the respective year. When usually resident population is not available, countries may report legal or registered residents. Source: Eurostat <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001&plugin=1>

Foreign citizens - Number of persons not having the citizenship of the country where they reside (the reporting country), including citizens of other EU Member States, non-EU citizens as well as stateless persons, usually resident in the reporting country on 1 January of the respective year. Source: Eurostat

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/MIGR_POPICTZ_custom_646770/default/table?lang=en

Foreign-born population - Number of persons born abroad, (according to present time borders), whether in other EU Member States or non-EU countries, who are usually resident in the reporting country on 1 January of the respective year. Source: Eurostat <https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

Number of immigrants - Immigration is the action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another Member State or a third country. Source: Eurostat

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_imm1ctz/default/table?lang=en

Acquisition of citizenship - Citizenship means the particular legal bond between an individual and his or her state, acquired through birth or naturalisation, whether by declaration, choice, marriage or other means according to national legislation. Naturalisation is one of the most common ways of acquiring citizenship. It is a formal act of granting citizenship to an alien who applies to be a citizen. Source: Eurostat

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_acq/default/table?lang=en

Table 2: Foreign-born population in Slovakia by country of birth 2010-2020

Place of birth/Time	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Foreign country	64 422	68 135	156 883	158 164	174 908	177 624	181 642	186 217	190 308	194 389	198 429
EU28 countries (2013-2020)	:	:	:	:	146 274	147 923	150 523	153 663	156 397	159 024	161 638
Non-EU28 countries (2013-2020)	:	:	:	:	28 634	29 701	31 119	32 554	33 911	35 365	36 791
Czechia	12 632	13 343	87 032	86 378	88 194	87 989	87 813	87 966	88 017	88 123	88 203

Hungary	8 743	9 396	16 657	16 636	17 319	17 058	16 820	16 585	16 314	16 058	15 830
Ukraine	2 761	2 858	9 848	9 753	9 877	10 092	10 450	10 738	11 053	11 418	11 821
United Kingdom	1 846	1 961	4 481	4 943	4 830	5 501	6 255	7 160	8 115	9 057	10 155
Romania	7 083	7 481	5 124	5 301	8 051	8 299	8 735	9 128	9 315	9 624	9 743
Poland	5 571	5 817	4 589	4 591	6 656	6 721	6 872	7 030	7 136	7 263	7 371
Germany	4 621	4 717	2 889	3 041	4 613	4 817	5 077	5 387	5 776	6 114	6 481
Austria	2 194	2 332	2 487	2 607	3 115	3 361	3 662	4 014	4 344	4 656	5 005
Italy	2 062	2 255	1 645	1 851	2 653	2 841	3 117	3 379	3 676	3 863	4 028
Russia	1 347	1 405	2 320	2 303	2 737	2 780	2 855	2 925	2 979	3 055	3 130
France	1 547	1 663	2 358	2 329	2 937	2 938	2 962	2 996	3 013	3 001	2 999
United States	730	751	2 304	2 338	2 111	2 181	2 278	2 376	2 496	2 610	2 737
Bulgaria	1 871	1 987	1 168	1 303	2 163	2 193	2 326	2 453	2 523	2 561	2 589
Serbia	667	695	1 486	1 581	1 851	1 917	2 040	2 170	2 292	2 429	2 521
Vietnam	1 215	1 257	1 548	1 596	2 078	2 145	2 188	2 228	2 275	2 340	2 385
Spain	623	681	511	592	810	885	990	1 101	1 199	1 287	1 389
China including Hong Kong	710	746	530	611	1 026	1 074	1 138	1 187	1 217	1 239	1 264
Croatia	340	348	610	602	795	850	968	1 079	1 169	1 225	1 262
North Macedonia	353	366	488	497	714	760	798	818	849	872	892
Netherlands	511	542	417	430	543	585	631	678	734	770	818
South Korea	630	636	283	303	521	534	564	574	588	602	607

Notes and sources: Most important countries and some other countries ranked from highest to lowest numbers in 2019.

Foreign-born population - Number of persons born abroad, (according to present time borders), whether in other EU Member States or non-EU countries, who are usually resident in the reporting country on 1 January of the respective year.

Source: Eurostat https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/MIGR_POP3CTB_custom_646830/default/table?lang=en

Table 3: Number of valid residence permits for foreigners on 31/12/2020 in Slovakia

Number of valid residence permits for third country nationals					Number of EU, EEA, Swiss and UK nationals with valid registration for residence		Total number of all valid residence permits (residence permits for third country nationals plus valid registration for residence for EU, EEA, Swiss
Nationality	Total number of permits	Thereof:			Nationality	number of permits	
		Temporary	Permanent	Tolerated			
Ukraine	42 162	36 002	6 158	2	Czechia	12 246	
Serbia	16 005	15 068	937	-	Hungary	9 492	
Viet Nam	6 798	4 873	1 924	1	Romania	7 372	
Russian Federation	5 658	2 974	2 682	2	Poland	6 133	
China	2 695	862	1 833	-	Germany	4 572	
North Macedonia	1 675	1 015	660	-	Italy	3 057	

