



Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic
Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for
National Minorities

Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016-2020

Introduction

Through the Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No 71 of 18 February 2015, adopting the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the “Strategy”), the Government of the Slovak Republic also tasked several Ministries to draw up, by 31 December 2015, within the scope of their competences, action plans for those vulnerable and marginalised groups and individuals for which no legislative frameworks, institutional frameworks, separate strategies and application frameworks existed. Under the above-mentioned Resolution No 71/2015, the Head of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic imposed the responsibility for this task on the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities (hereinafter the “Office of the Plenipotentiary”).

The Office of the Plenipotentiary - in collaboration with the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups (hereinafter the “Committee”), as a standing expert body of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality for issues relating to national minorities and ethnic groups and persons belonging to them - created space for the participative process of development of the Draft Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016-2020.

The Draft Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016-2020 is based on Annex 1 to the Strategy: *Base Document relating to the part of the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups* (hereinafter the “Base Document”). This Base Document also fulfils the role of the introductory part of the presented Action Plan, since it contains an analysis of the current situation in the national legal framework of the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the area of promotion of the culture of national minorities, the education and training of persons belonging to national minorities, the use of national minority languages, as well as the international legal framework of the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and the institutional framework of the protection and promotion of the rights belonging to national minorities. The Base Document also defines the priorities and tasks in the concerned area creating the framework of strategic objectives and proposed measures and activities in order to reach these objectives.

The objective of the Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016-2020 is to provide an effective, transparent and reliable system of the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including strengthening its institutional framework.

The Draft Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016-2020 was adopted by the Committee through the Resolution No 79 at its 19th meeting held on 17 December 2015.

The Draft Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016-2020 was discussed at the 24th session of the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for Human Rights, Minorities on gender equality, on which the Council with the Resolution No 155 and recommended the Slovak Government to approve the draft.

Operational objectives of the Draft Action Plan for the Protection of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and Ethnic Groups for 2016-2020

- 1. Provide a comprehensive approach to the development of legislation on the rights and the situation of national minorities and ethnic groups;**
- 2. Improve the system of promotion of the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups;**
- 3. More efficiently take into account the specific aspects of education and training needs of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups;**
- 4. Improve the conditions of the use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups in practice;**
- 5. Raise the public awareness of national minorities and ethnic groups via the media;**
- 6. Improve the mechanisms of participation of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in the decision making on matters affecting them;**
- 7. Increase the knowledge base serving to better identify target groups - national minorities and ethnic groups and their needs through a survey and research.**

Operational objective 1

Provide a comprehensive approach to the development of legislation on the rights and the situation of national minorities and ethnic groups

1.	Proposed activity/measure:	Provide an analysis of legislation on the rights and the situation of national minorities and ethnic groups, including the situation of the city districts of Bratislava and Košice in the context of the use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups
	Performance indicator:	Preparation of the analysis
	Deadline:	2017
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, professional public
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic
2.	Proposed activity/measure:	Provide the preparation of comprehensive and coherent legislation on the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups, if such a need arises from the prepared analysis
	Performance indicator:	Preparation of the legislative proposal
	Deadline:	2018-2019
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, professional public
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic

3.	Proposed activity/measure:	Analyse the possibilities of utilising temporary special measures in the area of the prevention of discrimination of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups
	Performance indicator:	Preparation of the analysis
	Deadline:	2017 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities, Slovak National Centre for Human Rights
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic

4.	Proposed activity/measure:	Develop a methodology of the adoption of temporary special measures in the area of the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups, including the preparation of standards, models and measures to implement temporary special measures
	Performance indicator:	Preparation of methodology, standards, models and measures to implement temporary special measures
	Deadline:	2017- 2019
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities, Slovak National Centre for Human Rights
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic

Operational objective 2

Improve the system of promotion of the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups

1.	Proposed activity/measure:	Provide a more effective system of promotion of the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups, including reducing the administrative burden of applying for support for cultural activities from grant programmes, developing the mechanisms of institutional promotion of minority organisations and associations, and more flexible mechanisms of support for professional minority theatre and artistic ensembles
	Performance indicator:	Preparation and implementation of the rules to provide a more effective system of promotion of the culture
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic
2.	Proposed activity/measure:	Train the staff of the culture sector in the area of the importance and contribution of the cultures of different national minorities and ethnic groups, eliminate prejudices and stereotypes in relation to persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in order to prevent discrimination and strengthen the democratic mechanisms of an inclusive society
	Performance indicator:	Number of training events
	Deadline:	Ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	National Edification Centre
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

