

Communication on the Strategy Paper  
**Operational Programme Slovakia**

under Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment and on  
amendments to certain acts as amended

June 2021

## **I. Basic information on the contracting authority**

### **I.1. Name**

**Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the SR**

### **I.2. Identification number**

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### **I.3. Official seat address**

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### **I.4. Name, surname, address, telephone number and other contact details of the contracting authority's authorised representative and place for consultations**

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## **II. Basic information on the strategy paper**

### **II.1. Name**

#### **Operational Programme Slovakia**

### **II.2. Nature of the document**

Operational Programme Slovakia is prepared by the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the SR following the Resolution of the Government of the SR No 329 of 27 May 2020, item C.2.

Operational Programme Slovakia (hereinafter referred to as OP Slovakia) is an implementation document of the Partnership Agreement of the Slovak Republic for 2021-2027 (hereinafter referred to as PA) for the implementation of funding from EU funds. On 28 April 2021, the Slovak government took note of the draft PA, which was subsequently submitted for approval to the European Commission.

With five policy objectives and measures/areas of support, OP Slovakia sets out the areas in which funds from the Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 will be invested in the total amount of more than EUR 12.8 billion.

Priorities/measures/areas of support of OP Slovakia are based on the draft PA.

### **II.3. Main objectives**

OP Slovakia will be the main implementation document of the PA for the use of EU funds for eligible beneficiaries in the form of repayable as well as non-repayable assistance, or a combination of both. OP Slovakia will be developed on the principle of partnership with territorial self-government, academia, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and other socio-economic partners.

### **II.4. Content (structure)**

The draft OP Slovakia will follow the structure provided in Article 16 of Annex V of the draft General Regulation.

The investment priorities of OP Slovakia are divided into five objectives of European cohesion policy:

**Policy objective 1 – a more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation and regional ICT connectivity.** Under policy objective 1, the following measures/areas of support are proposed in OP Slovakia:

1.1. Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

- Promoting cooperation between research institutions, universities and businesses;
- Support for human resources in research and development, including the return of the Slovak researchers;
- Support for the creation and modernisation of central research and development infrastructure;
- Support for the participation of Slovak entities in the European Research and Innovation Area.

1.2. Reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies, research organisations and public authorities

- Promoting the development of digital and data economy, and digital transformation;
- Upgrading public service provision (Slovakia in a Smartphone application) and addressing cybersecurity;
- Promoting smart cities and regions;
- Promoting digital connectivity /broadband/.

1.3. Enhancing sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including by productive investments

- Support for small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Internationalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Support for networking of business entities.

1.4. Developing skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship

- High-quality tertiary education reflecting the needs of the labour market;
- Vocational and lifelong learning in the context of an industrial revolution;
- Digital and entrepreneurial skills.

**Policy objective 2 – a greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility.** Under policy objective 2, the following measures/areas of support are proposed in OP Slovakia:

2.1. Promoting energy efficiency and reducing of greenhouse gas emissions – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Improvement of energy efficiency of businesses;
- Reduction of energy consumption in buildings;
- Improvement of energy efficiency of energy supply infrastructure;
- Development of regional and local energy sectors;
- Introduction of alternative sources of power in businesses.

2.2. Promoting renewable energy in accordance with Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including the sustainability criteria set out therein – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Support for the use of RES in companies based on active electricity consumers, self-consumers of energy from RES and communities producing energy from RES
- Support for the use of RES in energy supply systems;
- Support for the use of RES in households (innovation of the project "Green for Households");
- Support for the exploration and identification of geothermal resources in order to make them available for energy purposes;
- Support for facilities producing energy from RES in industrial areas or estates.

2.3. Developing smart energy systems, grids and storage outside Trans-European Energy Network (TEN-T) – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Support for the facilities for energy generation, distribution and storage, including smart metering and control systems, will help increase the efficiency of energy-consuming facilities and the options of installing new RES-based facilities.

2.4. Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Water retention measures for climate change adaptation in settlements and the countryside and/or flood protection;
- Hydrogeological survey aimed at defining deficit areas and securing drinking water sources;
- Support for the prevention and management of landslide risks related to excessive precipitation;
- Flood prevention measures linked to a particular watercourse;
- Update of flood risk management plans, including preliminary flood risk assessment and flood threat and risk maps;
- Support for the adaptation process at lower levels of management by developing strategy documents at the level of regional governments, local governments and micro-regions, and support of information campaigns and programmes on adaptation to climate change;
- Support for the prevention and management of risks resulting from breaches of environmental legislation;
- Identification of risk development, determination of prevention methods, implementation of procedures and measures for preparedness and response to disasters caused by climate change;
- Strengthening and upgrading intervention capacities and disaster management infrastructure;
- Developing and revamping early warning and notification systems.

2.5. Promoting access to water and sustainable water management – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Construction of sewerage networks and wastewater treatment plants in agglomerations above 2,000 PE in compliance with the commitments of the SR towards the EU;
- Construction, intensification and modernisation of existing surface water treatment plants;
- Construction of public water mains in municipalities with more than 2,000 inhabitants
- Rehabilitation of public water mains in municipalities with more than 2,000 inhabitants in parallel with the construction of a sewerage network (together in one groove);
- Construction of public water mains in municipalities with less than 2,000 inhabitants
- Comprehensive reliable monitoring and evaluation of surface water and groundwater status;
- Support for wastewater drainage and treatment infrastructure in agglomerations up to 2,000 PE;
- Rehabilitation of public sewerage networks and wastewater treatment plants in agglomerations above 2,000 PE;
- Support (optimisation) of data processing for a more efficient water policy of the SR.

2.6. Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Support for waste prevention, in particular biodegradable municipal waste, as well as the establishment of product re-use centres/networks or product re-use activities (repairs, upcycling, etc.);
- Support for municipal waste collection, and completing, intensifying and expanding sorted municipal waste collection systems with a focus on biodegradable municipal waste;
- Support for mechanical and biological treatment of mixed municipal waste, preparation of waste for re-use, waste recycling including anaerobic and aerobic treatment of biodegradable waste and reprocessing of waste into materials to be used as fuel;
- Encouraging education and awareness of consumers and general public of circular economy as well as conceptual activities in this area;
- Improving electronic data collection on circular economy.