Korean Republic	1 493	842	651	-	United Kingdom	2 828	and UK nationals)
Iran	1 221	1 003	218	-	Austria	2 563	
United States, USA	1 055	369	686	-	Bulgaria	1 740	
India	991	787	204	-	France	1 563	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	901	753	148	-	Spain	1 300	
Turkey	785	456	329	-	Croatia	1 274	
Georgia	741	688	53	-	Greece	805	
Belarus	593	368	225	-	Netherlands	614	
Kazakhstan	574	423	151	-	Portugal	500	
Thailand	481	256	225	-	Norway	498	
Israel	383	295	88	-	Belgium	408	
Syria	359	189	167	3	Slovenia	380	
Egypt	358	122	236	-	Sweden	302	
Afghanistan	314	148	130	36	Switzerland	297	
Other nationalities	5 564	2 486	3 070	9	Other nationalities	1 262	
Total third countries	90 806	69 978	20 775	53	Total EU and EEA	59 206	150 012

Notes and sources: Source: Úrad hraničnej a cudzineckej polície Prezídia Policajného zboru (ÚHCP P PZ) – Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie v Slovenskej republike za rok 2020 <http://www.minv.sk/?rocenky> https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/policia/hranicna_a_cudzinecka_policia/rocenky/rok_2020/2020-rocenka-UHCP-SK.pdf

Table 4: Foreign citizens employed in Slovakia by category and citizenship 2010-2020 (in persons, data for December)

Category and citizenship/Time	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
EU and EEA nationals with information cards	13 695	17 027	7 314	9 181	15 802	19 428	24 054	27 726	36 265	32 114	29 937
Romania	2 935	4 513	2 533	3 140	4 729	6 261	7 394	8 692	11 072	8 664	7 392
Czechia	2 830	3 227	1 314	1 354	2 524	3 195	4 134	4 635	6 062	5 979	5 917
Hungary	1 730	2 164	1 022	1 320	2 070	2 773	3 696	4 786	5 933	5 502	4 878
Poland	1 969	2 196	982	1 429	3 023	3 048	3 204	2 667	2 539	2 539	2 442
Bulgaria		727				837	1 111	1 527	2 381	2 300	2 390
Italy							753	943	1 417	1 264	1 244
Third country nationals with work permits	2 982	3 253	3 310	3 160	2 548	3 033	3 685	8 937	17 064	28 578	24 169
Ukraine	701	705				921	1 388	2 879	8 473	16 998	14 361
Serbia							490	3 267	4 415	5 837	4 435
Vietnam									841	1 128	940

Third country nationals with information cards	1 570	1 905	923	1 059	1 705	3 076	7 351	12 815	15 787	17 606	14 906
Serbia						1 369	4 920	8 992	9 146	7 498	5 739
Ukraine							869	1 747	3 369	5 934	5 217
Total	18 247	22 185	11 547	13 400	20 055	25 537	35 090	49 478	69 116	78 298	69 012
Total employment (4th quarters in thousands)	2 339,4	2 315,7	2 313,7	2 327,1	2 390,9	2 452,4	2 512,6	2 540,2	2 589,3	2 591,2	-
Foreigners as % of total	0,78 %	0,96 %	0,50 %	0,58 %	0,84 %	1,04 %	1,40 %	1,95 %	2,67 %	3,02 %	-

Note: For individual countries only relevant numbers (above 700 persons provided).

Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family: *Employment of foreigners – statistics*. (Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny: *Zamestnávanie cudzincov – štatistiky*, https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/statistiky/zamestnavanie-cudzincov-statistiky.html?page_id=10803)

Table 5: Number of asylum applications, asylums, subsidiary protection and citizenships granted or not granted in Slovakia (1993-2020)

Year	Number of asylum applications submitted	Asylum granted	Asylum not granted	Subsidiary protection granted/not granted	Asylum procedure stopped	Citizenship granted
1993	96	41	20		25	0
1994	140	58	32		65	0
1995	359	80	57		190	0
1996	415	72	62		193	4
1997	645	69	84		539	14
1998	506	53	36		224	22
1999	1320	26	176		1034	2
2000	1556	11	123		1366	0
2001	8151	18	130		6154	11
2002	9743	20	309		8053	59
2003	10358	11	531		10656	42
2004	11395	15	1592		11782	20
2005	3549	25	827		2930	2
2006	2849	8	861		1940	5
2007	2642	14	1177	82/646	1693	18
2008	909	22	416	66/273	457	4
2009	822	14	330	98/165	460	1
2010	541	15	180	57/101	361	3

