

# COUNTRY FACTSHEET: SLOVAKIA 2012

## EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

### 1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in the Slovak Republic during 2012, including latest statistics. It has been prepared in conjunction with the European Commission's 4th Annual Report on Migration and Asylum (2012).

### 2. Legal Migration and Mobility

#### 2.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

Information on conditions of entry and residence in the Slovak Republic can be found on the website of the Ministry of Interior<sup>1</sup>, at front offices of the Aliens Police or at consular offices. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family's website<sup>2</sup> contains a separate section on the integration of foreigners, also containing a **multilingual on-line course of Slovak language** and vocabularies. Moreover, the Central Office of Labour Social Affairs and Family provides employers with information on the employment of foreigners. Complex counselling for foreigners on the different aspects of life in Slovakia is provided by the **Migration Information Centre (MIC)**<sup>3</sup> established by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Specialised counselling days were organised by the MIC in 2012, giving the chance to foreigners to meet several public stakeholders at one place.

#### 2.2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

As foreseen by the "**Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic with a Perspective until 2020**" document, an analysis of the monitoring of scarce jobs and of the labour market will be conducted in 2013 and 2014 to set the management of labour migration priorities. During 2012, the Slovak Republic tried to compensate for the shortage of available labour forces on the labour market, especially in scarce professions, as well

as to focus on the employment of **highly qualified workers, scientists and students**. However, with regards to this particular category of migrants, only seven EU Blue Cards were issued in 2012, partly due to issues related to the recognition of higher qualifications in the case of non-regulated professions. In relation to this, a draft act amending Act No. 293/2007 Coll. on the Recognition of Qualifications in the wording of Act No. 560/2008 Coll. has been prepared, with the aim of simplifying the process of **recognising qualifications**. In the area of international cooperation, in 2012 the Agreement with New Zealand on a **Working Holiday Scheme**, enabling 100 citizens from both countries to reciprocally use the working holiday scheme on a one-time basis, was published in the Collection of Laws. Moreover, draft agreements on a similar scheme with Japan and with Australia are at the stage of preparation.

#### 2.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

The new **Act on Residence of Aliens**, replaced the incomplete **transposition of Directive 2004/38/EC** on the right of the citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States. In fact, the category of family members of a Union citizen has been extended to a partner with whom a Union citizen has a durable relationship and also to a third-country national with the right of a family member of a Union citizen to reside in another EU Member State. Moreover, in order to harmonise **Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification** with national legislation, provisions governing permanent residence have also been modified, as well as the possibility to obtain permanent residence for a period of five years has been extended to dependent children over 18 years old who cannot take care of themselves due to long-term unfavourable health conditions.

<sup>1</sup> [www.minv.sk](http://www.minv.sk)

<sup>2</sup> [www.employment.gov.sk](http://www.employment.gov.sk)

<sup>3</sup> [www.mic.iom.sk](http://www.mic.iom.sk)

## 2.4. INTEGRATION

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family organised several meetings with foreigners' communities and relevant stakeholders to exchange views on integration issues and to prepare its **Integration Policy** document. In the field of labour integration, persons with a disadvantaged position in the labour market, including third-country nationals, received assistance during the course of 2012 as it was the case also in previous years. Through the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals (EIF), **IOM's Migration Information Centre (MIC)** implemented several projects on training, labour counselling and socio-cultural orientation of migrants. Moreover, the TV programme **Integruj!** (Integrate!)<sup>4</sup> played an important role on informing foreigners about all important aspects of life in Slovakia and raising awareness among the Slovak public on the culture and traditions of the new minorities living in the country.

## 2.5 MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY<sup>5</sup>

In the area of visa policy, an increased number of diplomatic missions can now issue **visas** with biometric identifiers. Moreover, Slovakia signed three agreements on mutual representation in visa issuance with Poland, Lithuania and Hungary. In the domain of **Schengen governance**, working groups were established in areas such as personal data protection and police cooperation, in order to prepare for regular Schengen evaluations in 2012 and 2013. Several external border facilities were modernised in 2012 and police staff training were undertaken thus providing *inter alia* guidance on the detection of forged travel documents. Furthermore, an important meeting was held between the chief border attorneys of Slovakia and Ukraine to adopt a cooperation plan in the area of security at the **Slovak-Ukrainian state borders**.