2.7. Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Measures in Natura 2000 protected areas in the SR;
- Monitoring of habitats and species of European importance;
- Promoting biological and landscape diversity and the quality of ecosystem services by maintaining and building green and blue infrastructure and reducing the impact of invasive alien species;
- Ensuring the continuity and restoration of watercourses in order to enhance biodiversity;
- Raising environmental awareness, including through environmental centres;
- Ensuring the survey, remediation and monitoring of environmental burdens;
- Modernising technologies to reduce air pollutant emissions in businesses;
- Reducing air pollutant emissions by replacing coal-fired boilers in households with low-emission heating equipment – boiler subsidies;
- Improving the air quality monitoring system at national, local/regional level, the monitoring of the impact of air pollution on ecosystems, air quality management, including the development of a new emissions information system;
- Information activities aimed at improving air quality, including appropriate heating technology.
- Regeneration of neglected and unused areas (brownfields)

2.8. Promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility , as part of transition to a net zero carbon economy<sup>1</sup> – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Support for public transport (apart from for cycling)
- Promoting cycling
- Bratislava transport hub

**Policy objective 3 – a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility.** Under policy objective 3, the following measures/areas of support are proposed in OP Slovakia:

3.1. Developing a climate resilient, intelligent, secure, sustainable and intermodal

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<sup>1</sup> Note (currently included under policy objective 3, will be adapted according to the final text of the legislation)

TEN-T (European corridors) – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Removing key bottlenecks in railway infrastructure through the modernisation and development of major railway lines and junctions. The railway transport infrastructure will undergo modernisation and development on those lines that are essential for economic growth and the mobility of the population in Slovakia and the EU. These include the main railway lines that are part of the TEN-T on the routes Žilina – Košice – state border SR/UA, Žilina – state border SR/CZ and state border SR/CZ – Kúty – Bratislava – Štúrovo – state border SR/HU. The modernisation and development of key junction stations on the corridor routes (Bratislava, Košice and Žilina) is also planned.
- Removing key bottlenecks in road infrastructure through the construction of new sections of motorways and expressways. Their absence has a negative impact on the economy, the environment and the mobility of the population, making the area less attractive for tourism and investment. New stretches of motorways and expressways will significantly help increase traffic safety. The plans concern the construction of new sections of the D1 and D3 motorways. After its completion, the D1 motorway will connect the capital Bratislava with Ukraine and at the same time it will connect eight of the ten largest towns in Slovakia from the west to the east of the country. The priority will be to ensure the connection of Bratislava and Košice.
- Improving the quality of services provided on the Danube waterway. The proposed interventions focus on technical measures that will implement optimal solutions of individual fairway parameters (depth and width of the fairway, radius of curvature, bridge clearance) and on improving the navigability of the Danube waterway, in line with the forthcoming feasibility study. Another area will be the improvement and expansion of public port services: modernisation and development of infrastructure in Bratislava and Komárno, which are part of the TEN-T network.

3.2. Developing and enhancing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- *Removing key bottlenecks in railway infrastructure through the modernisation and development of railway lines, and increasing the attractiveness and quality of public passenger rail transport services through the renewal of the rolling stock.* Interventions will be primarily focused on the modernisation of railway lines and signalling equipment, installation of the ERTMS telecommunication system, electrification of railway lines, remote traffic control, increasing line speed, increasing the quality of railway stations, etc. Infrastructure projects will work in synergy with the investments in the renewal of the rolling stock of passenger public rail transport. The funds will also be used to reduce safety risks (e.g. modernisation of railway crossings, removal of level crossings with road infrastructure) and to build intermodal transport terminals.
- *Removing key bottlenecks in road infrastructure and improving regional mobility through the construction and modernisation of first-class roads.* Special attention will be paid to the construction of bypasses and relocations of first-class roads, especially in stretches with non-compliant technical and capacity parameters and where the tracing of TEN-T lines in the form of motorways and expressways is not planned. Interventions will also be aimed at improving non-compliant parameters (width, directional and height guidance, load-bearing capacity, safety features) of first-class roads, reconstruction of junctions and modernisation of bridges, with the view to removing collision points and critical accident sites in the road network. In order to achieve a 10% share of bicycle traffic in the total distribution of transport works in the near future, it is important to finance, alongside the construction and reconstruction of

first-class roads, also cycle paths, including additional cycling infrastructure (bicycles parking facilities/stands, information boards).

- *Improving accessibility of TEN-T infrastructure through the modernisation and construction of regional roads, and increasing the competitiveness of less developed regions.* The regional transport services will be improved with investments in the reconstruction, modernisation and construction of regional roads, in line with the Regional Sustainable Mobility Plans and with the objectives set out in the territorial strategies (Integrated Territorial Investments), taking into account a higher priority of transnational and national solutions. Primary support will be aimed at reconstruction, modernisation and construction of second-class roads as the backbone of regional infrastructure, their bridges, and cycling infrastructure, in order to improve the accessibility of the TEN-T network from settlements and industrial estates.
- *Increasing the attractiveness of public transport through the construction and modernisation of IDS infrastructure, infrastructure and renewal of the rolling stock of the track-based public transport in Bratislava.* In the Slovak capital, the support will focus on the interventions aimed at the construction and modernisation of infrastructure of integrated transport systems and their link to the construction of non-motorised transport infrastructure, especially cycling (construction and modernisation of cycle paths and construction of bicycles parking facilities/stands and information boards) in line with the creation of multi-purpose public spaces. There will also be support for the construction and modernisation of urban track-based transport lines as well as renewal and modernisation of the rolling stock of urban track-based transport, including related maintenance and management facilities for new vehicles.
- *Increasing attractiveness of public passenger transport through the construction and modernisation of infrastructure for ITS, infrastructure and renewal of the rolling stock of urban public transport and suburban bus transport.* Priority will be given to interventions in the construction of barrier-free transfer terminals (including the presence of bicycle parking facilities/stands and information boards), barrier-free integrated stops and park and ride parking lots (in large urban agglomerations and busiest transport hubs). Priority will also be given to interventions in the construction and modernisation of non-motorised transport infrastructure (for cyclists and pedestrian paths) considering barrier-free access; in tram and trolleybus lines to improve transport services and options for the population with environmentally-friendly forms of urban public transport; purchase of (i.) track-based transport rolling stock and (ii.) bus transport vehicles, including charging and filling stations as well as upgrading of the existing maintenance infrastructure (transport company depots). Projects concerning the purchase of urban public transport fleet must include a complementary condition of ensuring priority for public transport, including the creation of dedicated lanes.

**Policy objective 4 – a more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights.** Under policy objective 4, the following measures/areas of support are proposed in OP Slovakia:

4.1. Enhancing the effectiveness and inclusiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social infrastructure and promoting social economy – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Employment services;
- Improving the quality of employment services;
- Promoting work-life balance;
- Developing skills related to the digital and green transition of the economy.

4.2. Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for



distance and on-line education and training – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Increasing the quality and effectiveness of education systems;
- Access to education and training services, including pre-school facilities (with a focus on vulnerable groups);
- Lifelong learning;
- Developing education infrastructure.

4.3. Youth Guarantees – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Youth employment, education and integration.

4.4. ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family-based and community-based care – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Deinstitutionalisation of facilities and services, active inclusion, long-term care system;
- Integration of migrants;
- Better and more affordable healthcare;
- Integration of marginalised Roma communities;
- Poverty and social exclusion.

4.5. Food and material deprivation – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Addressing material deprivation.

4.6. Social innovation and experiments – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- Social innovation and experiments.