2011	491	12	186	91/47	270	7
2012	732	32	334	104/153	383	0
2013	441	15	124	34/49	352	7
2014	331	14	197	99/41	163	12
2015	330	8	124	41/24	148	5
2016	146	167	82	12.13	35	3
2017	166	29	77	25/16	73	6
2018	178	5	128	37/23	69	18
2019	232	9	93	19/33	179	9
2020	220	10	63	19/16	137	11
Total	59 263	873	8 351	784/1600	49 931	285

Note: In persons. Source: Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the SR – Statistical overview of asylum seekers as of October 2020. (Migračný úrad MV SR – Štatistický prehľad Žiadatelia o udelenie azylu a rozhodnutia v I. stupni za obdobie rokov 1993 – október 2020 <https://www.minv.sk/?statistiky-20>)

Table 6: **Some indicators on irregular migration**

Third country nationals...	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
refused entry at the external borders	840	595	595	435	455	465	750	1 085	1 755	1 375
found to be illegally present	1 440	1 145	1 395	1 025	1 155	1 985	2 035	2 590	2 635	2 005
ordered to leave	870	580	490	545	925	1 575	1 735	2 375	2 500	1 905

Source: Eurostat: Asylum and Managed Migration, Enforcement of Immigration Legislation
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database>

Table 7: **Population of Slovakia by nationality (ethnicity) according to the 2001 and 2011 censuses**

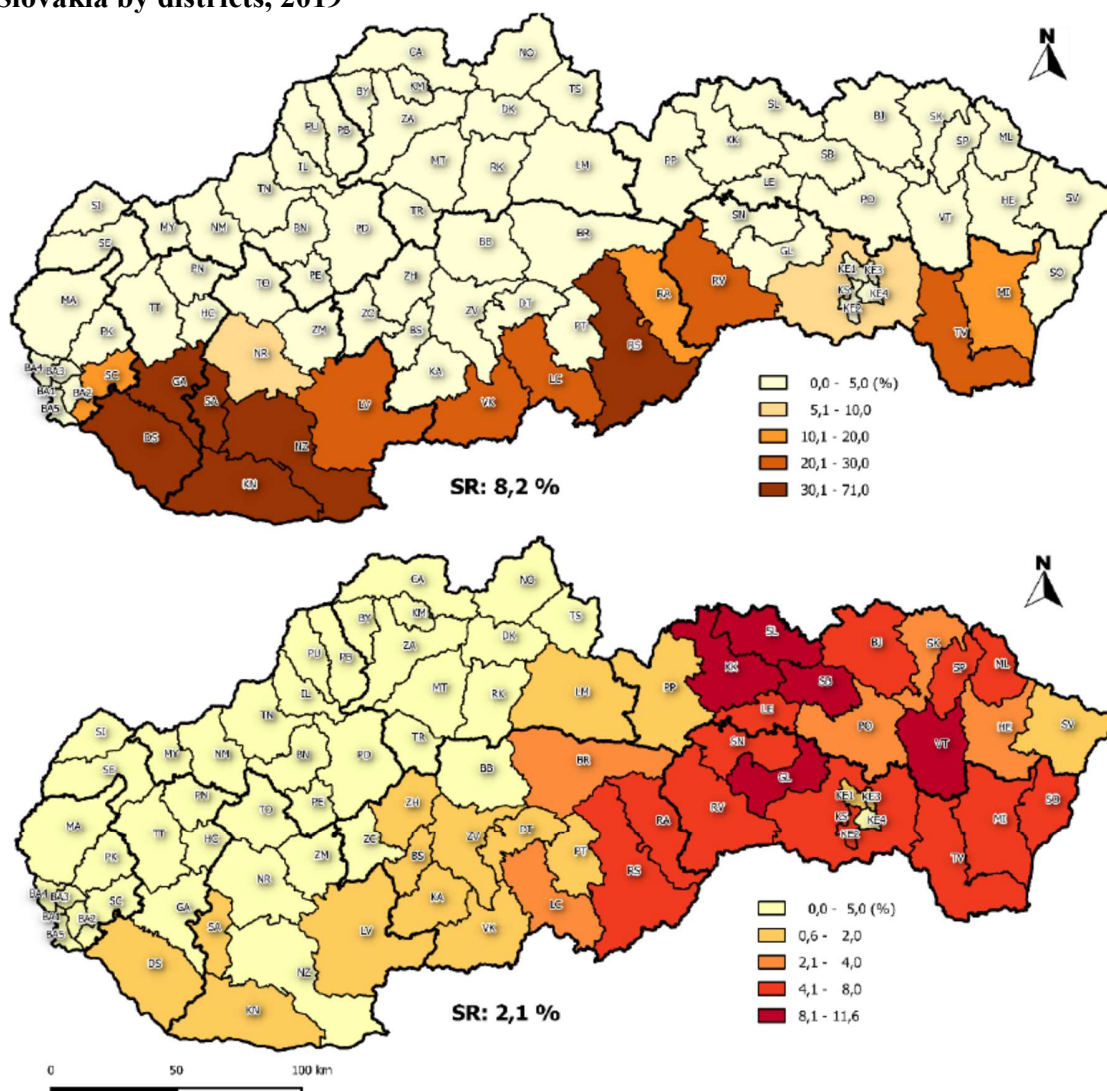
Nationality (ethnicity)	Population according to population and housing census			
	as at 26 May 2001		as at 21 May 2011	
	in person	in %	in person	in %
Slovak	4 614 854	85.79	4 352 775	80.65
Hungarian	520 528	9.68	458 467	8.49
Romany	89 920	1.67	105 738	1.96
Czech, Moravian, Silesian	44 620	0.83	33 653	0.62
Ruthenian	24 201	0.45	33 482	0.62
Ukrainian	10 814	0.20	7 430	0.14
German	5 405	0.10	4 690	0.09
Polish	2 602	0.05	3 084	0.06
Others	12 009	0.22	15 224	0.28
Not given	54 502	1.01	382 493	7.09
Total	5 379 455	100.00	5 397 036	100.00

