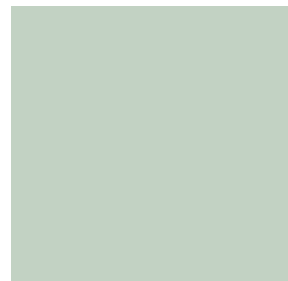


UPDATE ON 2025



SLOVAKIA



COUNTRY REPORT

JULY 2026

Acknowledgements & Methodology

This report was written by Lukáš Novák and Michaela Dojčinovičová from HRL, with the support of interns Marek Panák and Sahar Ahmadi and was edited by ECRE.

The information in this report draws upon observations from activities carried out by HRL, publicly available sources of state authorities, international organisations, and civil society organisations, as well as statistics and information shared inter alia by the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

The information in this report is up-to-date as of 31 December 2025, unless otherwise stated.

The Asylum Information Database (AIDA)

The Asylum Information Database (AIDA) is managed by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). It aims to provide up-to date information which is accessible to researchers, advocates, legal practitioners and the general public through the dedicated website www.asylumineurope.org. It covers 27 countries, including 21 EU Member States (AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, ES, FR, GR, HR, HU, IE, IT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK) and 6 non-EU countries (Egypt, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and the United Kingdom). The database also seeks to promote the implementation and transposition of EU asylum legislation reflecting the highest possible standards of protection in line with international refugee and human rights law and based on best practice.

The AIDA country report on Slovakia on 2025 was shared with the Migration Office to grant the opportunity to provide comments on the draft country report. The comments were taken into account by the authors in the report below and published in a separate [annex](#) on the AIDA website.



This report is part of the Asylum Information Database (AIDA), funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and ECRE. The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of ECRE and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



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Glossary & List of Abbreviations

AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
BBFP PFP	Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CoI	Country of Origin Information
EMN	European Migration Network
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
HRL	Human Rights League
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MO	Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic
MoERDY	Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic
MoFEA	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
MoH	Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic
MoI	Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic
MoJ	Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic
MoLSAF	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OLSAF	Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
SAO	Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic
SHC	Slovak Humanitarian Council
UAM	Unaccompanied minor
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Statistics

Overview of statistical practice

Monthly and yearly statistics on asylum and migration are published by the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (MO) on the [website](#) of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (Mol). In addition, the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force (BBFP PFP) publishes a biannual statistical overview of legal and illegal migration in Slovak Republic, also on the [website](#) of the Mol.

Applications and granting of protection status at first instance: figures for 2025

	Applicants in 2025	Pending at end 2025	Total decisions in 2025 (1)	Total rejection (2)	Refugee status (3)	Subsidiary protection (4)	Humanitarian protection (5)
Total	163	91	182	54	39 (6)	32 (4)	2
Breakdown by countries of origin of the total numbers							
Ukraine	40	17	37	3	0	13	0
Afghanistan	21	11	28	3	13 (5)	8 (1)	0
Belarus	14	7	21	3	18	0	0
Russia	11	13	15	7	5 (1)	3	1
Syria	8	2	7	0	1	5	1
India	7	1	7	2	0	3 (3)	0
Azerbaijan	6	4	4	0	1	0	0
Iran	5	5	2	0	0	0	0
Germany	5	0	5	5	0	0	0
Angola	4	1	4	1	0	0	0

Source: The MO's Statistical report on international protection for 2025 available [here](#) and the Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

(1) Total number of decisions includes also decisions to discontinue the proceedings, e.g. in case of absconding.

(2) Total number of rejections includes decisions rejecting the asylum application as inadmissible and manifestly unfounded.

(3) Total number of decisions on granting asylum, including asylum for family reunification (*azyl na účel zlúčenia rodiny*) and asylum on humanitarian grounds (*azyl z humanitných dôvodov*). The number in parentheses indicates the number of decisions granting asylum for family reunification. The number of decisions on granting asylum on humanitarian grounds is indicated in the column "Humanitarian protection". (See [National forms of protection](#)).

(4) Total number of decisions on the provision of subsidiary protection, including subsidiary protection for family reunification (*doplnková ochrana na účel zlúčenia rodiny*). The number in parentheses indicates the number of decisions on the provisions of subsidiary protection for family reunification. (See [National forms of protection](#)).

(5) Total number of decisions on granting asylum on humanitarian grounds (*azyl z humanitných dôvodov*) (See [National forms of protection](#)).

Applications and granting of protection status at first instance: rates for 2025

	Overall rejection rate (2) (4)	In merit rejection rate (1) (3) (4)	Overall protection rate (2) (4)	In merit protection rate (1) (3) (4)	Refugee rate (1) (4)	Subsidiary protection rate (1) (4)	Humanitarian protection rate (1) (4)
Total	60%	43%	39%	57%	31%	26%	0%
Breakdown by countries of origin of the total numbers							
Ukraine	65%	19%	35%	81%	0%	81%	0%
Afghanistan	21%	14%	79%	86%	54%	33%	0%
Belarus	14%	14%	86%	86%	86%	0%	0%
Russia	47%	47%	53%	53%	33%	20%	0%
Syria	25%	0%	75%	100%	16%	84%	16%
India	57%	40%	43%	60%	0%	60%	0%
Azerbaijan	75%	0%	25%	100%	100%	0%	0%
Iran	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Germany	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Angola	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Rates calculated by the authors of the report based on data in the MO's Statistical report on international protection for 2025 available [here](#) and the Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

Gender/age breakdown of the total number of applicants: 2025

		Men	Women		Adults	Children	
						Accompanied	Unaccompanied
Number		124	39	Number	122	35	6
Percentage		76%	24%	Percentage	75%	21%	4%

Source: The MO's Statistical report on international protection for 2025 available [here](#).

Note: The gender breakdown (Men/Women) applies to all applicants, not only adults.

Overview of the legal framework

Main legislative acts on asylum procedures, reception conditions, detention and content of international protection

Title (EN)	Original Title (SK)	Abbreviation	Web Link
Act No. 480/2002 Coll. on Asylum and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts <i>(The Asylum Act shall be repealed as of 12 June 2026 by the IPA)</i>	Zákon č. 480/2002 Z. z. o azyle a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov	Asylum Act	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2002/480/?ucin nost=26.02.2026 (SK)
Act. No. 404/2011 Coll. on the Residence of Foreigners and on Amendments to Certain Acts	Zákon č. 404/2011 Z. z. o pobyte cudzincov a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov	Act on Residence of Foreigners	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2011/404/20250901 (SK)
Act No. 71/1967 Coll. on Administrative Proceedings (Administrative Procedure Code)	Zákon č. 71/1967 Zb. o správnom konaní (správny poriadok)	Administrative Procedure Code (APC)	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1967/71/20180901 (SK)
Act No. 162/2015 Coll. the Administrative Judicial Code	Zákon č. 162/2015 Z. z. Správny súdny poriadok	Administrative Judicial Code (AJC)	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2015/162/20250901 (SK)
Act No. 327/2005 Coll. on Granting of Legal Aid to Persons in Material Hardship	Zákon č. 327/2005 Z. z. o poskytovaní právnej pomoci osobám v materiálnej núdzi	Act on Legal Aid	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2005/327/20260101 (SK)
Act No. 460/1992 Coll. Constitution of the Slovak Republic	Ústava Slovenskej republiky č. 460/1992 Zb.	Constitution of the Slovak Republic	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/1992/460/20251101 (SK)
Act No. 69/2026 Coll. on International Protection and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts <i>(The IPA enters into force on 12 June 2026)</i>	Zákon č. 69/2026 Z. z. o medzinárodnej ochrane a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov	IPA	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2026/69/ (SK)

Main implementing decrees, guidelines and regulations on asylum procedures, reception conditions, detention and content of international protection

Title (EN)	Original Title (SK)	Abbreviation	Web Link
Regulation of the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic No. 34/2014 Coll. of 21 February 2014 on the procedure of the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, Police Force departments, and support centres in the implementation of Act No. 480/2002 Coll. on Asylum and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended	Nariadenie ministra vnútra Slovenskej republiky č. 34/2014 z 21. februára 2014, o postupe migračného úradu Ministerstva vnútra Slovenskej republiky, útvarov Policajného zboru a centier podpory pri vykonávaní zákona č. 480/2002 Z. z. o azyle a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov v znení neskorších predpisov	Regulation of the MoI No. 34/2014	n/a
Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 716/2002 Coll. of 11 December 2002 Establishing the List of Safe Third Countries and Safe Countries of Origin	Nariadenie Slovenskej republiky č. 716/2002 Z. z. z 11. decembra 2002, ktorým sa vydáva zoznam bezpečných tretích krajín a bezpečných krajín pôvodu	Regulation of the Government No. 716/2011	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2002/716/ (SK)

Overview of main changes since the previous report update

As this is the first AIDA report covering Slovakia, no direct comparison with a previous report is possible; the changes noted below reflect key developments observed during the reporting period.

International protection

- ❖ **Statistics:** In 2025, Slovakia received 163 applications for asylum, compared to 165 applications in 2024. The number of persons granted asylum remained unchanged at 41 in both years. However, the number of beneficiaries granted subsidiary protection increased from 22 in 2024 to 32 in 2025. The number of negative decisions slightly decreased from 59 in 2024 to 54 in 2025. Similarly, the number of discontinued procedures fell from 58 to 55. Overall, while the volume of asylum applications remained almost identical, the proportion of applicants receiving subsidiary protection increased in 2025, whereas the number of negative and discontinued cases slightly decreased.¹ In both 2024 and 2025, the largest number of asylum applications was lodged by nationals of Ukraine, Afghanistan and Belarus. While Afghan nationals constituted the largest group of beneficiaries granted asylum in 2024, Belarusian nationals became the main beneficiary group in 2025. In both years, subsidiary protection was granted predominantly to Ukrainian nationals, reflecting the continuing protection needs arising from the consequences of the war in Ukraine.