**Policy objective 5 – a Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories and local initiatives.** Under policy objective 5, the following measures/areas of support are proposed in OP Slovakia:

5.1. Building administrative, and analytical and strategic capacities of local and regional authorities – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- analytical and strategic activities of local government, development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of planning documents, including ITS;
- lifelong skills learning for staff at all levels of public administration and their appropriate remuneration;
- implementation of policy-making approaches based on data and impact assessment of local and regional policies and the quality assessment of public service delivery and availability;
- establishment of shared service centres in pilot districts.

5.2. Better public policies and open governance – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- creating conditions for the development of civil society and strong, functional, sustainable communities that are actively involved in the regions' development;
- enhancing cooperation, support for participation and cross-sectoral partnerships in the development, implementation and assessment of public policies, in strategic planning and in the preparation and implementation of projects at regional and local level;
- improving the capability of regional and local governments to prevent further polarisation and the rise of extremism, and to address the existing dangerous socio-pathological phenomena.

5.3. Prevention of negative social phenomena and creation of a safe physical environment of municipalities, towns and regions – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- crime prevention (completion of camera systems, installation of new street lighting or its reconstruction in high-risk areas, introduction of neighbourhood watch in high-risk areas, etc.);
- ensuring a smooth and prompt access to counselling and assistance to victims of crime;
- field and volunteer work with at-risk groups of population;
- development and monitoring of strategic security documents.

5.4. Regional and local infrastructure for physical activities, leisure, cycling - this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- building sports grounds, multi-purpose sports facilities and leisure sports and physical education facilities;
- building and reconstructing sports infrastructure serving the general public and leisure activities of children and youth;
- creating sports and recreation zones in towns and municipalities;
- preparing architectural designs for the regeneration of regional sports infrastructure to offer active leisure time options in the community;
- promoting a healthy lifestyle;
- monitoring the use of regional infrastructure, in particular by children and young people, the elderly, sports organisations and people with disabilities, including the assessment of the link between physical activities and reduced healthcare costs, lower crime rate, safer environment, higher work intensity and improved learning outcomes for children and young people.

5.5. Improving management, services and infrastructure supporting cultural heritage, community development and sustainable tourism – this measure/area will be implemented through the following activities:

- improving the quality and availability of information for visitors in cultural and natural tourism and its promotion, especially with innovative solutions;
- restoration of cultural monuments, national cultural monuments, monuments, existing cultural institutions and facilities, exhibitions and collections, other cultural infrastructure;
- development of culture of urban and rural areas through modern types of museums: open-air museums, in situ museums;

- building and development of sites for meeting and development of local communities (community culture points and residential centres, theatres, concert halls, libraries, culture houses, music clubs, amphitheatres, festivals and craft fairs, etc.);
- infrastructure to support cultural monuments, national cultural monuments and other cultural infrastructure, natural sites, travel and tourism, and leisure options (e.g. car parks, technical facilities, sanitary facilities, connection to cycle paths, bicycle stands and storage areas, etc.);
- technical infrastructure of cultural facilities in independent culture for the purpose of modernisation (e.g. lighting and sound equipment; heating, ventilation and air conditioning; digitisation; interior renovation; refurbishment and digitisation of exhibition premises, etc.).

The promotion of national cultural monuments, including cultural and natural monuments on the UNESCO World Heritage List, and the preparations for the European Capital of Culture 2026 are considered as actions of strategic importance.

## **II.5. Possible alternative solutions taking into account the objectives and geographical dimension of the strategy paper**

Given the nature of this strategy paper and its drafting process, the document will, in one variant, be the result of an agreement between all the stakeholders from public administration, economic and social area, civil society entities as well as environmental partners, NGOs and bodies responsible for promoting equality and non-discrimination.

## **II.6. Timeline for preparation and approval**

The expected timeline for OP Slovakia takes into account the time frame for the draft PA approval by the European Commission (expected in Q3 2021), and at the same time it reflects the requirements of individual policy objectives' guarantors, integrated territorial strategies, requirements for sustainable urban development and of all socio-economic partners. The time schedule should be seen as indicative.

Drafting the strategy paper	Q4 2021
Environmental impact assessment of the strategy paper	Q4 2021 – Q1 2022
Finalising the strategy paper based on the environmental impact assessment	Q1 2022
Approval by the Slovak government	Q1 2022
Submitting the strategy paper for approval to the European Commission	Q2 2022
Approval of the strategy paper by the European Commission	Q2 2022

## **II.7 Relation to other strategy documents**

OP Slovakia is based on the draft PA, and in its focus and content is linked and harmonised with the following main legislative and strategic frameworks:

## **UN strategic frameworks**

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

## **Main EU legislative and strategic frameworks**

- Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL (EU) laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (2020)
- Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (consolidated version), (2016)
- Paris Agreement – UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (2016)
- Kyoto Protocol to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1997)
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)
- IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – assessment reports
- EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change (2013)
- EU policy objectives for the 2021-2027 programming period
- Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (2003)
- EU Strategy for the Danube Region
- Revised Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (July 2019)
- WHITE PAPER: Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, COM(2011) 144 final
- European Green Deal, published in December 2019, on policy initiatives with the overarching aim of making Europe climate neutral
- Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable, inclusive growth, COM(2010) 2020 final
- European Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility (COM(2016) 501 from 20 July 2016)
- A Roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050, COM(2011) 112 final
- Energy Roadmap 2050, COM(2011) 885 final
- Connecting Europe Facility to support low-carbon economy and clean energy
- Horizon Europe (2021-2027)
- LIFE (biodiversity protection, transition to a circular economy, climate change adaptation and support for renewable sources of energy)
- Erasmus (development of education and vocational training focused on smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship)
- Programme for social change and innovation in the area of employment and social inclusion
- European Pillar of Social Rights (2017)
- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (2020)
- Regulation (EU) 2021/522 of the European Parliament and of the Council of the EU establishing a Programme for the Union's action in the field of health for the period 2021-2027 (2021)
- Recovery and Resilience Facility (2021)
- Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027 (2020)

- Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the public sector loan facility under the Just Transition Mechanism (2020)