Source: Eurydice: Slovakia. Population: Demographic Situation, Languages and Religions
https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/population-demographic-situation-languages-and-religions-72_en

Based on: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky) 2001. Population and Housing Census 2001: Basic Data (Sčítanie obyvateľov domov a bytov 2001: Základné údaje) and: 2013. Population and Housing

Census 2011: Basic Data: Population by nationality (Základné údaje zo sčítania obyvateľov, domov a bytov 2011: Obyvateľstvo podľa národnosti). Bratislava.

Map 1-2: Proportion of inhabitants of Hungarian (first) and Roma (second) nationality in Slovakia by districts, 2019

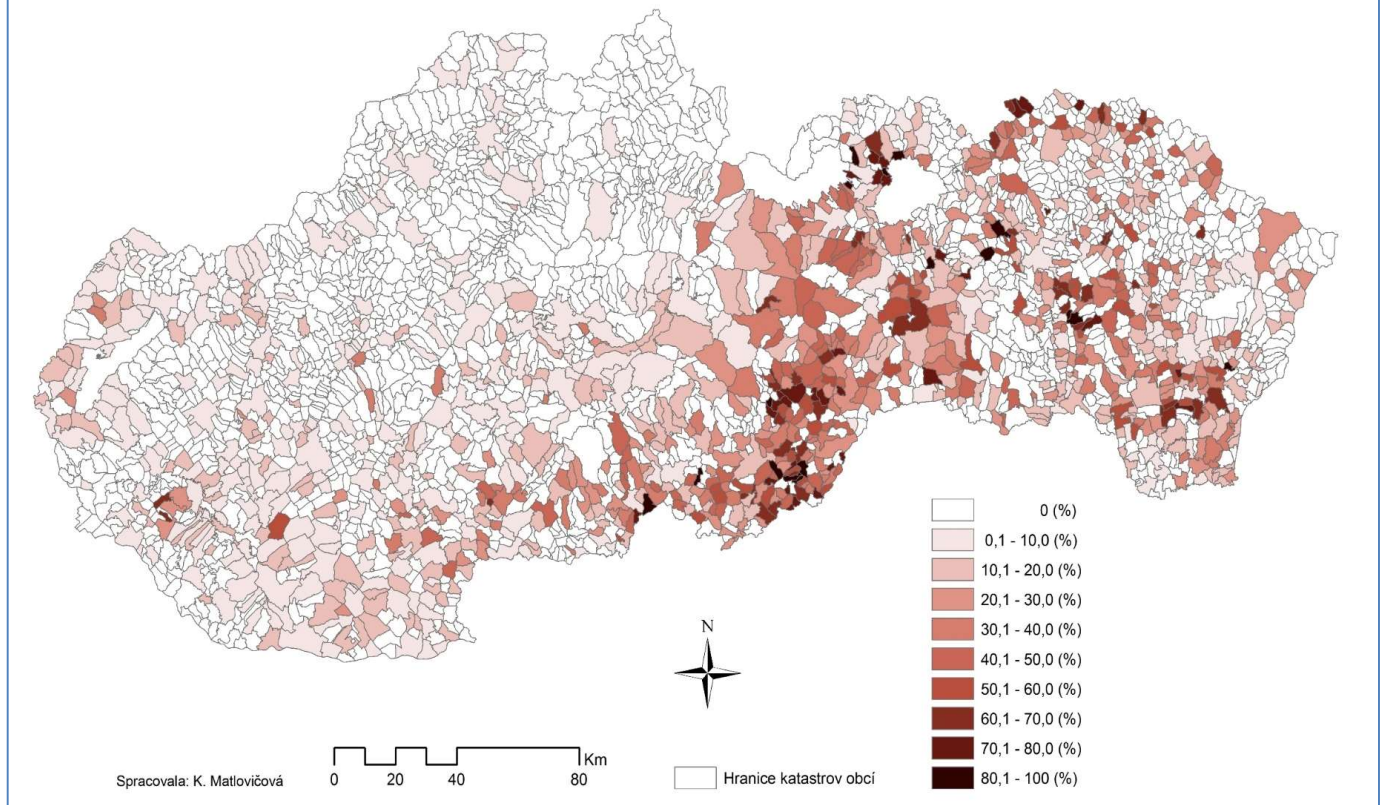


Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2019 (based on 2011 census and administrative register data)