Reception conditions

- ❖ **Material reception conditions:** Only minor changes were introduced to reception conditions during the reporting period. Since June 2024, applicants for international protection are no longer entitled to receive basic hygiene items where they are engaged in employment or have another source of income amounting to at least the subsistence minimum for a single adult. The same restriction applies where the Ministry of Interior has determined that the applicant is required to contribute, in full or in part, to the costs of accommodation in an asylum facility or integration centre, or to the costs of healthcare, due to their financial or property situation. In such cases, applicants may be required to bear part of the expenses related to their stay or medical treatment.

Content of international protection

- ❖ **Integration support:** An amendment to the Asylum Act entered into force on 1 July 2024, affecting the integration support available to beneficiaries of international protection. Under the new provisions, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are no longer entitled to a one-off financial contribution amounting to 1.5 times the subsistence minimum, nor to an integration allowance amounting to 1.75 times the subsistence minimum, if they previously held or currently hold a permanent or temporary residence permit in Slovakia, or if they were previously granted temporary refuge (temporary protection) in the country. The amendment primarily affects beneficiaries of international protection who had already established a legal residence status in Slovakia before being granted asylum or subsidiary protection.

Temporary protection

See [Temporary Protection Annex](#) to the country report.

Content of temporary protection

- ❖ **Accommodation:** Several amendments affecting beneficiaries of temporary protection entered into force on 1 July 2024. The most significant changes concerned accommodation support. Under the new rules, accommodation in asylum facilities is generally limited to 120 days following

¹ <https://www.minv.sk/?statistiky-20>

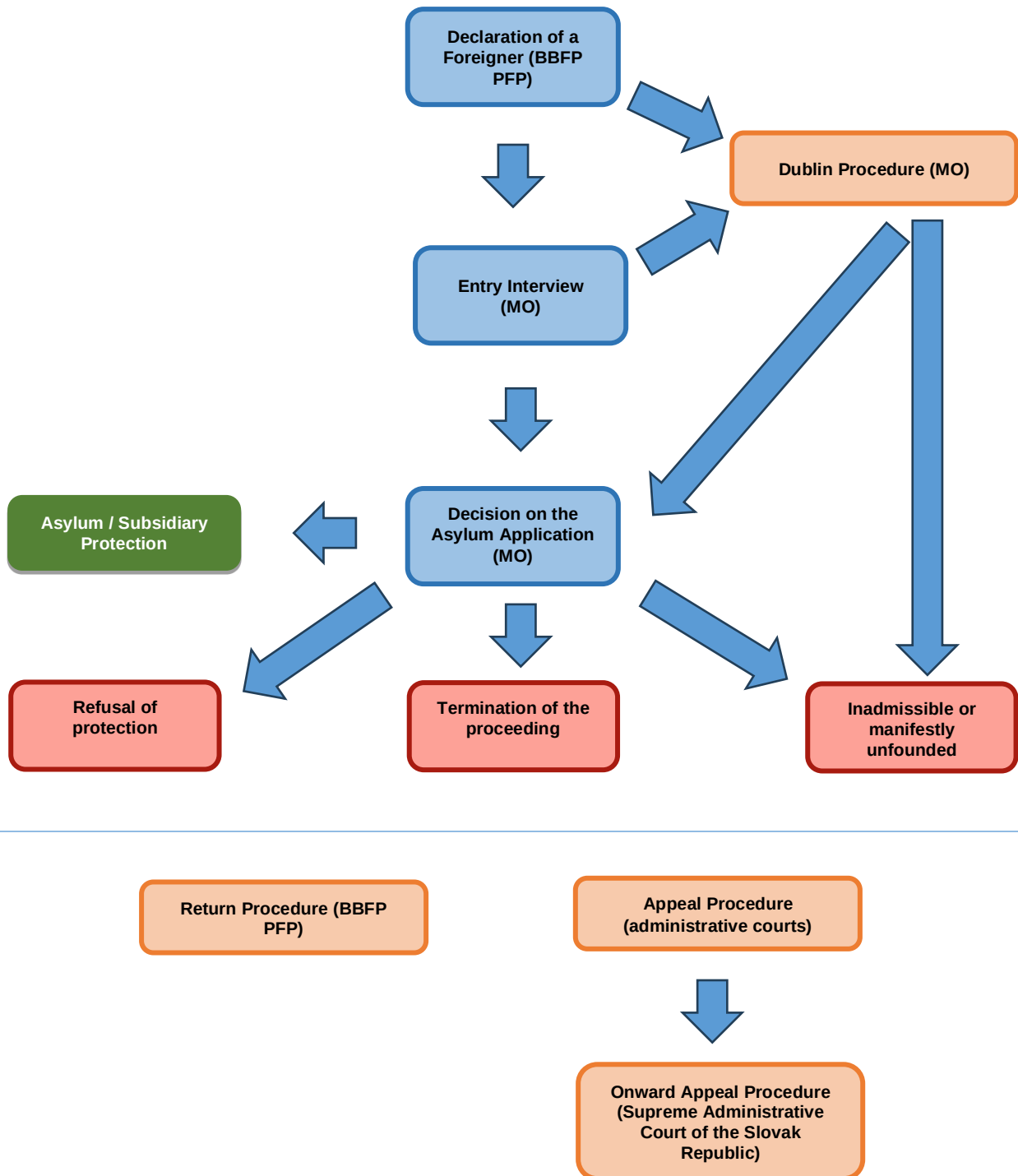
the first grant of temporary protection. Continued accommodation beyond this period is available only to specific categories of vulnerable persons, including persons over the age of 65, single caregivers of children under the age of five, and children under five years of age. The conditions for the accommodation allowance scheme were also substantially modified. As of July 2024, accommodation providers may receive financial contributions only for vulnerable beneficiaries of temporary protection after the initial 120-day period. Vulnerability must be documented through prescribed evidence and reported to the competent municipality. Furthermore, accommodation providers operating commercial accommodation businesses, such as hotels, hostels and guesthouses, were excluded from eligibility for the accommodation allowance.

- ❖ **Education and health care:** Additional changes were introduced in the areas of education and healthcare. From 1 September 2024, municipalities became responsible for maintaining records of children benefiting from temporary protection who are subject to compulsory pre-primary or compulsory school education and monitoring their school attendance. Moreover, amendments to healthcare legislation established that general practitioners, paediatricians, gynaecologists and dentists may not refuse to register beneficiaries of temporary protection on the grounds of capacity constraints within their designated catchment area.

Asylum Procedure

A. General

1. Flow chart



2. Types of procedures

Indicators: Types of Procedures

- Which types of procedures exist in your country?

❖ Regular procedure:	☒ Yes	☐ No
▪ Prioritised examination:	☐ Yes	☒ No
▪ Fast-track processing:	☐ Yes	☒ No
❖ Dublin procedure:	☒ Yes	☐ No
❖ Admissibility procedure:	☒ Yes	☐ No
❖ Border procedure:	☐ Yes	☒ No
❖ Accelerated procedure:	☒ Yes	☐ No
❖ Other:	☒ Yes	☐ No
- Are any of the procedures that are foreseen in the law, not being applied in practice?

☐ Yes	☒ No
------------------------------	--

The national legislation does not regulate a separate admissibility or accelerated procedure; however, under circumstances defined by law, the MO may, in regular procedure, reject the asylum application as inadmissible or manifestly unfounded.

3. List of authorities that intervene in each stage of the procedure

Stage of the procedure	Competent authority (EN)	Competent authority (SK)
Application ❖ At the border ❖ On the territory	Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force (BBFP PFP)	Úrad hraničnej a cudzineckej polície Prezídia Policajného zboru (ÚHCP P PZ)
Dublin	Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior	Migračný úrad Ministerstva vnútra
Refugee status determination	Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior	Migračný úrad Ministerstva vnútra
First appeal	Administrative Courts in Bratislava and Košice	Správne súdy v Bratislave a Košiciach
Onward appeal	The Supreme Administrative Court	Najvyšší správny súd
Subsequent application	Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior	Migračný úrad Ministerstva vnútra
Revocation / Withdrawal	Migration Officer of the Ministry of Interior	Migračný úrad Ministerstva vnútra
Returns (voluntary and forced)	Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force (BBFP PFP)	Úrad hraničnej a cudzineckej polície Prezídia Policajného zboru (ÚHCP P PZ)

4. Determining authority

Name in English	Number of staff	Ministry responsible	Is there any political interference possible by the responsible Minister with the decision making in individual cases by the first instance authority?
Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic	n/a	Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic	☒ Yes ☐ No

The determining authority competent to take decisions on asylum applications at first instance is the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (*migračný úrad Ministerstva vnútra Slovenskej Republiky*) (MO) (hereinafter also Migration Office or determining authority). The MO was

established by the Governmental resolution no. 501/1993 dated 13 July 1993 to perform duties in migration policy. The MO has fully replaced the former Secretariat of the Slovak Government's Commissioner for Refugees (SSV SR for Refugees), appointed to the position from 1 June 1991. The MO is managed by the director, who is under the authority of the First State Secretary of the MoI. The MO is divided into:

- (1) **Organisational and Legal Department:** responsible for drafting legislation governing asylum matters, transposition of EU legislation into national law and legal representation of the MoI before the courts in international protection matters;
- (2) **Procedural Department:** responsible for asylum-related administrative procedures, including examination of asylum applications;
- (3) **Migration and Integration Department:** responsible for cooperation with competent government authorities, local governments and non-governmental organisations in the integration of beneficiaries of international protection into society, in particular regarding access to accommodation, employment, social security and education;
- (4) **Dublin Centre:** responsible for the implementation of the Dublin Regulation and determining the EU Member State responsible for examining an asylum application;
- (5) **Department of Documentation and International Cooperation:** responsible for documenting activities and providing information and analysis about the countries of origin of asylum seekers;
- (6) **Asylum Facilities Department:** managing, coordinating and supporting the asylum facilities, the integration centre and the international airports;²
- (7) **Migration Assistance Facility (formerly the Foreigners' Services Centre):** individual counselling and assistance to international university students, highly qualified workers and their family members, as well as returnees (Slovak citizens) returning to the territory of the Slovak Republic from abroad and their family members, in matters relating to residence, employment, integration, and navigation of the public services system.³

The MO is also responsible for asylum facilities – Humenné Reception Centre, Accommodation Centre in Opatovská Nová Ves dedicated for vulnerable persons and Accommodation Centre in Rohovce dedicated for single men.

5. Short overview of the asylum procedure

The asylum procedure starts with a foreigner's declaration that he or she seeks international protection in Slovakia, made to the competent police department under the competence of the BBFP PFP.⁴ The national legislation does not distinguish between making, registering and lodging an asylum application. These three steps overlap in most cases. The competent police department is under an obligation to record the declaration on an official form - Declaration of Foreigner (*Vyhlásenie cudzinca*).⁵ The form contains personal information about the applicant, including a brief description of the reasons for submitting the asylum application. Subsequently, the police department must send the filled form to the determining authority without delay; however, the law does not set any specific time limit.

The determining authority competent to take decisions on asylum applications at first instance is the MO. After lodging the asylum application, the employee designated by the MO conducts an entry interview during which the asylum applicant must provide the requested information truthfully and completely to

² MoI, *The Migration Office of The Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic: 25 years (1993-2018)* 2018, available [here](#).

³ MoI, *MAP - Migračný asistenčný priestor*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

⁴ Article 3(1) of the Asylum Act.

⁵ Article 3(3) of the Asylum Act.

enable the MO to decide on the application.⁶ The asylum application may be decided solely based on the information provided during the entry interview, or the MO may decide to conduct supplementary interview(s). The MO must make a decision on the asylum application in a due time and without unnecessary delays, no later than 6 months after the commencement of the procedure. The decision-making time limit may be extended up to a total of 12 months, provided that the conditions set out by law are met.⁷ The only exception is a decision rejecting the asylum application as manifestly unfounded, which may be issued only within 60 days from the commencement of the asylum procedure.⁸ The possible outcomes of the asylum procedure are:

- Decision on granting asylum (Article 8 of the Asylum Act),
- Decision on provision of subsidiary protection (Article 13a of the Asylum Act),
- Decision on granting asylum for the purpose of family reunification (Article 10 of the Asylum Act),
- Decision on provision of subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification (Article 13a of the Asylum Act),
- Decision on granting asylum on humanitarian grounds (Article 9 of the Asylum Act),
- Decision refusing to grant asylum and subsidiary protection (Article 13 and Article 13c of the Asylum Act),
- Decision on rejecting the asylum application as inadmissible (Article 11 of the Asylum Act) - such a decision is also issued in case the MO determines that another State is responsible for examining the asylum application,
- Decision on rejecting the asylum application as manifestly unfounded (Article 12 of the Asylum Act),
- Decision on termination of the asylum procedure (Article 19 of the Asylum Act).

First instance decisions of the MO may be appealed by submitting an administrative appeal to the administrative courts (Administrative Court in Bratislava or Administrative Court in Košice). Administrative appeal must be filed within 30 days of the notification of the decision.⁹ In case of a decision on rejecting the application as inadmissible or manifestly unfounded, a decision on transfer of the applicant to another state and a decision on termination of asylum procedure, the administrative appeal must be filed within 20 days from the notification of the decision. Generally, the submission of an administrative appeal has an automatic suspensive effect,¹⁰ with exceptions laid down in Article 21 of the Asylum Act. If the automatic suspensive effect of the administrative appeal is excluded by the Asylum Act, administrative courts still have the right to grant the suspensive effect upon the applicant's request (not ex officio).¹¹ Such a request must be submitted together with the administrative appeal, and the administrative court must decide on it within 15 days of its submission.

Judgments of the administrative courts may be reviewed by the Supreme Administrative Court of the Slovak Republic, acting as a court of cassation. A cassation complaint must be filed within one month of the notification of the administrative court's decision. The cassation court examines only points of law. Return decisions and decisions in asylum proceedings are issued by two different state authorities: the e BBFP PFP and the MO, respectively. The decisions are not issued jointly. If the applicant is not granted international protection and there is no other legal basis for residing in the territory of Slovakia, the police department issues a decision on administrative expulsion and, where applicable, an entry ban to Slovakia and other Schengen States.

⁶ Article 4(1) of the Asylum Act.

⁷ Article 20(1) of the Asylum Act.

⁸ Article 12(3) of the Asylum Act.

⁹ Article 211(1) of the AJC.

¹⁰ Article 213(1) of the AJC.

¹¹ Article 213(2) of the AJC.

B. Access to the procedure and registration

1. Access to the territory and push backs

Indicators: Access to the Territory

1. Are there any reports (NGO reports, media, testimonies, etc.) of people refused entry at the border and returned without examination of their protection needs? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Is there a border monitoring system in place? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Who is responsible for border monitoring? ☐ National authorities ☐ NGOs ☒ Other
4. How often is border monitoring carried out? ☐ Frequently ☒ Rarely ☐ Never

According to the report published by Refugee Rights Europe and The End Pushbacks Partnership, pushbacks at the borders of Slovakia with Ukraine have been occurring since 2009, despite not garnering much attention.¹² The Human Rights League (HRL) is unable to estimate the exact number of pushbacks having occurred; however, the organisation has been made aware of numerous pushback cases continuously over the years through legal counselling sessions.

Before 24 February 2022, people seeking to enter the EU from Ukraine were typically intercepted by border guards operating at the Slovak-Ukrainian border, who routinely ignored asylum requests. Individuals, therefore, kept being readmitted to Ukraine without an opportunity to claim asylum in the EU. The pushbacks were usually conducted under the readmission agreement with Ukraine. In 2021, there were 89 foreigners who were returned to Ukraine based on the readmission agreement.¹³ On the contrary, during the years 2022,¹⁴ 2023,¹⁵ 2024¹⁶ and 2025,¹⁷ there were, in total, 16 readmissions from Slovakia to Ukraine.

Immediately after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, anyone coming from Ukraine could enter the Slovak territory through the Slovak-Ukrainian border crossings. If a person did not meet the conditions for entry set by the Schengen Border Code, entry to the Slovak territory was allowed based on humanitarian grounds according to Article 6/5/c) of the Schengen Border Code. In 2025, entry to Slovakia based on humanitarian grounds has been granted to third-country nationals who do not meet the conditions for entry only if it is the first time they are entering the Schengen zone after the start of the war on 24 February 2022. Despite the special regime for crossing the Slovak-Ukrainian border, the HRL has been made aware of several cases in which the border guards refused to register the asylum application made at the border crossings. In September 2023, the HRL was contacted by a Belarusian citizen who was at that time residing in Ukraine and decided to apply for asylum. Despite the fact that the border police were informed in advance about the date and approximate time of arrival at the Slovak-Ukrainian border crossing Ubľa – Malij Berezniy and his intention to submit the asylum application, when he arrived at the border crossing point on 5 September 2023, at first the border police refused to accept his application for international protection. Only after the HRL contacted the UNHCR Slovakia, who intervened at the Directorates of Border and Foreign Police Prešov, was his asylum application accepted.

¹² Refugee Rights Europe, *Pushbacks and Rights Violations at Europe's Borders*, 2020, available (in English) [here](#), 53-54.

¹³ BBFP PFP, *Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie cudzincov na Slovensku za rok 2021, 2022*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹⁴ BBFP PFP, *Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie cudzincov v Slovenskej republike za rok 2022, 2023*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹⁵ BBFP PFP, *Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie cudzincov v Slovenskej republike za rok 2023, 2024*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹⁶ BBFP PFP, *Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie cudzincov v Slovenskej republike za rok 2024, 2025*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹⁷ BBFP PFP, *Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie cudzincov v Slovenskej republike za rok 2025, 2026*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

1.1 Border monitoring

In the past, border monitoring was carried out on the basis of a tripartite agreement between BBFP PFP, UNHCR, and an NGO. From January 2008 until the end of August 2009, the AMAS (Access Management and Support Project) was implemented under a tripartite agreement entitled the “*Memorandum of Understanding, Mutual Cooperation and Coordination Aimed at Supporting the Access of Asylum Seekers to the Territory of the Slovak Republic and to the Asylum Procedure*” between the BBFP PFP, UNHCR, and the HRL. The objective of the project was to monitor whether persons falling under UNHCR’s mandate were able to enter the territory of the Slovak Republic, whether they had access to the asylum procedure, whether they had access to free legal assistance, and whether the principle of non-refoulement was respected.