### **Slovakia's strategic frameworks**

- Programme of the Government of the Slovak Republic 2021-2024
- Greener Slovakia – Strategy for the Environmental Policy of the SR until 2030 (2019)
- Vision and development strategy of Slovakia until 2030 – long-term strategy of sustainable development (2021)
- Recovery and Resilience Plan of the SR (2021)
- Low-carbon development strategy of the Slovak Republic until 2030 with a view to 2050 (2020)
- Economic policy strategy of the SR until 2030
- Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan of Slovakia for 2021-2030 (2019)
- National reform programme of the SR (2018, 2019, 2020)
- National regional and territorial development strategy of the SR until 2030 (2017)
- Slovak spatial development perspective (SSDP) 2001 – as amended by SSDP 2011 – amendment No 1 SSDP 2001
- National investment plan of the SR for 2018-2030 – pilot version (2018)
- Strategic transport development plan of the SR until 2030 (2016)
- Electric mobility action plan in the SR (2019)
- National strategy of development of cycling transport and cycle touring in the SR (2015)
- Tourism development strategy until 2020 (2013)
- Updated national strategy for the protection of biodiversity until 2020 (2014)
- Climate change adaptation strategy of the SR – update (2018)
- National sustainable development strategy (2001)
- Nature and landscape conservation strategy until 2030 (2019)
- Implementation concept of the 2030 Agenda in the international context (2017)
- Update of the National health programme in the SR (2014)
- State health policy concept of the SR (2008)
- Environment and health action plan for the SR V (2019)
- Strategic framework for healthcare for years 2014 to 2030 (2013)
- Integrated national energy and climate plan for the period 2021-2030
- Documents/strategies/plans of the SR related to compliance with the basic conditions criteria
- Research and innovation strategy for smart specialisation of the SR (2013)

### **II.8. Bodies competent in matters of its adoption:**

The Government of the Slovak Republic  
European Commission

### **II.9. Types of approval documents**

Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic  
Decision of the EC on approval of OP Slovakia

### **III. Basic data on the foreseen impacts of the strategy paper on the environment, including the impacts on human health**

### III.1. Input requirements

The most significant inputs for OP Slovakia which is currently under preparation:

Input requirements will be linked to the implementation of individual measures under five policy objectives of OP Slovakia with respect to the elements of the environment related to the need for water, energy (such as gas, fuel, electricity, heat), raw materials and land occupation, and last but not least, to transport and other infrastructure demands.

Given the fact that the Communication on the strategy paper is currently under development, detailed information on the nature and extent of the above inputs are not available. The data will be made more specific and detailed in the next stages of developing and implementing the strategy paper through concrete investment projects.

Human resources are a determining factor of a successful preparation of OP Slovakia. They are a required input at all levels of public administration (central, regional and local). The focus of OP Slovakia puts great demands on qualifications, organisational and management capacities of human resources in public administration at all levels of hierarchy. An efficient management and good cooperation between the central government and self-government and the involvement of social and economic partners based on the principle of partnership in liaison with the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society will be needed to achieve the strategy paper goals.

### III.2. Output data

The output will be a document which will be submitted to the Slovak government specifying the breakdown of financial allocations within five policy objectives and measures/areas of support for the absorption of EU funds for the period 2021-2027, totalling EUR 12.8 billion.

Given the nature and reach of the strategy paper, concrete output data are not available at the stage of its preparation. Similarly to input data, they will be made more specific and quantified in the next stages of developing and implementing the strategy paper and subsequently, when concrete projects under the strategy paper are implemented.

### III.3. Data on direct and indirect environmental impacts

Since the OP Slovakia strategy paper is an implementation document of the Partnership Agreement for 2021-2027, it is believed that direct and indirect environmental impacts identified in the Communication on the strategy paper for PA will be identical.

The content focus of the proposed OP Slovakia at the stage of developing the Communication on the strategy paper foresees both positive and negative impacts of its implementation on the environment, which will be detailed in the report on the strategy paper evaluation.

**Among the expected positive impacts** are reduced air pollution, noise reduction, reduced waste generation and increased rate of waste recovery, improving the population's physical and intellectual health condition, reducing and eliminating the negative effects of industry and services, increasing energy efficiency of the transport system and buildings, enhancing the quality of transport infrastructure and reducing the impact of transport on the environment, increasing the use of renewable energy sources.

**Among the expected negative impacts** are permanent occupation of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes, permanent occupation of forest land, fragmentation of protected areas

and interference with wildlife migratory corridors, landscape fragmentation and reducing wildlife quiet areas, increased light pollution, impact due to the use of renewable energy sources, spread of invasive species, effects on the landscape structure, scenery and landscape character, disruption of the regenerative capacity of ecosystems, interventions into protected areas, including Natura 2000 areas and into the elements of the territorial system of ecological stability (TSES).

When any human activity is developed, the overall land carrying capacity must be regarded in the first place. Exceeding limit values (frequently not even exactly specified) may lead to disruptions in the structure of landscape systems or even to their irreversible destruction. Therefore, natural laws, structure and dynamics of spatial landscape systems must be observed and anthropic activity must be regulated so as not to exceed the land carrying capacity limits. For instance, unrestrained/uncontrolled use of renewable energy resources may, apart from positive impacts, also have negative effects on the environment. The overriding parameter for an efficient and environment-friendly use of renewable energy sources must be determining the potential of a renewable source in Slovakia, in accordance with sustainable development principles. Transport, too, may have a negative environmental impact. In addition to the general negative effects caused by transport, (e.g. noise, exhaust gases, dust, land occupation) transportation in areas that have not yet been affected, as well as in protected areas, may be considered to have negative effects. All of the above and other expected negative impacts need to be taken into account when considering individual projects that will be incorporated in OP Slovakia.

#### **III.4. Impact on the population's health**

The proposed OP Slovakia can make a positive contribution to improving the overall health status of Slovakia's population. Severe negative impacts of OP Slovakia on the population's health are not envisaged.

#### **III.5. Impact on protected areas, e.g. proposed Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, compact European network of protected areas (Natura 2000), national parks, protected landscape areas, protected water management areas and the like, including a proposal of mitigating measures**

Areas protected under special regulations located within the reach of the strategy paper, i.e., in the territory of Slovakia, may be divided into two basic groups:

- areas protected under Act No 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection;
- areas protected under Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters.

#### **III. 5.1. Areas protected under Act No 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection**

##### *III. 5.1.1. The European network of protected areas Natura 2000*

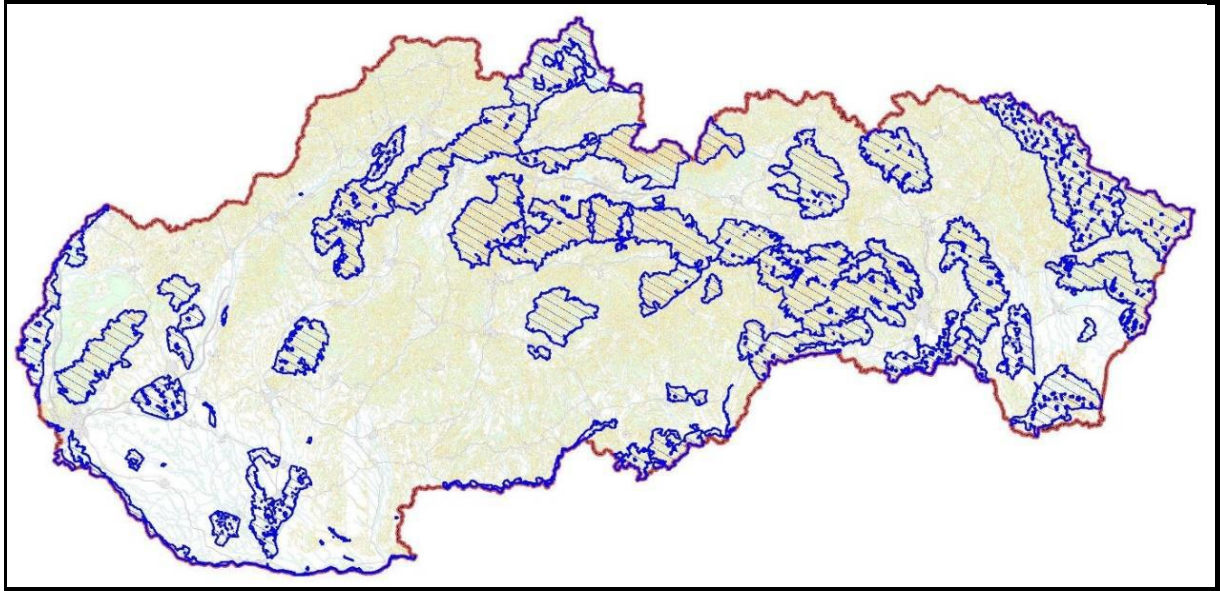
The Natura 2000 network of protected areas comprises two types of areas:

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs) laid down by Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds – codified version;
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) laid down by Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

#### **Special Protection Areas (hereinafter referred to as "SPAs")**

By the Government Resolution No 636/2003, of 9 July 2003, a national list of proposed Special Protection Areas containing 38 Special Protection Areas was approved. The list was updated

and supplemented by the Government Resolution No 345/2010, of 25 May 2010.



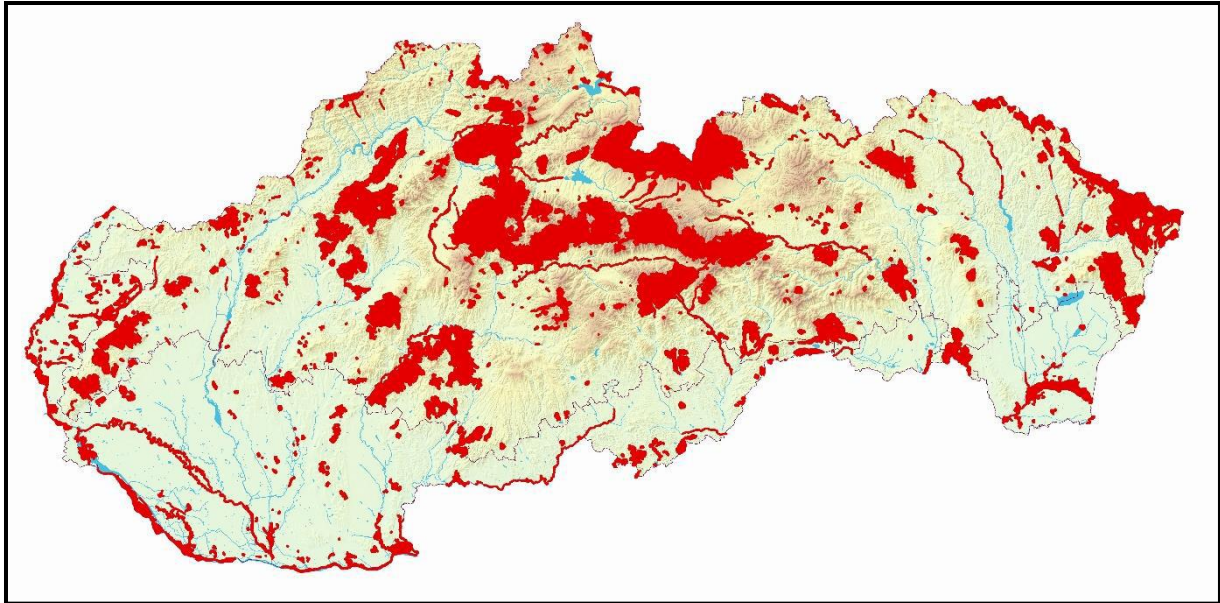
Source: State Nature Conservation of the SR

The updated national list of SPAs contains 41 Special Protection Areas with a total area of 1,284,806.1 hectares (12,848,06 sq. km), which accounts for 26.2% of the total area of the SR. As of 30 November 2020, all of the above areas had been declared SPAs by the decrees of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “MoE SR”).

#### Special Areas of Conservation (hereinafter referred to as “SACs”)

On 17 March 2004, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved a national list of Special Areas of Conservation and on 14 July 2004, the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the “MoE SR”) issued Decree No 3/2004-5.1, of 14 July 2004, by which the national list of Special Areas of Conservation was issued, effective as of 1 August 2004.





Source: State Nature Conservation of the SR

The national list of Special Areas of Conservation was first updated in 2011. Thanks to the first update, the number of SACs increased to 473 with a total area of 584,353 hectares (5,843.53 sq. km), which accounts for 11.92% of the total area of Slovakia. The second update of the national list of SACs took place in 2017 and the number of SACs increased by additional 169. Currently, the updated list of Special Areas of Conservation contains 642 areas of conservation with a total area of 615,262.5 ha (6,152.63 sq. km), accounting for 12.56% of the total area of Slovakia. There is an 86% overlap with the current network of protected areas.

#### *5.1.2. National network of protected areas*

In addition to the European network of protected areas Natura 2000 there is also the National network of protected areas, as stipulated by Act No 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection.

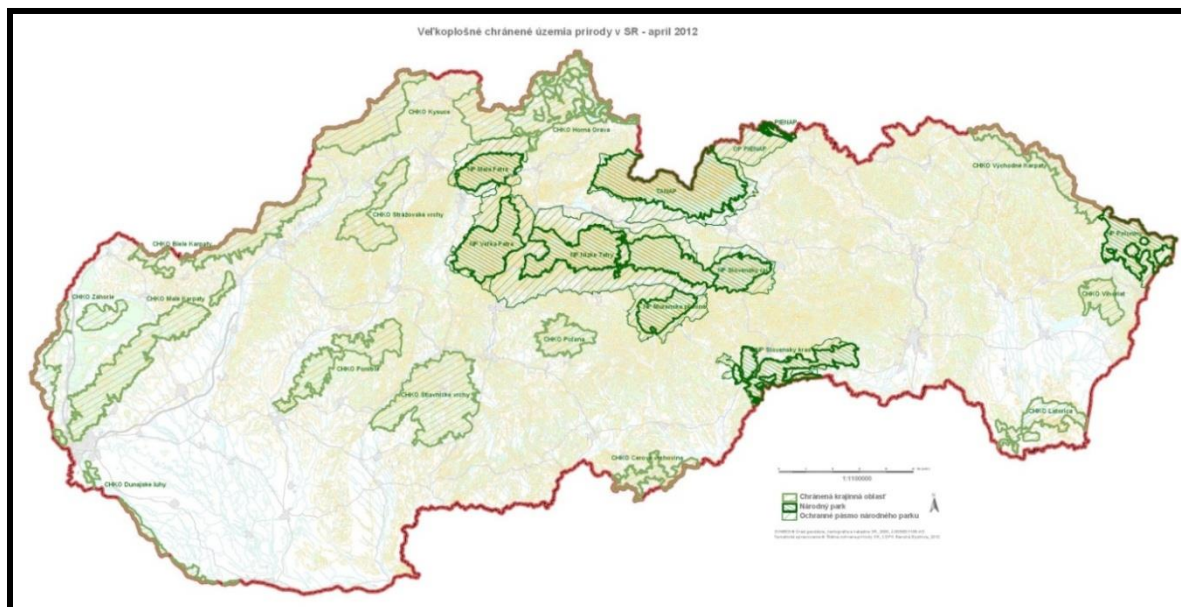
The territory of the Slovak Republic is divided into five levels of nature protection; the range of environmental constraints increases proportionately to making the level of nature protection more stringent. In the territory where no specific protection under the above law is stipulated, the first level of nature protection applies.