Map 3: Proportion of Roma in Slovak municipalities – estimates based on subjective consideration by others (and not on self-identification)

Percentuálny podiel Rómov v obciach Slovenska

Kvalifikovaný odhad - Atlas 2013



Source: Ministerstvo vnútra SR 2013: Atlas rómskych komunit 2013 https://www.minv.sk/?atlas_2013

Table 8: **Slovak ethnic communities and diaspora abroad – Autochthon communities** (former Austro-Hungarian empire and Czechoslovakia)

Country	Earlier censuses (around 2000)	Last census (2011– 12)	Estimates by the community
Czechia	193 190 (2000) 314 000 (1990)	148 000	350 – 400 000
Croatia	4 713	4 753	10 000
Hungary	17 693	29 647	100 000
Poland	1 710	3 240	12 000
Romania	19 000	17 199	25 000
Serbia	59 021	52 750	35 – 42 000
Ukraine	6 397	6 700	12 000
Together	around 300 000 (2000)	around 262 500	around 560 – 600 000

Table 9: **Slovak ethnic communities and diaspora abroad – Communities born in earlier and current migration waves**

Country	Official data	Qualified estimates
Argentina	Not available	20 – 25 000*
Belgium	5 727 (November 2018)	7 000
Denmark	2 997 (1.4.2019)	3 000
France	9 768 (2017)	10 000

Netherlands	-	8 000
Ireland	9 717 (2016)	22 000
Canada	72 000 (2016)	100 – 150 000
Luxembourg	882 (June 2019)	1 000
Germany	58 235 (31.12.2018)	80 000
Norway	4 289 (2018)	5 000
Portugal	248 (December 2017)	500
Austria	-	25 000
UK	84 000 (June 2018)	110 000
Spain	11 652 (k 31.12.2018)	12 000
Switzerland	15 007 (2016)	20 000*
Sweden	1 765 (2017)	5 000
Italy	8 568 (1.1.2018)	10 000
USA	560 000 (2010)	750 000
Total	844 855	1 188 500 – 1 250 000

Source: Úrad pre Slovákov žijúcich v zahraničí (ÚSZZ) 2020. Správa za rok 2019 o štátnej politike vo vzťahu k Slovákom žijúcim v zahraničí a o poskytnutej štátnej podpore Slovákom žijúcim v zahraničí a návrh programu štátnej politiky vo vzťahu k Slovákom žijúcim v zahraničí na rok 2021. <https://www.slov-lex.sk/legislativne-procesy/-/SK/dokumenty/LP-2020-211>

Figure 1. **The contribution of immigrants to society** (European Commission 2014. Special Eurobarometer 415, p. 132)ⁱ

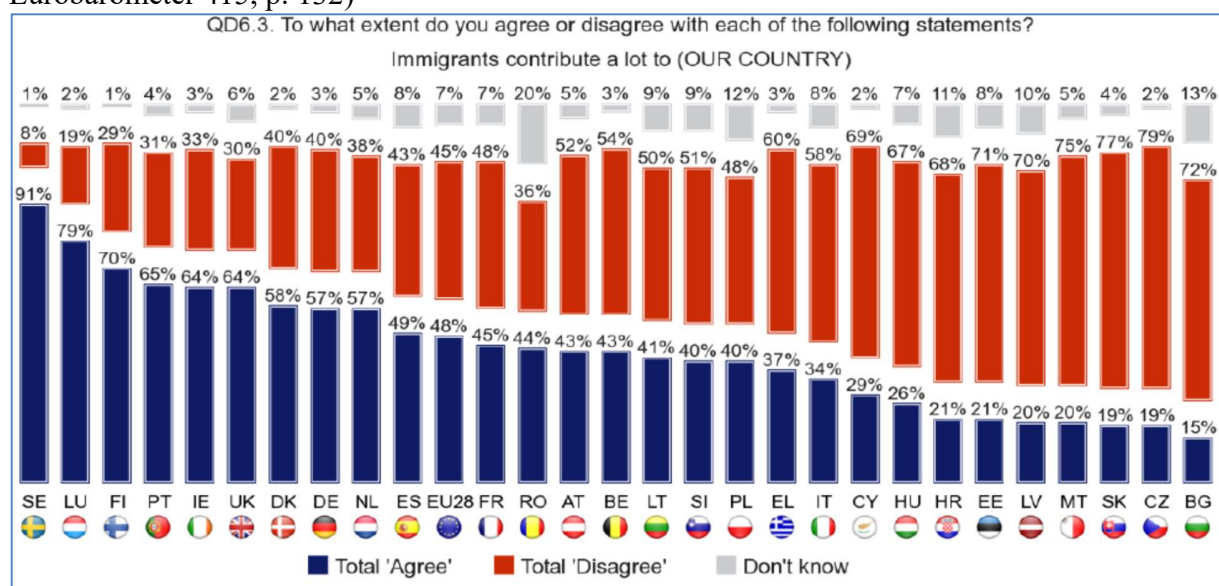


Figure 2. **Personal ties with immigrants** (European Commission 2018. Special Eurobarometer 469, p. 51)ⁱⁱ