At present, border monitoring is conducted solely by UNHCR. From March 2022 until the end of 2024, regular UNHCR border monitoring was conducted on the Slovak–Ukrainian border on a weekly basis. In 2025, such monitoring was carried out on a monthly basis. Based on agreement and with the consent of the BBFP PFP, the border monitoring is conducted through a combination of announced and unannounced visits to the relevant border police departments, the respective police directorates and NGOs (particularly the Slovak Humanitarian Council (SHC)), operating at the border. It was carried out primarily through discussions with police officers and staff of NGOs, focusing on findings related to current trends in cross-border movements, profiles of incoming foreigners, the functioning of referral mechanisms between the police and NGOs, needs for further support and related issues.

1.2 Legal access to the territory

Slovakia does not provide any humanitarian visa specifically for the purpose of applying for international protection. The only exception applies to family members of persons granted international protection in Slovakia. Family members of refugees granted asylum or foreigners provided with subsidiary protection have a right to be granted a national (type “D”) visa if they do not threaten the state security or public order.¹⁸ (See also [Family Reunification](#))

In 2025, Slovakia did not have any resettlement operations in place.

In December 2015, Slovakia relocated on a voluntary basis 149 internally displaced Iraqi (Assyrian Christians) from the refugee camp in Erbil, Iraq, who had been facing in their country of origin a serious risk of persecution based on their religion.¹⁹ The list of relocated persons was approved by the Slovak Minister of the Interior and the Prime Minister. In January 2016, all of them were granted asylum on humanitarian grounds. MO closely cooperated with the Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Nitra and NGO Pokoj a dobro – Aid to Refugees on their relocation and subsequent integration in Slovakia. As of 1 February 2019, 58 relocated Iraqis remain living in Slovakia.²⁰

In August 2021, after the fall of Kabul, Slovakia evacuated 24 persons from Afghanistan, out of which 16 were Slovak citizens with their family members, and 8 were Afghan citizens that were supporting Slovakia and other allies.²¹ All evacuated foreigners have undergone standard asylum proceedings with different outcomes.

In 2025, Slovakia did not have any relocation operations in place.

¹⁸ Article 15(2) Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹⁹ EMN, *Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Programmes in Europe – What Works?*, 2016, available [here](#).

²⁰ Pokoj a dobro – pomoc ľdom v núdzi, *Integračný projekt komunity irackých azylantov*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

²¹ HN Online.sk, *Ako prebiehala slovenská evakuácia z Afganistanu? Naši vojaci museli použiť zbrane, popísal Nad'*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

2. Preliminary checks of third country nationals upon arrival

Indicators: Preliminary checks at the arrival point

1. Are there any checks that are applied systematically or regularly at the point of entry when a person enters the territory? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Is the person considered under law to have entered the territory during these checks? ☐ Yes ☒ No
Not applicable

Border checks at internal and external borders are fully regulated by the SCB. The national legislation does not foresee any special preliminary checks of third-country nationals at the point of entry that would differ from the minimum and thorough checks of third-country nationals regulated by Article 8 of the SBC.

3. Registration of the asylum application

Indicators: Registration

1. Are specific time limits laid down in law for making an application? ☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If so, what is the time limit for making an application? Insert
2. Are specific time limits laid down in law for lodging an application? ☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If so, what is the time limit for lodging an application? Insert
3. Are making and lodging an application distinct stages in the law or in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ No
4. Is the authority with which the application is lodged also the authority responsible for its examination? ☐ Yes ☒ No
5. Can an application for international protection for international protection be lodged at embassies, consulates or other external representations? ☐ Yes ☒ No

National legislation does not distinguish between making, registering and lodging an asylum application. These three steps overlap in most cases. The authority competent to receive and register an asylum application is a **specific police department** within the **BBFP**. In any circumstances, it is not possible to lodge an asylum application at the Slovak embassy, consulate or external representation abroad.

The asylum procedure starts with the third country national's declaration that he/she seeks international protection in Slovakia, made to the competent police department. The law does not set any time limit to make an asylum claim. When an individual wishes to apply for international protection at the point of entry to Slovakia, the police department competent to receive the declaration is the **police department at a border crossing point** or a **police department in the transit zone of an international airport**. If a third-country national wishing to apply for asylum is on the territory of Slovakia, the only police department competent to accept their declaration is the **Asylum Department of the Police Force in Humenné**. In case of third country nationals who are placed in police detention centres, the competent police department is **the police department established at this detention facility**. In case of third country nationals who are hospitalised, in custody/prison or in a childcare facility may seek international protection **at the nearest foreign police department**. If a person expresses a wish to seek asylum at a police department that is not competent under the law to accept the declaration, the department shall, in particular, establish the identity of the foreign national, arrange for an interpreter where necessary, and carry out a search of the person, luggage, and means of transport, of which an official record shall be drawn up. It shall also draft report (*zápisnica o podaní vysvetlenia*), which must include information that the person expressed an intention to apply for asylum in Slovakia.

Furthermore, the third country national shall be informed which police department is competent to receive the declaration of intention to apply for asylum and shall be issued a travel document valid for 24 hours. Where necessary, due to e.g. the person's health condition, the security situation, or adverse weather conditions, the department shall arrange the transfer of the person to the Asylum Department of the Police Force in Humenné.

This police department is also required to promptly inform the MO where a foreign national has applied for asylum at a department that was not competent to receive the application.²²

HRL is aware of cases where individuals who expressed their wish to seek international protection at a non-competent police department were not provided with information on where to submit their asylum applications and, as a result, were not issued a travel document. These individuals usually have to seek advice from NGOs assisting refugees and cover travel costs themselves. Considering that third country nationals already in Slovak territory can apply for asylum **only** at the Asylum Department of the Police Force in Humenné, located in the Eastern region of Slovakia, more than 400 km from the capital city, some applicants cannot afford the travel expenses.

According to a research study conducted by the HRL in 2011,²³ detained foreigners may express their intention to apply for asylum either in writing (on paper provided to them) or orally (by informing staff of the unit, or a lawyer or social worker, who then contacts the responsible staff of the police department established at this facility). The law does not regulate the length of time between the expression of the intention to apply for asylum and the actual lodging of the application. HRL documented a case in which the total time elapsed before the application was lodged was almost one month.

Third country nationals who arrive in Slovakia by plane, do not meet the conditions for entry, and apply for asylum in the transit area of an international airport are placed in **transit centres**. Transit centres are designated areas at international airports or delimited areas of other asylum facilities. The transfer and placement of asylum seekers in transit centres are not considered entry and stay in the territory of Slovakia.

The law does not prescribe any form in which a foreigner's declaration to seek asylum must be made. After a person expresses a wish to apply for international protection, the competent police department is under an obligation to record the declaration on an official form - lodging the asylum application. A template of such a form of Declaration of Foreigner (*Vyhlásenie cudzinca*) is an [Annex 1](#) to the Asylum Act. The form contains personal information about the applicant, including a brief description of the reasons for submitting the asylum application. During the lodging of the application, the police shall provide interpretation where necessary. The police also draw up a separate record of the declaration (*zápisnica o podaní vyhlásenia*), containing the applicant's personal data, information on the number of asylum applications submitted in Slovakia or other countries, the reasons for submitting such applications, and the outcomes of those proceedings.

During the initial stages of the procedure, the police also take away the applicant's travel document or other identification documents they presented. An asylum applicant is provided with a receipt of confirmation (*Potvrdenie o zadržaní cestovného dokladu (iného dokladu totožnosti)*) that includes information on where the travel or other identification document is stored. Travel/other identification documents of asylum application are usually stored in Police Detention Centres for Foreigners Medveďov and returned to the individual upon request after the termination of the asylum procedure. Travel documents of asylum applicants with valid temporary or permanent residence in Slovakia are not taken away from them; the police only make copies.

The asylum applicants are screened against the information systems of the Ministry of Interior. Asylum applicants older than 14 years old are also fingerprinted, and their fingerprints are sent to EURODAC.

Subsequently, the police department must forward the case file created during the lodging of the asylum application to the MO as the determining authority. The file mainly contains the *Declaration of a Foreigner*, the record of the declaration, and copies of the non-empty pages of the travel document. The documents must be transmitted to the MO without delay; however, the law does not prescribe a specific time limit. Based on HRL's experience, the file is usually forwarded on the same day the application is lodged.

²² Article 2(3) of the Regulation Regulation of the MoI No. 34/2014.

²³ HRL, *Zaistenie a alternatívy k zaisteniu v Slovenskej republike*, 2011, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

After the initial procedural acts at the police (lodging the application, taking away the travel/another identification document, screening the applicant in information systems and taking the fingerprints), the asylum applicant is accommodated at the Humenné Reception Centre, with the exception of applicants in transit centres, detention centres, hospitalised applicants and applicants in custody/prison or in a childcare facility, or applicants with valid temporary or permanent residence in Slovakia.

The Asylum Act recognises two situations in which the asylum procedure would not start despite a person's expressed wish to seek international protection. Firstly, it is when a declaration is made by an unaccompanied minor (UAM). Secondly, the asylum procedure does not start if a declaration is made by a person who is already an asylum applicant in Slovakia.