Act No 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape conservation stipulates the following protected areas:

- protected landscape area (2nd level of protection);
- national park (3rd level of protection);
- protected site (3rd to 5th level of protection);
- nature reserve or national nature reserve (4th to 5th level of protection);
- nature monument or national nature monument (4th to 5th level of protection);
- protected landscape element (2nd to 5th level of protection);
- protected bird area (1st level of protection);
- municipal protected area (1st level of protection).

The buffer zones of national parks, protected sites, nature reserves and nature monuments have a proportionately lower level of protection. The above levels of protection have general

application, but they may be changed by declaring protected area zones. Based on the condition of habitats, a protected area may be divided into no more than four zones depending on the nature of natural assets, from 2nd to 5th level of protection.



Source: State Nature Conservation of the SR

**Table 1: Overview of protected areas in the SR as of 30 December 2020:**

#### National parks

Name	Area (in hectares)	Protection zone area (in hectares)	Year of declaration, updates
NP Malá Fatra	22,630.0000	23,262.0000	1967 as PLA, 1988
NP Muránska planina	20,317.8021	21,697.9644	1977 as PLA, 1997
NP Nízke Tatry	72, 842.0000	110,162.0000	1978, 1997
Pieninský NP	3,749.6226	22,444.1676	1967, 1997
NP Poloniny	29,805.0514	10,973.2893	1997
NP Slovenský kras	34,611.0832	11,741.5677	1973 as PLA, 2002
NP Slovenský raj	19,413.6700	5,474.7600	1964 as PLA, 1988, 2016
Tatranský NP	73,800.0000	30,703.0000	1948, 1987, 2003
NP Veľká Fatra	40,371.3433	26,132.5817	1974 as PLA, 2002
<b>Total 9 NP</b>	<b>317,540.5726</b>	<b>262,591.3307</b>	

Source: State Nature Conservation of the SR

#### Protected Landscape Areas (PLA)

Name	Area (in hectares)	Year of declaration, updates
Biele Karpaty	44,568.0000	1979, 1989, 2003
Cerová vrchovina	16,771.2273	1989, 2001
Dunajské luhy	12,284.4609	1998
Horná Orava	58,738.0000	1979, 2003
Kysuce	65,462.0000	1984
Latorica	23,198.4602	1990, 2004
Malé Karpaty	64,610.1202	1976, 2001
Poľana	20,360.4804	1981, 2001
Ponitrie	37,665.4100	1985
Strážovské vrchy	30,979.0000	1989
Štiavnické vrchy	77,630.0000	1979
Vihorlat	17,485.2428	1973, 1999
Východné Karpaty	25,307.1072	1977, 2001
Záhorie	27,522.0000	1988
<b>Total 14 PLAs</b>	<b>522,581.5090</b>	

Source: State Nature Conservation of the SR

In total, the area of 9 national parks (6.48% of the total area of the SR), of the buffer zones of national parks (5.36% of the area of the SR) and 14 PLAs (10.66% of the area of the SR) account for 22.49% (1,102,713 hectares) of the territory of the SR (4,903,500 hectares).

### *III.5.1.3 Protected parts of nature*

#### Protected minerals and fossils

The protection of minerals and fossils in Slovakia is governed by the provisions of Articles 32 and 38 of Act No 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection and by the Decree of the MoE SR No 213/2000 Coll. on protected minerals and protected fossils and on their social value by which a list of protected minerals and protected fossils and their social value was laid down.

The following minerals have been included in the list of protected minerals:

- 12 type minerals first described from the territory of the SR;
- 61 significant minerals occurring rarely in the territory of the SR, of Community importance, or minerals characterised by peculiar morphological features or evolution;
- meteorites found in the territory of the SR.

The following fossils have been included in the protected fossils list:

- 655 type fossils that are unique remains of extinct plants and animals and according to which the relevant taxon was first described from the territory of the SR;
- selected groups of rarely occurring fossils which by their nature and level of preservation are a unique evidence of the evolution of organisms in the geological history of the SR.

The samples of protected minerals and protected fossils are deposited and kept especially in

the collections of state natural science museums.

Minerals and fossils protection is provided on a continuous basis by nature conservation authorities or by the organisational units of State Nature Conservation of the Slovak Republic (SNC SR).

### Cave protection

According to Act No 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection, caves are protected as nature monuments and the most important of them are protected as national nature monuments.

In addition, there are more than 45 caves in Slovakia which have been declared open to the public.

### Protected trees

In Slovakia, 443 trees and their groups were declared protected as of 31 September 2017, including tree alleys – protected objects. Physically, it is more than 1,200 individual trees consisting of 65 taxa, of which 32 are indigenous and 33 non-indigenous. A catalogue of protected trees is held by the Slovak Museum of Nature Protection and Speleology in Liptovský Mikuláš.

### Wetlands

Wetlands are areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing. This means that wetlands include all areas of natural or artificial origin where the water level is on the soil's surface or close to the soil's surface or where the surface is covered by shallow water, as well as streams, rivers and water reservoirs.

**Table 2: Wetlands in the SR**

Wetland type	Number of sites	Area in hectares	Percentage of SR's territory
Wetlands of international importance	23	43,981	0.9
of which Ramsar sites	14	40,911	0.8
Wetlands of national importance	72	147,260	3.0
Wetlands of regional importance	467	10,431	0.2
Wetlands of local importance	1,050	4,550	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,626</b>	<b>247,313</b>	<b>5.04</b>

Source: State Nature Conservation of the SR

The Convention on Wetlands was signed in Ramsar (Iran) on 2 February 1971 and entered into force in 1975. The Slovak Republic (as part of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic) acceded to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat on 2 July 1990 (Ramsar Convention). The Convention on Wetlands was the first international treaty aimed at nature conservation to have been signed by the Slovak Republic. As of 15 April 2020, there were 171 Parties to the Convention.