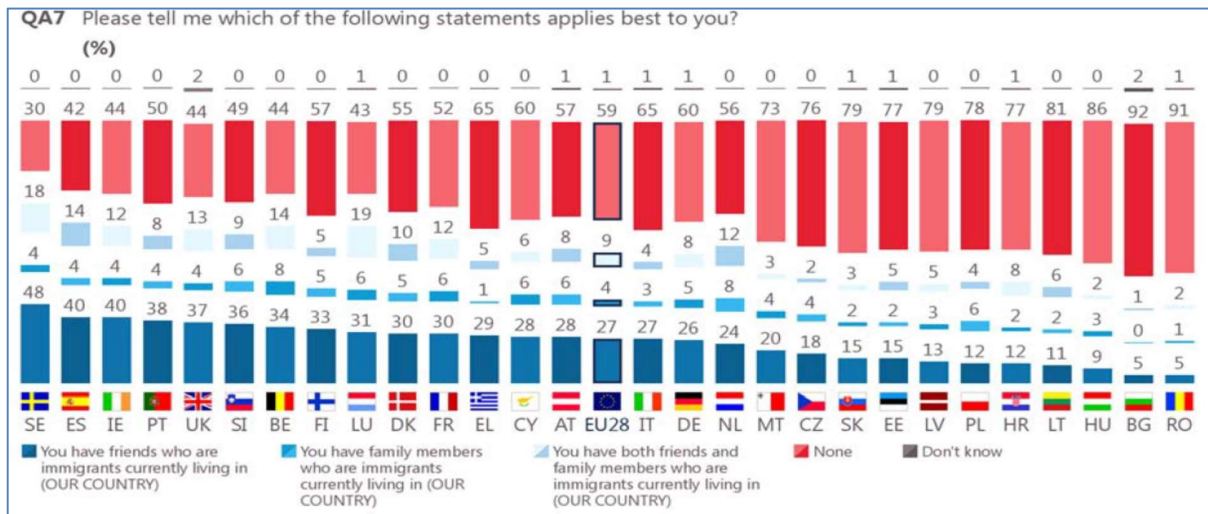
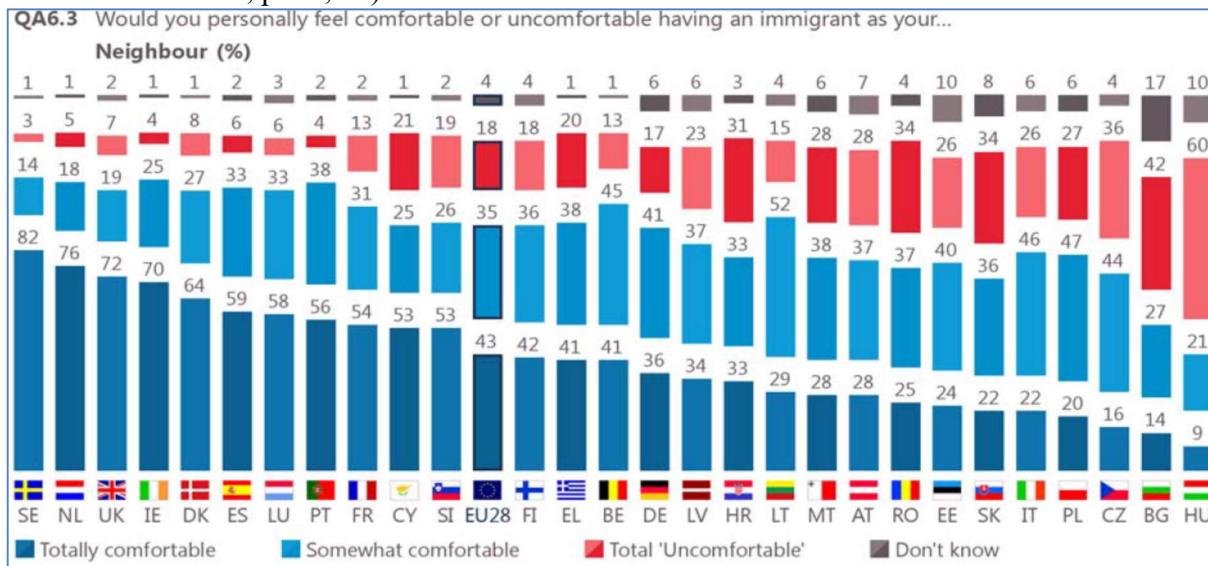