Asylum applicants above 15 years of age are issued an asylum applicant's card (*Preukaz žiadateľa o azyl*). The asylum applicant's card is considered as their identity card only if the applicant's travel document or another identity document has been seized. It contains information about applicant's name, surname, sex, date and place of birth, citizenship, the fact whether it is considered an identity document, date of issuance and validity period of the card, the name of the asylum facility issuing the card, and also the names, surnames, dates of birth of the applicant's children under 15 years of age if they are also asylum applicants. In case of individuals who applied for asylum at the border, after entering the Slovak territory or from the health care facility, the MO shall issue the applicant's card within three days from the commencement of the asylum procedure. In all other cases, the applicant's card shall be issued immediately after the applicant arrives to Humenné Reception Centre. Asylum applicants younger than 15 years old are issued the applicant card only in case they are not accompanied by their legal guardian. The applicant's card serves as proof that the holder is an asylum applicant in Slovakia. The validity of an asylum applicant's card is for the duration of the asylum proceeding.

C. Procedures

1. Regular procedure

1.1 General (scope, time limits)

Indicators: Regular Procedure: General

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Time limit set in law for the determining authority to make a decision on the asylum application at first instance: | 6 months (+ possible extension of 12 months) |
| 2. Are detailed reasons for the rejection at first instance of an asylum application shared with the applicant in writing? | ☒ Yes ☐ No |
| 3. Backlog of pending cases at first instance as of 31 December 2025: | 91 |
| 4. Average length of the first instance procedure in 2025: ²⁴ | n/a |

The regular asylum procedure is regulated by the Asylum Act, mainly by the part two of the Act – ASYLUM PROCEDURE (Article 3 to 13c and Article 16 to 21).

Based on fundamental principles of administrative procedure applicable also to the asylum procedure, the determining authority must take a decision on the asylum application in a due time and without unnecessary delays.²⁵ According to the Asylum Act, the determining authority must decide the asylum application within **6 months** of the commencement of the procedure.²⁶ The moment of the commencement of the procedure is the moment when a person declares his or her intention to apply for asylum at the competent authority. The 6-month decision-making time limit can be extended repeatedly

²⁴ The MO does not maintain statistics on the average duration of asylum proceedings.

²⁵ Article 3(4) of the APC.

²⁶ Article 20(1) of the Asylum Act.

by up to **9 months**.²⁷ The decision on extending the time limit is made by the superior of the case worker handling the case. The grounds for extending a decision-making time limit stipulated by the law are:

- (1) the examination of an asylum application requires the assessment of complex factual or legal issues,
- (2) a large number of applicants submitted asylum application simultaneously and it is very difficult to decide on them within six months from the commencement of the asylum procedure, or
- (3) it is not possible to issue a decision within six months from the commencement of the asylum procedure because the applicant does not cooperate or otherwise hampers the examination of the asylum application.

If it is necessary for the proper examination of the asylum application, the decision-making time limit may be **further extended by up to 3 months**.²⁸ If the grounds for extensions are met, the total length of the asylum procedure in the first instance may be 18 months (6 months + up to 9 months extension + additional up to 3 months extension). The applicant must be informed of the extension of the time limit for examining their application in a written form. The applicant may request the determining authority to provide information about the reasons for extending the decision-making time limit and the time within which he or she can expect the decision.

As of 31 December 2025, there were 91 pending cases.²⁹

Based on HRL's experience, the statutory time limit for deciding on asylum applications is generally not extended, and the MO is capable of issuing decisions within the prescribed time limits. Delays, however, occur in cases where the MO's decision is annulled by the courts during the appeal procedure and the case is remitted to the MO for re-examination. In such situations, a new six-month time limit for issuing a decision begins to run. The newly issued decision may again be annulled by the courts on grounds of unlawfulness. As a result, a "ping-pong" effect may arise between the MO and the administrative courts, lasting several years and leaving applicants in a prolonged state of legal uncertainty.

As an example, HRL refers to a case in which an applicant, represented by HRL, lodged their first asylum application in December 2015 and was granted international protection only in February 2023. In the meantime, the MO issued six decisions, all of which were annulled during the appeal procedure.

1.2 Prioritised examination and fast-track processing

In Slovakia, there are no legal provisions or practice by the MO to prioritise the examination of selected types of cases.

1.3 Personal interview

Indicators: Regular Procedure: Personal Interview

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum applicant in most cases conducted in practice in the regular procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 ❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. In the regular procedure, is the interview conducted by the authority responsible for taking the decision? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☒ Never
4. Can the asylum seeker request the interviewer and the interpreter to be of a specific gender? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 ❖ If so, is this applied in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

During the asylum procedure, there are three types of interviews, depending on the stage of the procedure.

Initial interview at the stage of lodging the asylum application

After a person declares his or her intention to apply for asylum at the competent police department, a police officer of the BBFP carries out an interview-like procedural step during which the foreigner is asked about personal data, information concerning the journey, and the reasons for applying for asylum. The shared information is officially recorded by the police officer³⁰ and used to complete the *Declaration of Foreigner (Vyhlásenie cudzinca)* form. At this stage, the police officer records only the essential elements of the applicant's reasons for seeking asylum and the applicant is usually not required to substantiate the statements made with evidence.³¹ The children applying for asylum together with their parents, are also present in the interview room during the initial interview.

Entry Interview

After lodging the asylum application, the employee designated by the MO conducts an entry interview during which the asylum applicant must provide the requested information truthfully and completely to enable the MO to decide on the application.³² Oftentimes, the caseworker conducting the interview is not making a decision on that asylum application and the case is assigned to a different caseworker within the MO.³³ The law does not allow omitting the entry interview under any circumstances. The information provided by the applicant during the interview is recorded on an official form, the 'Asylum Applicants Questionnaire' (*Dotazník žiadateľa o udelenie azylu*). A template of the Asylum Applicants Questionnaire is an [Annex II](#) to the Asylum Act, and it contains set of pre-defined questions for the applicant that are divided into the following thematic sections:

- I. Applicant's Personal Information
- II. Personal Information of the Applicant's Family Members
- III. Applicant's Assets and Property Situation
- IV. Previous Asylum Proceedings
- V. Identity Documents
- VI. Residency Documents/Visas
- VII. Information about the Journey
- VIII. Residence in Other EU Member State
- IX. Personal Information of the Applicant's Family Members Living in the EU Member States
- X. Other Information about the Applicant
- XI. Application for Granting Asylum in the territory of the Slovak Republic

The interviewing caseworker is not limited to the questions contained in the questionnaire and may ask any other questions relevant to deciding the case.

Supplementary Interview

The MO must conduct the supplementary interview with all asylum applicants, only with the exception that the application may be decided solely based on information provided during the entry interview. The supplementary interview may be conducted at the initiative of the MO or at the applicants' request. The purpose of the supplementary interview is to clarify the grounds of application, resolve any inconsistencies or provide supplementary claims and evidence. The supplementary interview may be conducted repeatedly. However, based on the latest developments, most asylum applications are decided either solely based on the entry interview or after a single supplementary interview.³⁴ In the majority of cases, and in contrast with the entry interview, the supplementary interview is conducted by the caseworker deciding on the application.³⁵

³⁰ Article 17(1) of the Police Corps Act.

³¹ Based on HRL's experience.

³² Article 4(1) of the Asylum Act.

³³ Based on HRL's experience.

³⁴ Based on HRL's experience.

³⁵ Based on HRL's experience.

The Asylum Act provides, in Art. 6(2)(4-7) for the same rules to apply to the conduct of both the entry and the supplementary interview. For that reason, the term “interview” in the following paragraph refers to both the entry and the supplementary interview. The applicant must be informed about the date, time and location of the interview in written form and in a language he or she presumably understands. If the applicant repeatedly fails to appear at the interview without a serious reason, this may be considered a failure to cooperate with the MO and may lead to termination of the asylum procedure.³⁶

At the request of the applicant, or for reasons deserving special consideration, the MO must ensure, where possible, that the interview and its interpretation are conducted by a person of the same sex as the applicant.³⁷ Generally, the MO satisfies such requests. Additionally, applicants may also request a caseworker of the opposite sex if they feel more comfortable.³⁸

In case of an interview with a child, the interviewing caseworker must take into account the child’s age and level of intellectual and volitional maturity.³⁹ Children are not present during the parents’ interview. UAMs may be interviewed only in the presence of their guardian, who has the right to inform the minor about the importance of the interview and its potential consequences, and to prepare them for the interview.⁴⁰

The law does not regulate the possibility of interviewing through video conferencing.

The length of the interview is not time-limited and, where necessary, it may be conducted over more days. This usually occurs during entry interviews with applicants who have more complex asylum claims.⁴¹ Applicants may request a break at any point during the interview, during which they are permitted to leave the interview room.

1.3.1 Interpretation

The MO must hold an interview in a language that the applicant is able to understand.⁴² The applicant may, where possible, request an interpreter of their same sex.⁴³ Generally, the determining authority satisfies such requests. In addition to an interpreter appointed to the asylum procedure by the determining authority, whose costs are covered by the authority,⁴⁴ the applicant has a right to call in an interpreter of his or her own choice.⁴⁵ In this case, the cost of interpretation is borne by the applicant.⁴⁶

When appointing the interpreter, the determining authority chooses the certified interpreter from the List of Experts, Interpreters and Translators at the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (MoJ). Certified interpreters are obliged by law to perform interpreting personally, properly and within the prescribed time limit, efficiently and economically, and impartially.⁴⁷ In addition, the interpreter must maintain confidentiality regarding all facts and information of which he or she became aware in the course of, or in connection with, the performance of his or her duties.⁴⁸ In case:

- (1) there is no interpreter registered for a particular language, or
- (2) an interpreter listed in the register is unable to interpret, or
- (3) the interpretation would involve disproportionate difficulties or costs,

³⁶ Article 19(1)(i) of the Asylum Act.