By 2020, 14 wetlands had been declared in the SR and entered on the List of Wetlands of International Importance as Ramsar sites, with a total area of 42,227 hectares (0.86% of the territory of the SR).

**Table 3: Wetlands of international importance**

Number	Name	Area (hectares)	District	Date of entry
1.	Parížske močiare	184.0	Nové Zámky	2.7. 1990
2.	Šúr	1,136.6	Pezinok	2.7. 1990
3.	Senné- rybníky	424.6	Michalovce	2.7. 1990
4.	Dunajské luhy	14,488	Bratislava II, V, Senec, Dunajská Streda, Komárno	26.5. 1993
5.	Niva Moravy	5,380	Bratislava IV, Malacky, Senica, Skalica	26.5. 1993
6.	Latorica	4,404.7	Michalovce, Trebišov	26.5. 1993
7.	Alúvium Rudavy	560	Malacky, Senica	17.2. 1998
8.	Mokrade Turca	750	Martin, Turčianske Teplice	17.2. 1998
9.	Poiplie	410.9	Levice, Veľký Krtíš	17.2. 1998
10.	Mokrade Oravskej kotliny	9,287	Námestovo, Tvrdošín	17.2. 1998
11.	Rieka Orava a jej prítoky	865	Dolný Kubín, Tvrdošín	17.2. 1998
12.	Domica	621	Rožňava	2.2. 2001
13.	Jaskyne Demänovskej doliny	1,448		17.11.2006

Source: State Nature Conservation of the SR

### III. 5.2. Areas protected under Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters

#### III. 5.2.1. Protected areas designated for the abstraction of water intended for drinking

The subject-matter of protection are water supply resources which according to Article 7 of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters, as amended, are the bodies of surface water and groundwater used for the abstraction of drinking water or which can be used for supplying water to the population whereby more than 50 persons are served or allowing for water abstraction for such a purpose on average greater than 10 cubic metres per day in its original condition or after treatment. In the SR, protected water management areas, catchments of water supply watercourses and protection zones of water supply resources are designed for their protection.

In the SR, there are three types of drinking water protected areas:

- protection zones of water supply resources – Article 32 of Act 364/2004 Coll. on waters;
- catchments of water supply watercourses – in the SR, 102 watercourses have been declared, their list is to be found in the Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the SR No 211/2005 Coll. establishing a list of watercourses important in terms of water management and water supply watercourses;
- Protected water management areas (PWMA) – in the SR, 10 PWMA have been declared, stipulated under Article 31 of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters, as amended. Their list is to be found in the Government Resolution No 46/1978 Coll. on protected area of natural water accumulation in Žitný ostrov, as amended, and in the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Socialist Republic No 13/1987 Coll. on certain protected areas of natural water accumulation.

### Protection zones of water supply resources

Protection zones of water supply resources are set up to protect their yield, quality and wholesomeness. At 31 December 2012, 1,350 protection zones of water supply resources had been set up in the SR, with a total area of 8,617 sq kilometres.

### Water supply watercourses and watercourses important in terms of water management

Lists of watercourses important in terms of water management and water supply watercourses are stipulated by the Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the SR No 211/2005.

586 watercourses are included in the list of watercourses important in terms of water management and 102 watercourses are found in the list of water supply watercourses.

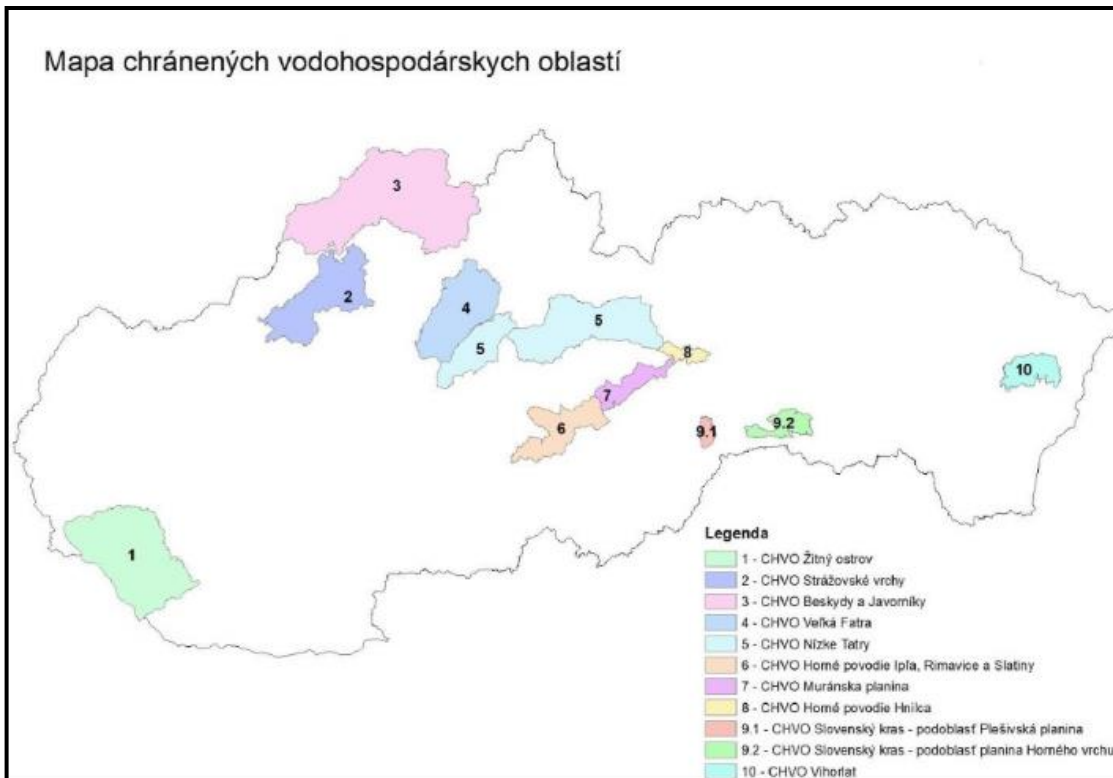
### Protected water management areas

Protected water management areas (hereinafter only "PWMA") are areas in which natural accumulation of surface and groundwater takes place due to favourable natural conditions.

**Table 4: Overview of protected water management areas in the SR**

Sequential number	Name of PWMA	Area	
		Area of land (km <sup>2</sup> )	% of land area of the SR
1.	Žitný ostrov	1,400	2.86
2.	Strážovské vrchy	757	1.54
3.	Beskydy - Javorníky	1,856	3.78
4.	Veľká Fatra	644	1.31
5.	Nízke Tatry		
	Západná časť	358	0.73
	Východná časť	805	1.64
6.	Horné povodie Ipľa, Rimavice a Slatiny	375	0.76
7.	Muránska planina	205	0.42
8.	Horné povodie rieky Hnilec	108	0.20
9.	Slovenský kras		
	Plešivecká planina	57	0.12
	Horný vrch	152	0.31
10.	Vihorlat	225	0.46
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,942</b>	<b>14.16</b>

Source: Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute



Source: Slovak Water Research Institute  
 Map of protected water management areas

### III.5.2.2. Protected nutrient-sensitive areas

Sensitive areas (Article 33 of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters) are surface water bodies:

- in which deterioration of water quality occurs or may occur due to an increased nutrient concentration according to Article 2 letters a-g of the applicable Act;
- that are used as water supply resources or may be used as water supply resources;
- that require a higher level of waste water treatment to enhance water protection.