Figure 3-4. Levels of comfort to interact with immigrants across various social relations (Special Eurobarometer 469, p. 41, 43)



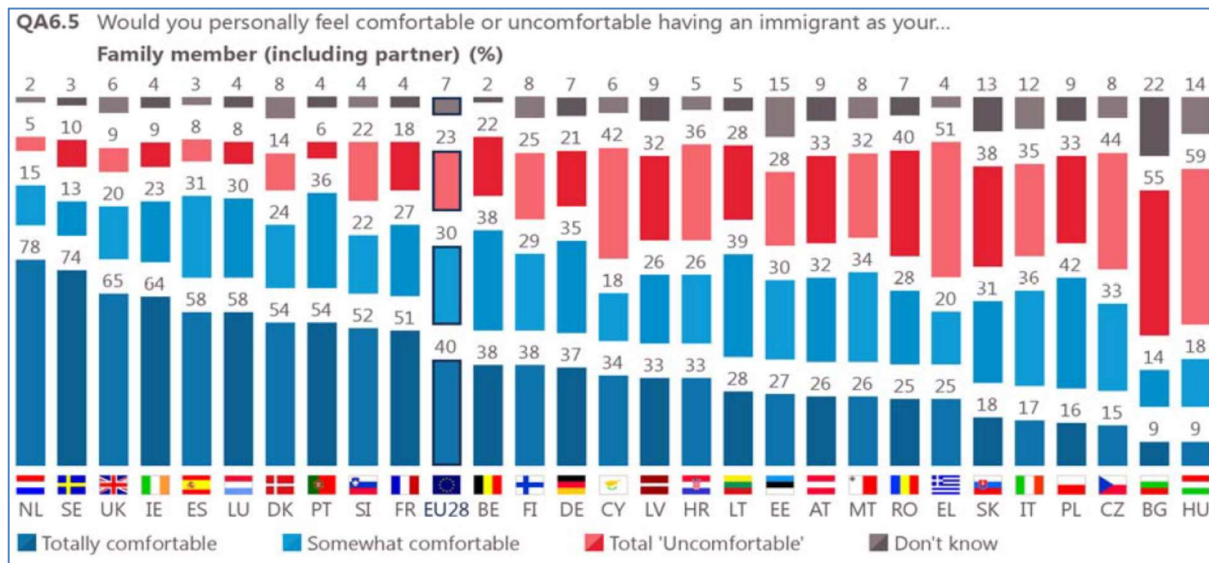


Figure 5-6. **Perceptions of the impact of immigrants on EU societies** (European Commission 2018. Special Eurobarometer 469, p. 72, 73)