## 3. International Protection and Asylum

In 2012 no legislative changes occurred in the field of international protection. However, several projects and bilateral exchanges were put in place by the Slovak Republic. For example, the General Directors of Immigration Services Conference's (GDISC) remote interpreting project, carried out in cooperation with Malta, to test **language analysis**. Slovakia participated in all EU level negotiations of proposals for the asylum package and was actively involved within the **European Asylum Support Office (EASO)** activities. For instance, Slovakia provided eight experts to the reserve asylum support team. One expert has been deployed in Greece to support the management of the reception system and to contribute to the training courses for employees at entry reception

<sup>4</sup> [www.integruj.sk](http://www.integruj.sk)

<sup>5</sup> "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

centres for migrants. In the field of **relocation**, within the EU project for the relocation of persons under international protection in Malta (EUREMA II), the Slovak Republic continued to affirm its commitment to accept the relocation of ten persons; however, they showed no interest to be relocated to the Slovak Republic. Regarding **resettlement**, in cooperation with IOM and UNHCR, Slovakia received several refugees from Iran, Iraq, Somalia and other countries, with the aim of gradually resettling them to third countries. (See table 5 in Statistical Annex).

## 4. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

The Slovak Republic continued to participate in the project "**Improving the quality of guardianship and care for unaccompanied minors – asylum applicants – in central European countries**". Within this project, a two-day training course was held with the participation of ministerial representatives, decision-makers, social workers, employees of relevant foster homes, and guardians. Legal instruments on the protection of unaccompanied minors (UAMs) as well as the psychological aspects of work with UAMs were discussed. The **European Refugee Fund (ERF)** contributed to funding several projects for, *inter alia*, counselling unaccompanied minor asylum seekers and preparing them on life after leaving the foster home. With regards to **other vulnerable groups**, the ERF-funded project AZYL.SK IV involved the construction of protected housing units for asylum applicants with social, psychical or health problems. The latter were also involved in the building works, an activity that proved to be highly beneficial to their self-realisation and self-confidence.

## 5. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

The Slovak Republic continued to be particularly active in the fight against trafficking in human beings (THB) during 2012. Under the **new Act on Residence of Aliens, specific measures have been modified** in relation to the conditions applying to third-country national victims of trafficking in human beings in case they cooperate with the law enforcement authorities. Moreover, several legal regulations were issued on the establishment and functioning of the expert group and working groups targeting the fight against human beings. Many initiatives aimed at facilitating the **identification and detection of possible victims** of human trafficking and of traffickers. A manual was prepared on this topic in the framework of Frontex activities as well as training and screening activities were carried out to identify human trafficking victims. The **Programme of Support and Protection of the Victims of Human Trafficking** provided help to a further 22 victims of trafficking in 2012, while the national helpline continued to be operated. Several **campaigns** were carried out to raise awareness on

the topic of human trafficking, such as: "You Can Become a Slave without Information" campaign and the "Do you Know What Your Children Is Doing Right Now?" campaign, which aimed at providing advice for parents whose children decide to study or work abroad or who make use of drugs.

## 6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

The **National Programme of Official Development Aid of the Slovak Republic** for 2012 specifically emphasised the need to increase coherence between migration and development policies. In this framework, the Slovak Republic provided assistance to **internally displaced persons** in Georgia and contributed to building a water reservoir on the Iraqi-Syrian border. Material humanitarian aid and financial contributions were donated to relief the situation of **Syrian refugees** in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Material humanitarian aid was also provided for the Konik refugee camp near Podgorica, in Montenegro.

## 7. Irregular Migration

In order to face the growing trend of irregular state border crossings, the Slovak Republic continued to use its system of technical and physical border protection, to carry out regular analysis and to sign readmission agreements. In May 2012 a readmission agreement between Slovakia and Austria came into force, aiming at promoting cooperation between the two countries. The Slovak Republic was actively involved in training and working meetings with countries of origin and of transit of irregular migration. For example, they participated on a two-day seminar held in September 2012 for the Moldovan operational unit responsible for organised irregular migration and trafficking in human beings. Cooperation with Moldova continued also with the project "**Building training and analytical capacities in the field of migration in Moldova and Georgia (GovAc)**", aiming at laying down the basis for the implementation of mobility partnerships in Moldova and Georgia through the enhancement of these countries' capacities in migration management.

In the area of return, the new Act on Residence of Aliens, introduced specific provisions of the **Return Directive**, such as the reasons for executing a decision on administrative expulsion of a third-country national by the police department. In the field of voluntary return, the project "**Assistance in the return and reintegration of rejected asylum applicants and irregular migrants from the Slovak Republic to their countries of origin III**" provided pre-departure counselling and post-return reintegration assistance to returnees. Moreover, an anonymous helpline and a website on voluntary returns proved to be useful in providing guidance and important information to potential voluntary returnees.