3.	Proposed activity/measure:	Provide expert methodological assistance in the area of cultural and educational activities and intangible cultural heritage to organisations dedicated to the development of cultural and edification activities and intangible cultural heritage of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic
	Performance indicator:	Number of events
	Deadline:	Ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	National Edification Centre, Slovak Folk Art Ensemble, Centre for Folk Art Production
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

4.	Proposed activity/measure:	Organise expositions and various forms of informal education for persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups and for the general public aimed at the elimination of prejudices and stereotypes, the strengthening of equal opportunities in the life and culture of national minorities and ethnic groups and the promotion of the process of social inclusion through national minority museums
	Performance indicator:	Number of events
	Deadline:	Ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	Slovak National Museum, Museum of the Slovak National Uprising
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

5.	Proposed activity/measure:	Organise cultural activities and informal educational events in the area of audio-visual culture and cultural heritage, as well as cultural activities in the arts in order to raise awareness of the majority population and access to culture for persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups through organizations founded by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Performance indicator:	Number of events
	Deadline:	Ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	Organisations whose founder is the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

6.	Proposed activity/measure:	Support cultural projects aimed at preventing discrimination and social exclusion of children and youth living in marginalised Roma communities through the grant system of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Performance indicator:	Number of events
	Deadline:	Ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	Non-governmental organisations
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

Operational objective 3

More efficiently take into account the specific aspects of education and training needs of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups

1.	Proposed activity/measure:	Strengthen the process of taking into account the specific aspects of education and training needs of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups based on different conditions and requirements, including ways of addressing education of their members in their mother tongue
	Performance indicator:	Number of activities
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
2.	Proposed activity/measure:	Effectively create the possibilities of education and training of Roma children in their mother Roma language
	Performance indicator:	Number of textbooks
	Deadline:	2017-2020
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, National Institute for Education, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
3.	Proposed activity/measure:	Strengthen the education and training of children and youth in the spirit of ideas of tolerance, inter-cultural and inter-ethnic dialogue
	Performance indicator:	Number of supported projects
	Deadline:	2016-2020
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic

	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic

4.	Proposed activity/measure:	Strengthen training programs for teaching staff, professional staff of schools and educational institutions in the area of education of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups, inclusive education, inter-cultural and inter-ethnic dialogue
	Performance indicator:	Number of programmes
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	Methodology and Pedagogy Centre, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic

5.	Proposed activity/measure:	Produce teaching material focused on the history and culture of national minorities in the Slovak Republic
	Performance indicator:	Preparation of output material
	Deadline:	2016-2018
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	National Institute for Education, Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic

6.	Proposed activity/measure:	Streamline the activities of the Minister's Council for National Minority Education in accordance with its Statute
	Performance indicator:	Number of meetings of the Minister's Council for National Minority Education
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
7.	Proposed activity/measure:	Creating content and performance standards and textbooks for specific subjects of primary and lower secondary education with teaching language in minority languages (music education, homeland education, history) and the subject of Slovak language and literature for primary and lower secondary education with instruction in minority languages by levels of the CEF
	Performance indicator:	Preparation of output material
	Deadline:	2017-2020
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	National Institute for Education, Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic

Operational objective 4

Improve the conditions of the use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups in practice

1.	Proposed activity/measure:	Streamline the provision of technical and methodological assistance and provision of translations of principal legislation of the Slovak Republic, official specimen forms, the provision of consistent technical terminology, and the issuing of methodological guidelines for local State authorities, authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions and legal entities founded by authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions in the implementation of legislation concerning the use of the languages of national minorities and ethnic groups
	Performance indicator:	Number of translations, opinions and guidelines Number of working groups
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Operational Programme Effective Public Administration
2.	Proposed activity/measure:	Analyse the cost of increasing the availability of the services of local State authorities, authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions and legal entities founded by authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions to persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in the area of the use of minority languages in official contact
	Performance indicator:	Preparation of the analysis
	Deadline:	2017 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Operational Programme Effective Public Administration

3.	Proposed activity/measure:	Increase the availability of the services of local State authorities, authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions and legal entities founded by authorities of municipalities and self-governing regions to persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups through training of the staff of these authorities
	Performance indicator:	Number of seminars, trained staff
	Deadline:	2017 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, Association of Slovak Towns and Villages, Union of Towns and Cities of Slovakia
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Operational Programme Effective Public Administration