³⁷ Article 6(4) of the Asylum Act.

³⁸ According to the HRL’s experience.

³⁹ Article 6(5) of the Asylum Act.

⁴⁰ Article 6(6) of the Asylum Act.

⁴¹ According to the HRL’s experience.

⁴² Article 6(2) of the Asylum Act.

⁴³ Article 6(4) of the Asylum Act.

⁴⁴ Article 50(c) of the Asylum Act.

⁴⁵ Article 18(2) of the Asylum Act.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Article 22 of the Act No. 382/2004 Coll.

⁴⁸ Article 13(1) of the Act No. 382/2004 Coll.

the MO may also appoint an ad-hoc non-certified interpreter.⁴⁹ In such a case, the non-certified interpreter must take an oath of impartiality, professionalism, and confidentiality.⁵⁰ The exact wording of the oath is provided in the relevant law.⁵¹

At the beginning of the interview, the caseworker verifies with the applicant and the interpreter if they understand each other. In case the communication is not effective and fluent, the interview is terminated, and the MO must provide a new interpreter.

Generally, there are no available interpreters to/from Belarusian language. As of 8 February 2026, there was no certified interpreter with Belarusian language registered in the List of Experts, Interpreters and Translators at the MoJ. The asylum applicants from Belarus belong to the top 5 nationalities seeking international protection in Slovakia. Despite the fact that the majority of them also speak Russian fluently, in some cases, their preferred language for asylum interviews is Belarusian. However, there is a lack of Belarusian interpreters in Slovakia, and the MO is unable to satisfy their requests.

Another challenge is the quality of interpretation. Based on HRL's experience, some interpreters overstep their role of providing impartial interpretation and instead offer a subjective assessment of the applicant's case or provide advice on various aspects of the application. Applicants are usually reluctant to complain about the quality of interpretation because they fear it may alienate the caseworker and subsequently have a negative effect on their application. When a legal representative is present, they first notify the caseworker of the problematic interpretation. If the issue persists, the lawyer requests the termination of the interview and the replacement of the interpreter. Despite concerns about the quality of interpretation provided by certain interpreters, the MO generally continues to engage them in other cases.

1.3.2 Recording and report

The currently applicable national legislation does not regulate the possibility of audio or video recording the interview. According to the Act No. 69/2026 Coll. on International Protection and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (IPA),⁵² which will replace the Asylum Act and implement the Pact on Asylum and Migration, all personal interviews will be audio-recorded.⁵³ The recording will be stored on a memory device attached to the asylum case file. Alternatively, the determining authority will make a note in the case file indicating the location of the recording.

During the interview, the interviewing caseworker records all the information provided by the applicant in an electronic verbatim transcript. The record is in the Slovak language. At the end of the interview, the record is printed out, and the applicant can make corrections or provide comments/additional information. If needed, the whole transcript is interpreted to the applicant. After the record is reviewed by the applicant, the applicant must sign every page. The caseworker, interpreter and any other persons present during the interview (legal representative, UNHCR representative, etc.) sign only the last page of the record. A signed record of the interview is filed, and the applicant may request a copy. The final review of the record substantially prolongs the overall length of the interview, which usually takes several hours. At this stage, applicants are often exhausted and may struggle to maintain full concentration. Many tend to focus solely on reviewing the information contained in the record, overlooking the need to also ensure that no information mentioned by them is missing from the document.⁵⁴ In addition, applicants are often reluctant to point out numerous additions or corrections for fear of alienating the caseworker.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Article 15(1) of the Act No. 382/2004 Coll.

⁵⁰ Article 15(2) of the Act No. 382/2004 Coll.

⁵¹ Article 5(7) of the Act No. 382/2004 Coll.

⁵² The IPA will come into force on 12 June 2026.

⁵³ Article 12(6) of the IPA.

⁵⁴ Observation by the HRL.

⁵⁵ Observation by the HRL.

1.4 Appeal

Indicators: Regular Procedure: Appeal

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against the first instance decision in the regular procedure?

☒ Yes	☐ No
☒ Judicial	☐ Administrative
☐ Yes	☒ Some grounds ☐ No
- ❖ If yes, is it
- ❖ If yes, is it automatically suspensive
2. Average processing time for the appeal body to make a decision: n/a

1.4.1 First appeal

The applicant has a right to appeal a decision of the determining authority to refuse asylum by submitting an administrative appeal against the MoI. In the court proceedings, the asylum applicant acts as a claimant and the MoI as the defendant. The appeal mechanism is judicial in nature. The general rules on the administrative court proceedings are set in the Administrative Judicial Code (AJC), which also specifies rules regarding the administrative appeal in asylum, detention and administrative expulsion matters.

The administrative appeal must be filed within **30 days** of the notification of the decision to refuse asylum.⁵⁶ In case of a decision on rejection of asylum application as manifestly unfounded or inadmissible or a decision on discontinuation of the asylum procedure, the administrative appeal must be filed within **20 days** of the notification of such a decision. The reviewing body is either the **Administrative Court in Bratislava** or the **Administrative Court in Košice**.⁵⁷ The administrative court examines the administrative appeal in asylum matters informally and is not bound by the claim points raised in the appeal when making its decision.⁵⁸ The decisive state of affairs for the administrative court is that at the time of the announcement or at the time of the issuance of their decision.⁵⁹ The administrative court must assess both the facts of the case and the points of law. Generally, administrative appeals against the decision to refuse asylum, the decision to reject an asylum application as manifestly unfounded and inadmissible have **an automatic suspensive effect**.⁶⁰ Administrative appeal against the decision on discontinuation of the asylum procedure does not have a suspensive effect.⁶¹ The claimant may request the granting of the suspensive effect of the administrative appeal. Such a request must be submitted together with the administrative appeal, and the administrative court must decide on it within 15 days of its submission.⁶²

Territorial Jurisdiction

The Administrative Court in Bratislava has territorial jurisdiction to review administrative appeals in asylum matters submitted by a claimant who (1) has a registered address of permanent residence, (2) engages in business activity, or (3) habitually resides in one of the following regions: (a) Bratislava Region, (b) Nitra Region, (c) Trenčín Region, and (d) Trnava Region. On the other hand, the Administrative Court in Košice has territorial jurisdiction to review administrative appeals in asylum matters submitted by a claimant who (1) has a registered address of permanent residence, (2) engages in business activity, or (3) habitually resides in (a) Banská Bystrica Region, (b) Košice Region, (c) Prešov Region, and (d) Žilina Region.⁶³

Hearing

The presiding judge orders a hearing if (1) at least one of the parties to the proceedings so requests, (2) evidence is to be taken, (3) it is required by the public interest, (4) it is necessary for the examination of the case, or (5) the Act so provides. In other cases, the administrative court decides without a hearing.

⁵⁶ Article 21(1) of the AJC.

⁵⁷ Article 17 of the AJC.

⁵⁸ Article 206 of the AJC.

⁵⁹ Article 206(4) of the AJC.

⁶⁰ Article 213(1) of the AJC.

⁶¹ Article 19(4) of the Asylum Act.

⁶² Article 213(2) of the AJC.

⁶³ Article 13(3) and Article 17 of the AJC.

The asylum applicant has a right to request a hearing; however, it must be requested in the administrative appeal. The court will not take into account the later request for the scheduling of a hearing.⁶⁴

In general, hearings in administrative court proceedings are public.⁶⁵ The public may be excluded from the entire hearing or part of it only if a public hearing would jeopardise (1) the protection of classified information, (2) sensitive information and facts protected under special regulation, or (3) an important interest of a party to the proceedings or of a witness.⁶⁶ The judgments must, in all cases, be pronounced publicly.⁶⁷ The courts must publish their decisions in anonymised form at the [MoJ](#) within 15 working days after the decision has become final.⁶⁸

The administrative court must decide on the administrative appeal in asylum matters within **90 days** from its submission.⁶⁹ If the administrative court finds the appeal to be well-founded, it issues a judgment on annulment of the decision of the MO. The MO must decide the application again. The same 6-month time limit for issuing a decision with a possible extension of a maximum of 12 months applies. The MO is bound by the legal opinion of the administrative court expressed in the annulment judgment.⁷⁰ If the determining authority does not act in accordance with the court's legal opinion, it may impose a fine on the determining authority.⁷¹

1.4.2 Onward appeal

Judgments of the administrative courts may be reviewed by the **Supreme Administrative Court of the Slovak Republic**, acting as a court of cassation. A cassation complaint may be filed by the party to the proceedings if the administrative court ruled against them.⁷² This means that an asylum applicant may file a cassation complaint against a judgment of the administrative court that dismissed his or her administrative complaint. The MoI may also submit a cassation complaint if it disagrees with an annulment judgment of the administrative court. Filing of a cassation complaint by the MoI is rather exceptional.⁷³

A cassation complaint must be filed within **one month** of the notification of the administrative court's decision.⁷⁴ Generally, a cassation complaint does not have an automatic suspensive effect, with the exception of a cassation complaint in matters of detention and administrative expulsion.⁷⁵ A suspensive effect may be granted upon the claimant's request.⁷⁶ The cassation court examines only points of law.⁷⁷ The decisive state of affairs for the cassation court is that at the time of the issuance of the contested decision of the administrative court.⁷⁸ The cassation court must render its decision in asylum matters within **60 days**.⁷⁹

In general, the cassation court decides without a hearing. Hearing is ordered only if the court deems it necessary.⁸⁰ If the cassation court finds the cassation appeal well-founded, it may either annul the decision of the administrative court and return the case to the court for further judicial proceedings or annul the decision of the determining authority and return the case to that authority for further administrative proceedings.⁸¹

⁶⁴ Article 182(1)(g) of the AJC.