## 8. Provision and Exchange of Information to support Policy Development

The Slovak Republic cooperation in this area involves active participation and cooperation for the preparation of opinions on the seasonal employment and intra-corporate transfer draft EU directives. Slovakia has also been involved in expert exchanges within the **ENARO network (European Network of Asylum Reception Organisations)** as well as in exchanges on forged and travel documents with other Member States. Bilateral exchanges were undertaken in the field of training activities and language analysis.

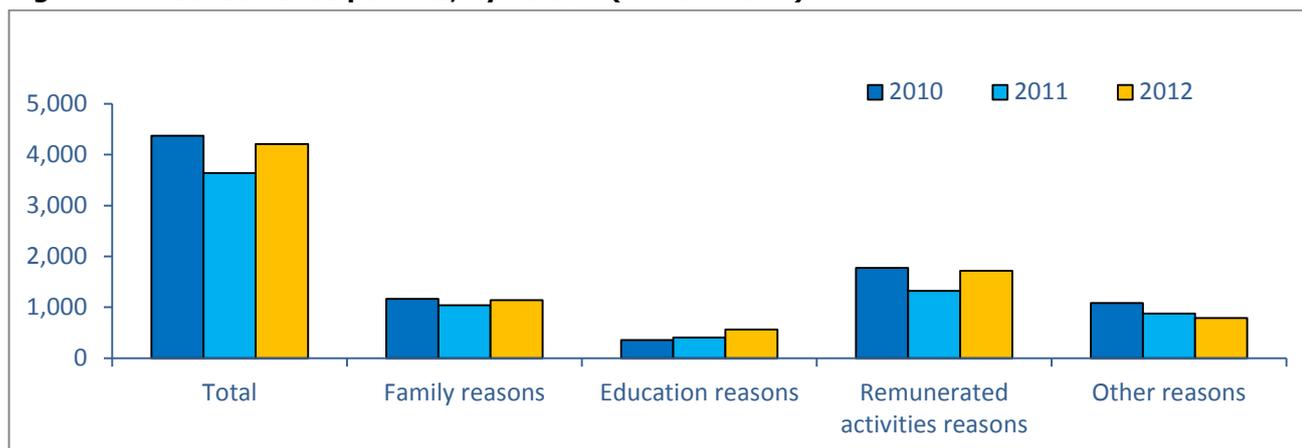
At national level, an important role was played by the **Managing Committee for Migration and Integration of Foreigners**, acting as a coordination body in the field of asylum. At regional level, valuable exchanges of information were undertaken by experts from various Member States specialised in individual countries of origin through formalised networks such as the European Countries of Origin Sponsorship Project.

### STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for the Slovak Republic on aspects of migration and asylum (2010-2012), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

## Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in the Slovak Republic (2010-2012)

**Figure 1: First residence permits, by reason (2010 – 2012)**



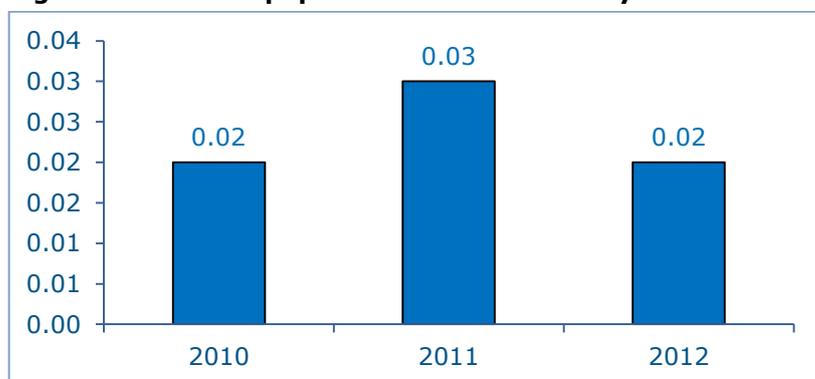
Source: Eurostat (migr\_resfirst)