Vulnerable areas (Article 34 of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters) are areas used for agriculture, from which rainwater runs off to surface water or is soaked in groundwater in which nitrate concentration is more than 50 mg.l-1 or it can be exceeded in the near future.

Vulnerable areas under Article 34 of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters are areas used in agriculture by municipalities whose list is attached in Annex 1 to the Government Regulation No 174/2017 Coll. establishing sensitive and vulnerable areas. In Slovakia, 1,546 municipalities have been declared vulnerable areas, accounting for a total area of 1,520 thousand hectares.

### III.5.2.3. Protected recreational areas including bathing waters

In the SR, protected recreational areas are not specially defined or identified.

## Waters fit for bathing

At EU level, the bathing water quality requirements are stipulated in Directive 2006/7/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the management of bathing water quality repealing Directive 76/160/EEC, which was implemented in the national regulations of the Slovak Republic. In Slovakia, the first classification of recreational bathing waters under the Directive was adopted in 2011.

As of 15 October 2012 (Act No 306/2012 Coll.), bathing waters are stipulated under Article 8 of Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters, as amended. Pursuant to Article 8 paragraph 1 of the above law, bathing water identification is annually performed by the Ministry of the Environment of the SR, in cooperation with the Public Health Authority of the SR (hereinafter only "PHA SR"). Requirements for bathing waters are laid down in the Decree of the Ministry of Health of the SR No 309/2012 Coll. on requirements for recreational bathing water, as amended by Decree No 397/2013 Coll.

According to Article 19 of Act No 355/2007 Coll. on the protection, promotion and development of public health and on amending certain acts, as amended, recreational bathing water is any surface water declared by a special regulation and used by a large number of people for bathing and on which no permanent ban on bathing was imposed or no permanent recommendation not to bathe was issued. A large number of bathers is assessed by the Slovak Health Authority of the SR, while taking into account past developments, the infrastructure or facilities and measures adopted in the past with an aim to promote bathing.

In the SR, bathing water quality is monitored by the PHA SR and by 36 regional PHAs. They monitor artificial swimming pools (with thermal and non-thermal water, with a year-round and seasonal operation) and the most important natural water recreation sites.

The Public Health Authority of the SR has launched an information system on the quality of recreational bathing water which is available at [www.uvzsr.sk](http://www.uvzsr.sk). It also provides reports on monitoring the sanitary conditions of natural and artificial swimming pools in individual years.

When implementing concrete projects relating to the implementation of the strategy paper, it will be essential to accept the requirements following from the generally binding legal regulations in nature and landscape conservation legislation, in particular Act No 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape conservation, as amended, Act No 364/2004 Coll. on waters and on amending Act of the Slovak National Council No 372/1990 Coll. on offenses, as amended (the Water Act), as amended, and related regulations.

Any particular activity to be launched in areas protected under special regulations will be assessed in terms of its environmental impact under Act No 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment, as amended.

Providing effective measures following from the assessment process are implemented, a serious impact of implementing the strategy paper on protected areas is not envisaged.

### **III.6. Potential risks associated with the strategy document implementation**

Developing OP Slovakia will not be associated with environmental risks. Given the current assessment stage, no risks can be foreseen.

Potential risks may only be presumed in the event of human failure in performing the activities related to OP Slovakia implementation, notably in cases of non-compliance and infringements of the generally binding environmental and health protection legislation.



### **III.7. Cross-border environmental impacts**

Cross-border impacts may be expected with respect to concrete projects that will be part of the proposed OP Slovakia. Any project and its modification that will meet the thresholds in accordance with Annex 8 to Act No 24/2006 Coll. will be assessed in terms of its environmental impact, including the impacts crossing the SR borders. In the event any expected negative impacts crossing national borders are identified, interested parties will be notified in a timely manner. At the strategic evaluation stage, cross-border environmental impacts of the assessed strategy paper are envisaged, as well as effects on human health.

## **IV. Interested parties**

### **IV.1. Defining interested general public including relevant associations**

Given the nationwide nature of the document and its content, interested general public are all the citizens of the SR and entities, associations and citizens' initiatives, legal and natural persons operating in the SR, wishing to take part in the implementation of OP Slovakia.

### **IV.2. List of interested parties**

#### ***Government organisations:***

- Office of the Government of the SR
- Ministry of Transport and Construction of the SR
- Ministry of the Environment of the SR
- Ministry of the Economy of the SR
- Ministry of Health of the SR
- Ministry of Finance of the SR
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family of the SR
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the SR
- Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the SR
- Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR
- Statistical Office of the SR
- Ministry of the Interior of the SR
- Ministry of Defence of the SR
- Ministry of Culture of the SR
- Antimonopoly Office of the SR
- Office for Public Procurement
- Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for Roma Communities, Ministry of the Interior of the SR
- Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the SR for the Development of Civil Society, Ministry of the Interior of the SR

#### ***Regional government:***

- Bratislava Self-Governing Region
- Trnava Self-Governing Region
- Nitra Self-Governing Region

- Trenčín Self-Governing Region
- Žilina Self-Governing Region
- Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Region
- Prešov Self-Governing Region
- Košice Self-Governing Region

### **Interested municipalities**

All towns and municipalities in the SR.

### ***Other interested bodies***

- Confederation of Trade Unions of the SR
- National Union of Employers
- Union of Towns and Cities of Slovakia
- Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia
- Entrepreneurs Association of Slovakia
- Club 500
- Federation of Employers' Associations of the SR

### **IV.3. Neighbouring countries concerned**

By implementing OP Slovakia as a strategy paper of nationwide impact, negative impact upon the countries neighbouring the SR is not envisaged.

## **V. Additional data**

### **V.1. Maps and graphic documentation**

Maps and graphic documentation are not part of the Communication.

### **V.2. Underlying documents used to develop the strategy paper**

When developing OP Slovakia, the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the SR will use the currently developed and existing strategies detailed in part II.7.

## **VI. Place and date of the Communication**

Bratislava, May 2021

## **VII. Acknowledgement of data correctness**

### **VII.1. Name of staff drafting the Communication**

RNDr. Jarmila Trenčanská - OP Slovakia Section of the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the SR

**VII.2. Acknowledgement of the correctness of the Communication data by signature of the contracting authority's authorised representative**

I hereby certify that the information contained in the Communication is correct.

Ing. Mgr. Ján Ridzoň, Director General of OP Slovakia Section

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