4.	Proposed activity/measure:	Take into account the needs of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups within the public administration reform
	Performance indicator:	Number of activities, number of working groups
	Deadline:	Ongoing
	Responsible body:	Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic
	Collaborating bodies:	Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities, Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

Operational objective 5

Raise the public awareness of national minorities and ethnic groups via the media

1.	Proposed activity/measure:	Promote the efficient use of public media to build an inclusive awareness of the majority population, and particularly children and youth, of the importance and contribution of national minorities to the development of the society
	Performance indicator:	Amount of broadcasting time of public media in national minority languages Number of broadcast programmes intended for the majority population, including programmes intended for children and youth
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities, Radio and Television of Slovakia, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Radio and Television of Slovakia
2.	Proposed activity/measure:	Strengthen education in the media landscape towards building an inclusive awareness among the majority population and the prevention of intolerance towards persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups
	Performance indicator:	Number of activities
	Deadline:	2017 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Communities
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Operational Programme Effective Public Administration

3.	Proposed activity/measure:	Promote the public awareness of the activities of the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Performance indicator:	Number of activities
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, non-profit organisations
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic

Operational objective 6

Improve the mechanisms of participation of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in the decision making on matters affecting them

1.	Proposed activity/measure:	Promote the development of participatory mechanisms at all levels and strengthen the statutes, status and competences of advisory and consultative bodies and strengthen their capacity
	Performance indicator:	Number of activities, number of working groups
	Deadline:	2016 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic
2.	Proposed activity/measure:	Provide the opportunities of traineeships for students – persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups at the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Performance indicator:	Number of candidates/number of trainees
	Deadline:	Ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic

Operational objective 7

Increase the knowledge base serving to better identify target groups and their needs through survey and research

1.	Proposed activity/measure:	Identify the obstacles to collecting sensitive data on ethnicity and create a system for collecting data on the ethnic or national origin
	Performance indicator:	Prepared analyses
	Deadline:	2017-2018
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Office for Personal Data Protection of the Slovak Republic, Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups
	Sources of funding:	Budget of the Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic

2.	Proposed activity/measure:	Strengthen a comprehensive research and systematic monitoring in the area of national minorities and ethnic groups
	Performance indicator:	Number of activities
	Deadline:	2017 and ongoing
	Responsible body:	Office of the Government of the Slovak Republic, Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities
	Collaborating bodies:	Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic
	Sources of funding:	Budgets of the Ministries Operational Programme Effective Public Administration

SWOT analysis of the situation and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of institutional mechanisms, in particular, the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities and the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups; • Strong universal and European international legal framework for the protection of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups; • Existence of commitments arising for the Slovak Republic from international conventions at the universal (UN) and regional (Council of Europe) levels relating to the protection of human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups; • Long-term tradition of support for projects aimed at promoting the culture, identity, language of national minorities and ethnic groups and multi-cultural activities within the grant programme Culture of National Minorities; • Right to education in national minority languages guaranteed by legislation; • Rights of national minorities and ethnic groups guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic; • Existence of the Atlas of Roma Communities as an example of good ethnicity data collection; • Systematic promotion of the culture of national minorities and ethnic groups through the grant programme Culture of National Minorities; • Existence of data from population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited competences and weak mandate of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for National Minorities and the Committee on National Minorities and Ethnic Groups; • Considerable fragmentation of legislation on the rights and the status of national minorities and ethnic groups; • A lack of data with regard to obstacles to collecting sensitive data on the ethnic and national origin which would make it possible to process in-depth analyses of the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups; • A lack of professional capacity of public administration authorities and local government authorities in the area of the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups; • A lack of analyses of the existing data; • A lack of comprehensive, continuous and comparative research.

censuses.

Opportunities

- **Promotion of cohesion of the society through multicultural and inter-ethnic activities;**
- **Foreign experience in the implementation of commitments arising from the international frameworks for the protection and promotion of the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups;**
- **Streamlining the practical exercise of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups;**
- **Cooperation with the Intergroup for Traditional Minorities, National Communities and Languages in the European Parliament, dealing with indigenous national minorities;**
- **Promotion of employment of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups in the spirit of equal opportunities.**

Threats

- **Unawareness of the public and persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups and, as a result, a weaker pressure to enforce the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups at the self-government level;**
- **Unawareness of the majority population of indigenous national minorities in the Slovak Republic;**
- **Weak practical enforcement of law in the area of anti-discrimination legislation;**
- **Limited funds for the promotion and development of national minorities and ethnic groups.**