**Table 1: First residence permits: Top 5 nationalities (2010 – 2012)**

2010	2011	2012
<b>1. Ukraine</b> – 969	<b>1. Ukraine</b> – 686	<b>1. Ukraine</b> – 782
<b>2. Serbia</b> – 483	<b>2. Serbia</b> – 568	<b>2. Serbia</b> – 548
<b>3. South Korea</b> – 427	<b>3. South Korea</b> – 369	<b>3. South Korea</b> – 373
<b>4. Russia</b> – 308	<b>4. Russia</b> – 298	<b>4. Russia</b> – 345
<b>5. China</b> – 292	<b>5. United States</b> – 195	<b>5. United States</b> – 211

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_resfirst)

**Figure 2: Resident population of third-country nationals in millions (2010 – 2012)**



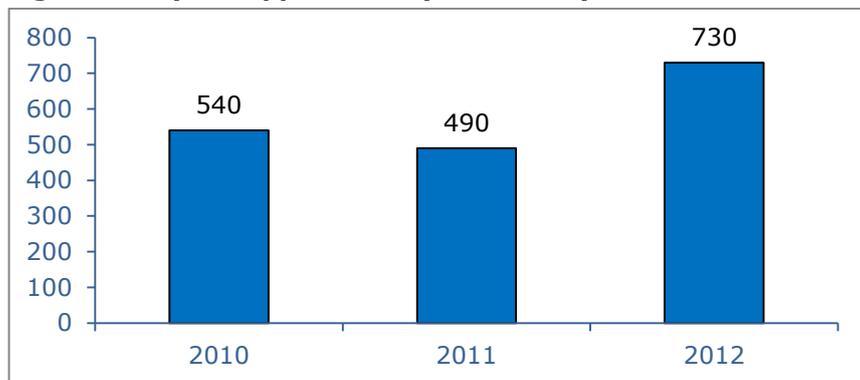
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_pop1ctz)

**Table 2: Resident population: Top 5 nationalities (2010 – 2012)**

2010	2011	2012
<b>1. Ukraine</b> – 5,907	<b>1. Ukraine</b> – 6,297	<b>1. Ukraine</b> – 3,873
<b>2. Serbia</b> – 335	<b>2. Serbia</b> – 3,853	<b>2. Russia</b> – 1,803
<b>3. Vietnam</b> – 2,341	<b>3. Vietnam</b> – 2,257	<b>3. Vietnam</b> – 1,489
<b>4. Russia</b> – 2,042	<b>4. Russia</b> – 2,227	<b>4. United States</b> – 856
<b>5. China</b> – 1,718	<b>5. China</b> – 1,878	<b>5. China</b> – 792

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_pop1ctz)

**Figure 3: Asylum applications (2010-2012)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asyappctza)

**Table 3: Asylum applications: Top 5 nationalities (2010 - 2012)**

2010	2011	2012
1. Afghanistan – 75	1. Somalia – 80	1. Somalia – 225
2. Russia – 65	2. Afghanistan – 75	2. Afghanistan – 90
3. Georgia – 65	3. Georgia – 65	3. Georgia – 55
4. India – 45	4. Moldova – 40	4. Congo – 45
5. Moldova – 40	5. Russia – 35	5. Armenia – 35

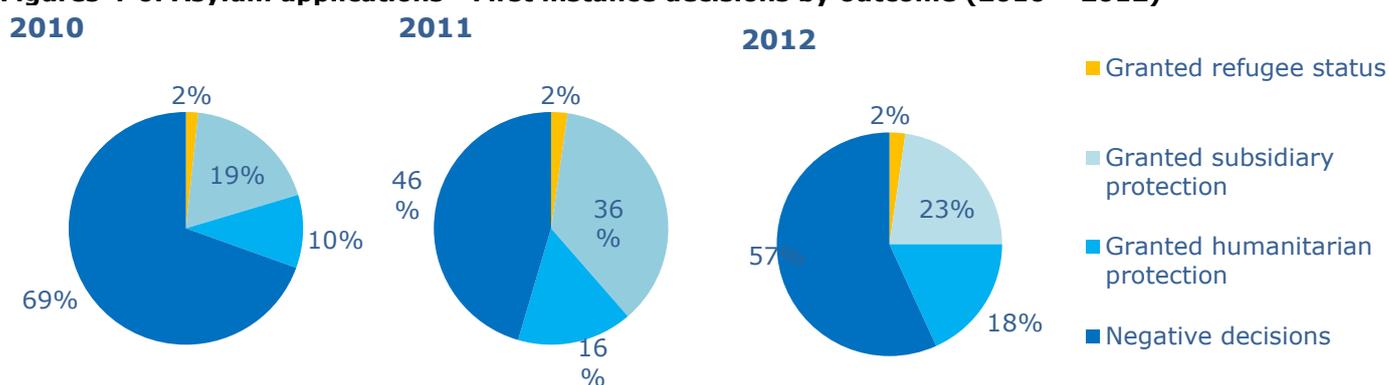
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asyappctza)