⁶⁵ Article 109(1) of the AJC.

⁶⁶ Article 110(1) of the AJC.

⁶⁷ Article 5(4) of the AJC.

⁶⁸ Article 82a of the Act No. 757/2004 Coll.

⁶⁹ Article 216(1) of the AJC.

⁷⁰ Article 191(6) of the AJC.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Article 442(1) of the AJC.

⁷³ Based on HRL's experience.

⁷⁴ Article 443(1) of the AJC.

⁷⁵ Article 446 of the AJC.

⁷⁶ Article 447 of the AJC.

⁷⁷ Article 440 of the AJC.

⁷⁸ Article 454 of the AJC.

⁷⁹ Article 458 of the AJC.

⁸⁰ Article 455 of the AJC.

⁸¹ Article 463 of the AJC.

The decisions of the Supreme Administrative Court of the Slovak Republic are published on the [website of the MOJ](#) and on [the court's website](#).⁸²

The quality of administrative court decisions in asylum cases largely depends on the judge to whom the case is assigned.

Constitutional complaint

An asylum applicant may also file a constitutional complaint if he or she claims that his or her fundamental rights and freedoms have been violated by a final decision, measure, or other intervention. A constitutional complaint must be filed with the **Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic** within **two months** from the date on which the decision became final, the measure was notified, or the person was informed of another intervention. The law does not establish a time limit within which the Constitutional Court must render its decision.

The decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic are published on the [court's website](#).

1.5 Legal assistance

Indicators: Regular Procedure: Legal Assistance

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
❖ Does free legal assistance cover:
☒ Representation in interview
☒ Legal advice
2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against a negative decision in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
❖ Does free legal assistance cover:
☒ Representation in courts
☒ Legal advice

Legal assistance at first instance

According to Article 17a(1) of the Asylum Act, an asylum applicant may be legally represented in the regular procedure by:

- (1) an attorney
- (2) any natural person with the full capacity for legal acts
- (3) The Centre of Legal Aid
- (4) NGO providing legal aid to foreigners. There is no accreditation procedure. In practice, the provision of legal aid to foreigners must be provided in the organisation's statutes. An employee or a member of the NGO acting on behalf of the organisation must hold a master's degree in law; however, no specific training is required.

The applicant may choose to have only one legal representative in the asylum procedure.

Power of attorney must be granted in writing. The law does not require notarisation of the signatures.

A legal representative may be present with the applicant during lodging the asylum application and all interviews, may submit evidence on behalf of the applicant and country of origin information, have access to the applicant's case file, and may provide a statement before issuing a decision.

Free legal assistance and/or legal representation for asylum seekers in the first instance procedure is not guaranteed by the national legislation, with the exception of UAMs. The new IPA, implementing the Pact on Asylum and Migration, does not envisage an extension of the right to free legal representation for all asylum applicants at first instance. The right to free legal counselling pursuant to Article 16(2) of

Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 (APR) (*bezplatné právne poradenstvo*) is guaranteed under Article 11 of the IPA. The IPA provides that free legal counselling may also be delivered in group settings and through audio-visual technical means.

On 1 July 2025, the amendment to the Act No. 327/2005 Coll. on Granting of Legal Aid to Persons in Material Hardship (Act on Legal Aid) entered into force, which provides for legal aid to UAMs during the whole duration of asylum proceedings, including the first instance and appeal stage.⁸³ Free legal aid is provided to UAMs by the lawyers of the Centre for Legal Aid, which is a state budgetary organisation established by the MoJ and financed through the state budget. Legal aid by the Centre for Legal Aid is granted to UAMs upon their request or a request submitted in their name by their guardian appointed by the court, and only in case they are not legally represented in the asylum procedure by another representative. Neither the merits test nor the means test is applied.

Free legal assistance at first instance is provided to asylum seekers by NGOs, mainly the HRL and SHC, which are funded through projects under UNHCR, EU and other sources.

Since 2005, HRL has been providing legal aid and legal representation to asylum seekers in person (at the HRL's premises in Bratislava and Košice and directly in the asylum facilities) and online (via phone, email, messengers and video conferencing platforms). HRL has been an implementing partner of UNHCR since 2022, which has been the main source of funding for legal assistance to asylum seekers. Due to UNHCR's budget cuts, the HRL remained the sole implementing partner in 2026. Availability of the HRL's legal assistance heavily depends on available funds. Due to significant budget cuts in 2025 connected to geopolitical developments (Trump's administration) and changes in the national political landscape (new government in October 2023 and its hostility towards NGOs), HRL was unable to provide legal assistance to all asylum seekers who requested it. In such cases, the asylum seekers were referred to SHC, Centre for Legal Aid or paid legal aid provided by attorneys. In 2025, legal aid was provided by two HRL asylum lawyers to a total of 71 asylum seekers. Legal representation was provided to 29 asylum seekers in the first instance and the appeal procedure before the administrative courts. Out of these cases, 11 applicants were granted asylum. In addition, HRL was successful in three cases before the administrative courts, where negative first-instance decisions were overturned, thereby securing renewed protection prospects for the applicants.

The SHC is the only NGO that is present in the asylum facilities of the MO (the Humenné Reception Centre and accommodation centres in Rohovce and Opatovská Nová Ves).

In addition, the asylum applicant may choose paid legal assistance from an attorney. On the website of the Slovak Bar Association, there is a publicly available [list of all attorneys](#) which can be filtered by the specialisation, including the specialisation asylum/refugee/migration law. In practice, only a few asylum seekers can afford paid legal aid. Pro bono legal aid in asylum cases is also not common, mainly due to the limited experience of attorneys with refugee law and additional costs connected to interpretation and travelling to asylum facilities that are not located in the main regional cities.

Legal assistance on appeal

In the in asylum matters at the administrative courts (appeal procedure), asylum applicants may be represented by:

- (1) an attorney,
- (2) the Centre for Legal Aid
- (3) NGOs providing legal aid to foreigners.⁸⁴

There is, however, no mandatory legal representation in asylum matters at administrative courts, and asylum applicants may submit the administrative appeal by themselves.⁸⁵ The same is applicable for onward appeal at the cassation court.

⁸³ Article 24a(3) of the Act on Legal Aid.

⁸⁴ Article 50(2) of the AJC.

⁸⁵ Article 49(2)(b) of the AJC.

There is no procedure for the accreditation of NGOs providing legal aid to foreigners. In practice, the provision of legal aid to foreigners must be provided in the organisation's statutes. An employee or a member of the NGO acting on behalf of the organisation must hold a master's degree in law; however, no specific training is required.⁸⁶

Despite the possibility for asylum applicants to file an appeal without legal representation, it is not recommended due to the complexity of judicial proceedings and relatively low chances for succeeding. HRL is aware of cases in which the applicants prepared and filed the appeal by using generative AI.

Free legal assistance to asylum applicants in the appeal procedure is guaranteed by the Act on Legal Aid and is provided by the lawyers of the Centre for Legal Aid. Free legal assistance is granted if the asylum applicant meets the following conditions:

- (1) the asylum applicant requested a provision of legal aid in an asylum matter
- (2) the determining authority issued a decision (a) to refuse asylum or subsidiary protection, (b) to reject the application as inadmissible, (c) to reject the application as manifestly unfounded or (d) to transfer the applicant to another State,
- (3) the asylum applicant is in a state of material hardship (means test)
- (4) the case is not obviously unsuccessful (merits test).⁸⁷

The means test applies only to asylum applicants who had a valid residence permit in Slovakia immediately prior to the issuance of the decision of the determining authority.⁸⁸

During the merits test, the Centre for Legal Aid primarily assesses whether the time limit for appealing has lapsed, whether the asylum application is based solely on economic grounds, and, in the case of a subsequent application, whether there has been any substantial change in the facts.⁸⁹

Additionally, legal assistance by the Centre for Legal Aid may also be granted to recognised beneficiaries of international protection in an appeal procedure against the decision:

- (1) to withdraw asylum,
- (2) not to prolong the subsidiary protection,
- (3) to withdraw subsidiary protection, and
- (4) to reject the application for temporary protection, and
- (5) to withdraw temporary protection.

In case the administrative courts annul the decision of the MO in the appeal procedure, the provision of legal assistance by the Centre for Legal Aid continues also in the subsequent administrative (first instance) procedure at the MO.⁹⁰

Provisions of legal assistance in asylum matters is only one of many agendas that is under the competence of the Centre for Legal Aid. From a long-term perspective, there is only a very limited number of lawyers that specialises on the asylum law. Based on HRL's experience, the quality of legal aid provided by the Centre for Legal Aid differs significantly among individual offices across Slovakia.