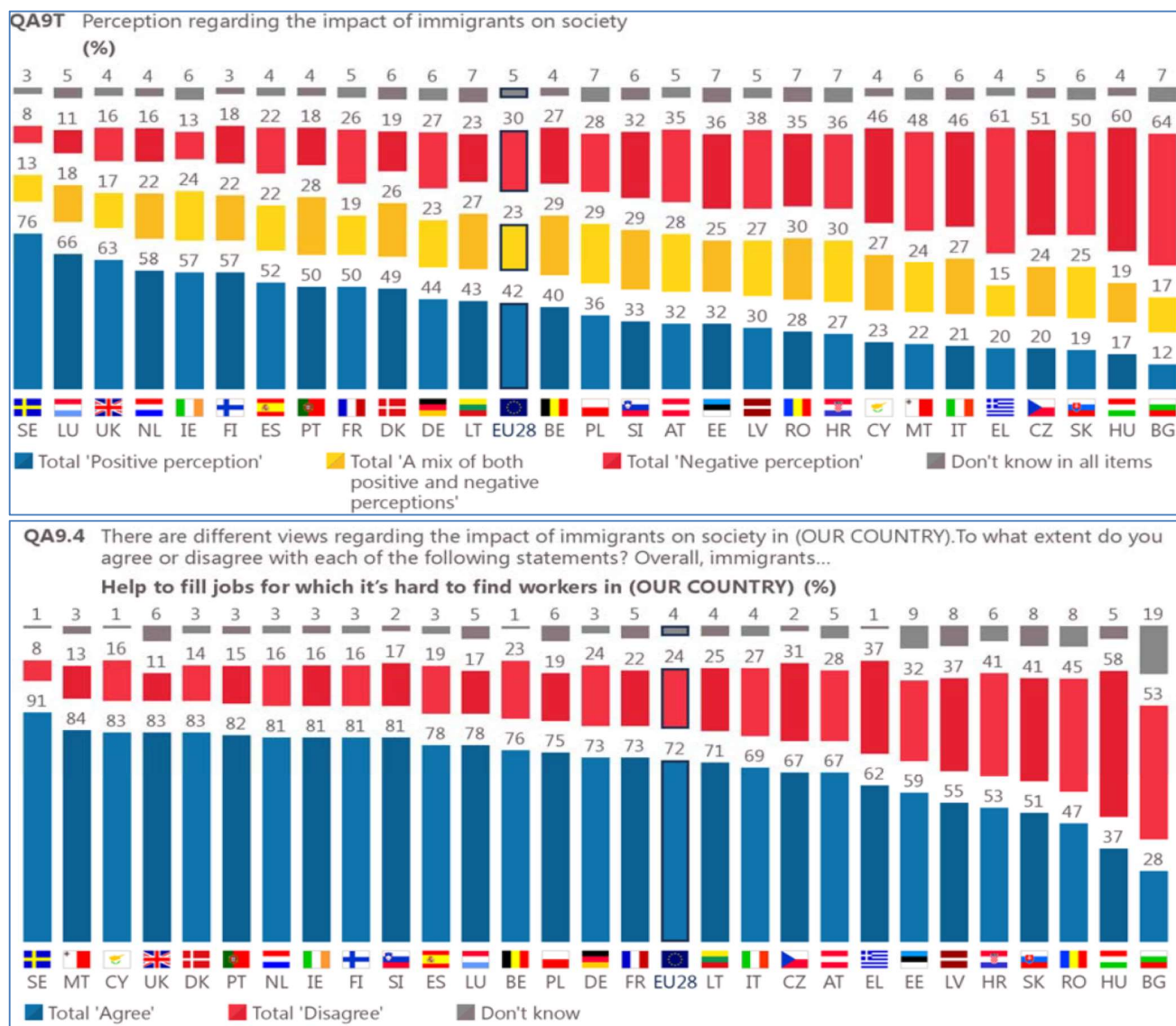
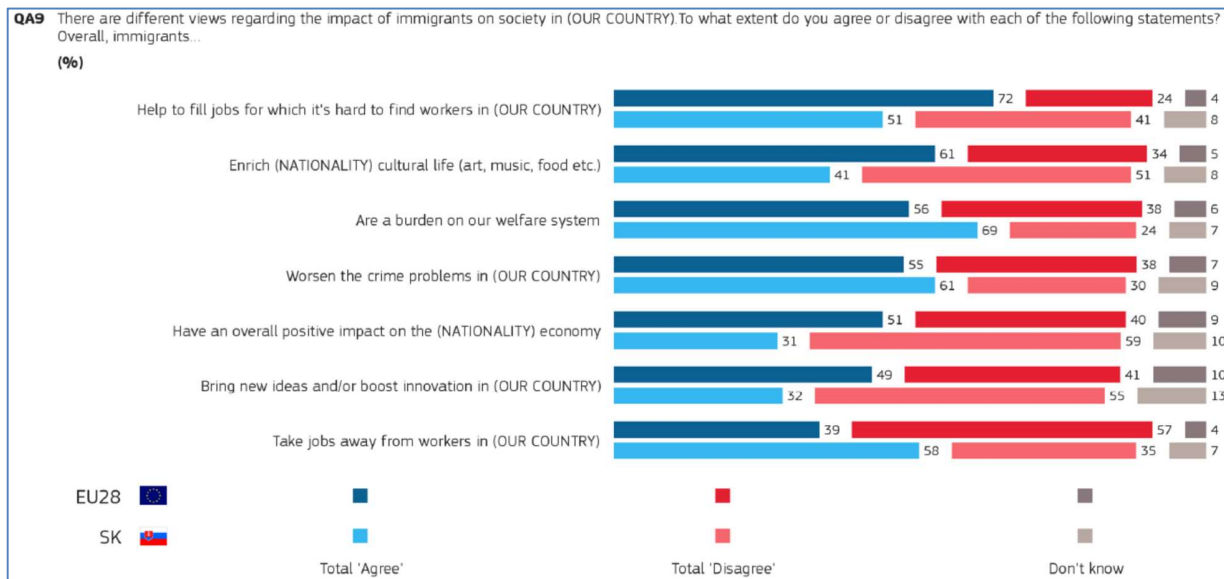


Figure 5-6. Perceptions on the impact of immigrants on Slovak and EU society, economy (European Commission 2018. Special Eurobarometer 469, Country specific factsheets: Slovakia)ⁱⁱⁱ



ⁱ European Commission 2014. Special Eurobarometer 415. Europeans in 2014 (Fieldwork: March 2014, publication: July 2014),
<https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2039/p/2>

ⁱⁱ European Commission 2018. Special Eurobarometer 469. Integration of immigrants in the European Union (Fieldwork October 2017, publication 13 April, 2018),
https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/results-special-eurobarometer-integration-immigrants-european-union_en

ⁱⁱⁱ European Commission 2018. Special Eurobarometer 469. Integration of immigrants in the European Union - Country specific factsheets (Fieldwork October 2017, publication 13 April, 2018),
<https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/special/surveyky/2169>