**Table 4: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010-2012)**

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:			Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
2010	295	90	5	55	30	205
2011	215	115	5	80	35	100
2012	440	190	10	100	80	250

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asydcfsta)

**Figures 4-6: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010 - 2012)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asydcfsta)

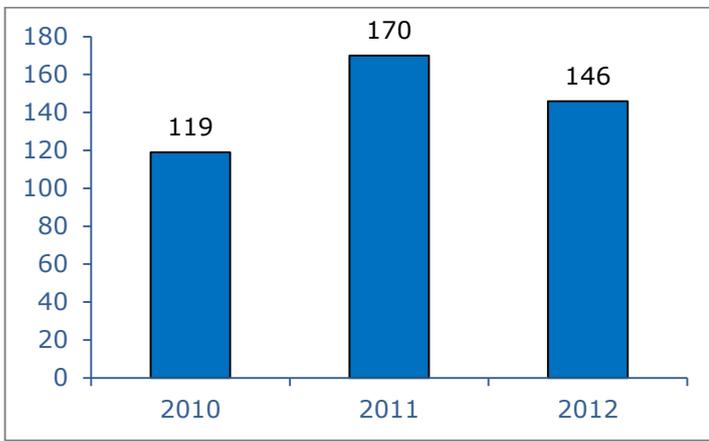
**Table 5: Third-country nationals relocated and resettled (2010 - 2012)**

	2010	2011	2012
Third-country nationals relocated	0	0	0
Third-country nationals resettled	0	0	0

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asyresa)

**Figure 7: Unaccompanied minors (2010 - 2012)**

**Table 6: Unaccompanied minors (2010 - 2012)**



Source: National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report

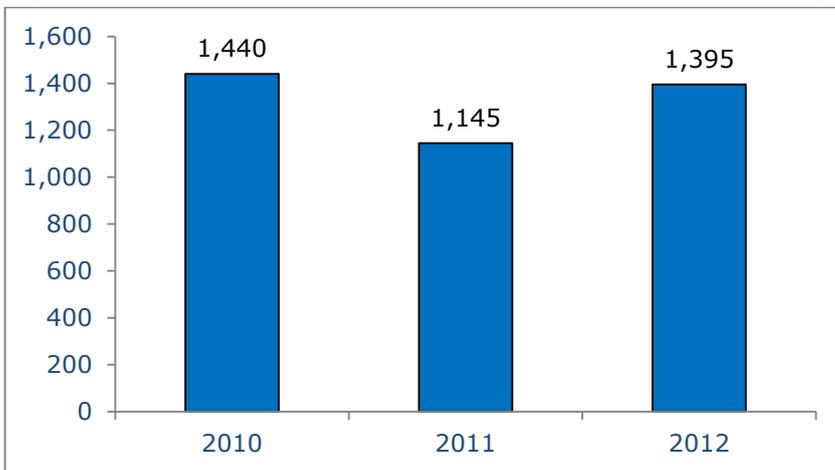
	2010	2011	2012
<b>Unaccompanied minors (total)</b>	119	170	146
<b>Unaccompanied minors not applying for asylum</b>	N/A	150	N/A
<b>Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants</b>	5	20	30

**Table 7: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2010 – 2012)**

	2010	2011	2012
<b>Third-country nationals refused entry at external borders</b>	840	595	595

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_eirfs)

**Figure 8: Number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present (2010 – 2012)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_eipre)

**Table 8: Third-country nationals returned (2010-2012)**

	Third-country nationals ordered to leave	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
<b>2010</b>	870	605	130	130*
<b>2011</b>	580	390	95	95
<b>2012</b>	490	273	72	54

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_eiord) and National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report; \*Information provided by EMN NCP

**Table 9: Number of visas issued by type (2010 – 2012)**

	2010	2011	2012
<b>Total visas</b>	N/A	N/A	75,836
<b>Schengen visa (short-stay visas)*</b>	56,675	69,681	74,539
<b>National visa</b>	N/A	1,235	1,175

Source: Commission Staff Working Documents on the Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum; \*DG HOME Statistics on Visa Policy website: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index_en.htm)