The NGOs, mainly HRL and SHC, providing legal assistance to asylum seekers in the appeal procedure, face similar challenges as described in the above section on legal assistance in the first instance. In addition, the NGOs providing legal aid to foreigners cannot claim the litigation costs in court.

⁸⁶ Article 50(2) AJC.

⁸⁷ Article 24a(1) of the Act on Legal Aid.

⁸⁸ Article 24b(4) of the Act on Legal Aid.

⁸⁹ Article 24a(2) of the Act on Legal Aid.

⁹⁰ Article 24b(6) of the Act on Legal Aid.

2. Dublin

2.1 General

In 2025, Slovakia submitted 49 outgoing Dublin requests, out of which 27 were accepted, and 23 transfers were implemented, mainly to Germany (10), Bulgaria (2), Czechia (2), Austria (2) and Sweden (2). In the same year, Slovakia received 334 incoming Dublin requests, out of which 293 requests were accepted and 46 transfers were implemented, mainly from Germany (10), Norway (10), Austria (8), Sweden (7) and Finland (4).

Dublin statistics: 1 January – 31 December of 2025

Outgoing procedure				Incoming procedure			
	Requests	Accepted	Transfers		Requests	Accepted	Transfers
Total	49	27	23	Total	334	293	46
Germany	20	13	10	Germany	121	108	10
Czechia	4	1	2	France	82	67	0
France	4	0	0	Belgium	33	30	0
Poland	4	3	1	Italy	15	11	0
Italy	3	2	0	Czechia	14	13	2

Source: Eurostat, 2026.

Transfers refers to the number of transfers actually implemented, not to the number of transfer decisions.

Outgoing Dublin requests by criterion: 2025		
Dublin III Regulation criterion	Requests sent	Requests accepted
“Take charge”: Articles 8 to 17		
Article 8 (minors)	0	0
Article 9 (family members granted protection)	0	0
Article 10 (family members pending determination)	0	0
Article 11 (family procedure)	0	0
Article 12 (visas and residence permits)	9	4
Article 13 (entry and/or remain)	0	0
Article 14 (visa free entry)	0	0
“Take charge”: Article 16	0	0
“Take charge” humanitarian clause: Article 17(2)	0	0
“Take back”: Articles 18 and 20(5)		
Article 18 (1) (b)	35	7
Article 18 (1) (c)	0	1
Article 18 (1) (d)	5	14
Article 20(5)	0	1

Source: Eurostat, 2026.

Incoming Dublin requests by criterion: 2025		
Dublin III Regulation criterion	Requests received	Requests accepted
“Take charge”: Articles 8 to 17		
Article 8 (minors)	0	0
Article 9 (family members granted protection)	0	0
Article 10 (family members pending determination)	0	0
Article 11 (family procedure)	6	7
Article 12 (visas and residence permits)	271	252
Article 13 (entry and/or remain)	6	3
Article 14 (visa free entry)	0	0
“Take charge”: Article 16	0	0
“Take charge” humanitarian clause: Article 17(2)	0	0
“Take back”: Articles 18 and 20(5)		
Article 18 (1) (b)	47	22
Article 18 (1) (c)	1	2
Article 18 (1) (d)	2	7
Article 20(5)	1	0

Source: Eurostat, 2025.

2.1.1 Application of the Dublin criteria

In the years 2021–2025, there were a total of 13 outgoing Dublin requests and 9 incoming Dublin requests based on the family unity criteria (Articles 8–11 of the Dublin III Regulation). The HRL is not aware of any unified practice of the MO requiring asylum applicants to meet specific evidential requirements to prove family links. Based on HRL’s experience, each case is examined on an individual basis.

In 2025, the most frequently used criterion for outgoing requests was in cases when an applicant lodged an asylum application or presented himself or herself without a residence document in a Member State while his or her asylum application was under examination in another Member State (Article 18(1)(b) of the Dublin III Regulation). Regarding the incoming requests, the most frequently used basis was in cases when the asylum applicants had visas or residence permits issued by Slovakia (Article 12 of the Dublin III Regulation).

In 2025, a total of 19 outgoing requests were rejected by other Member States. The reasons invoked for rejecting requests are not publicly available.

2.1.2 The discretionary clauses

The “humanitarian” clause (Article 17(2) of the Dublin III Regulation) and the “sovereignty” clause (Article 17(1) of the Dublin III Regulation) are applied by the MO exceptionally. Based on Eurostat data, the sovereignty clause was applied only once in the past ten years, in 2017. During the same period, there was only one reported case of an accepted outgoing Dublin request from Slovakia based on the humanitarian clause and one reported case of an accepted incoming Dublin request to Slovakia based on the humanitarian clause.

2.2 Procedure

Indicators: Dublin: Procedure

1. Is the Dublin procedure applied by the authority responsible for examining asylum applications?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. On average, how long does a transfer take after the responsible Member State has accepted responsibility?
n/a

The Dublin procedure is regulated by the Asylum Act and Regulation of the MoI No. 34/2014. The Asylum Act differentiates between two proceedings when the Dublin II Regulation is applied:

- (1) “TAKE CHARGE” cases: asylum seekers who lodged an asylum application in Slovakia. In such cases, their application is examined under the **regular procedure** and may be rejected as inadmissible on the ground that another State is responsible for examining the asylum application (also referred to in this report as the “Dublin Procedure”).⁹¹
- (2) “TAKE BACK” cases⁹²: Third-country nationals staying in Slovakia irregularly, who are not asylum applicants in Slovakia and applied for asylum in another Member State, are processed under the **procedure for transfer to another state** (*konanie o odovzdaní do iného štátu*) regulated by the Articles 46a – 46c of the Asylum Act.

The Dublin procedure is not applied in all asylum cases. According to Article 8(1)(a)(1.-3.) of the Regulation of MoI No. 34/2014, Dublin Centre initiates the Dublin procedure if:

- there is a Eurodac hit,
- the Procedural Department refers the application to the Dublin Centre based on evidence listed in Annex II to the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 118/2014,
- on the basis of a request transmitted electronically by a department or a police detention facility, in cases concerning a foreign national staying irregularly in the territory of the Slovak Republic.

The procedure for transfer to another state is carried out by also by the Dublin Centre and is commenced at the initiative of the MoI.

All asylum seekers are systematically fingerprinted and checked in Eurodac. The obligation to undergo the taking of fingerprints for all applicants older than 14 years of age is directly enshrined in the Asylum Act.⁹³ In case an asylum seeker refused to be fingerprinted and does not qualify for asylum based on 1951 Convention (Article 8(a)), constitutional asylum (Article 8(b)), asylum for family reunification (Article 10), subsidiary protection based on serious harm (Article 13a) or subsidiary protection for family reunification (Article 13b) his or her application is rejected as manifestly unfounded.⁹⁴ However, in practice, HRL is not aware of cases when asylum seekers refused to be fingerprinted.

Within the meaning of Article 11(4) of the Asylum Act, the determining authority shall promptly inform the asylum applicant that it is determining whether another State is responsible for examining the asylum application. Such notification contains neither information on the Member State to which a request will be sent nor the evidence on which the request will be based. This information is provided to applicants or their legal representatives upon request to the Dublin Centre.

2.2.1 Individualised guarantees

Before issuing a decision rejecting an application as inadmissible on the ground that another State is responsible for examining the asylum application, the Dublin Unit assesses information obtained from

⁹¹ Article 11(1)(c) of the Asylum Act.

⁹² If the third-country national lodges asylum application in Slovakia and also applied for asylum in another state before coming to Slovakia, their application is examined under the regular procedure similarly as mentioned above in TAKE CHARGE cases.

⁹³ Article 23(1) of the Asylum Act.

⁹⁴ Article 12(2)(b) of the Asylum Act.

publicly available sources concerning the asylum procedure and reception conditions in the Member State to which the applicant is to be transferred, as well as the demonstrable existence of a risk of inhuman or degrading treatment in that country.

The Dublin Unit also takes into account whether the Member State concerned is a signatory to the 1951 Convention and complies with all relevant European and international legal instruments governing the reception of applicants for international protection. Furthermore, it considers whether any decisions or recommendations have been issued at the EU level, or by the ECtHR or the CJEU, identifying systemic deficiencies in the asylum procedure or reception conditions in the Member State concerned. In assessing these matters, the Dublin Unit relies on publicly available sources, including AIDA reports. These sources are usually not included in the administrative file, and the assessment of reception conditions and access to the asylum procedure is carried out only in the reasoning of the decision rejecting the application as inadmissible.

While each case is assessed individually within the Dublin procedure, practice indicates that the Dublin Unit generally evaluates the state of the asylum system and reception conditions in a general manner, without seeking individualised guarantees for each asylum applicant.⁹⁵

2.2.2 Transfers

Asylum seekers subject to the Dublin procedure or third-country nationals subject to procedure on transfer to another state may be detained where there is a considerable risk of absconding.⁹⁶ However, there is no practice of automatically detaining asylum seekers following notification of a decision rejecting their application as inadmissible on the ground that another State is responsible for examining their asylum application.

Dublin transfers are carried out by a police officer for the BBFP PFP. The police authority is responsible, in particular, for agreeing with the competent authority of the Partner state on the place, time, and manner of the transfer of the asylum seeker.⁹⁷ Where necessary, the asylum seeker shall be issued a laissez-passer, the template of which is set out in Annex IV to the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 118/2014.⁹⁸

Based on 2026 Eurostat data, of the 46 incoming Dublin transfers implemented in 2025, 41 were carried out within 1–6 months, 3 within 7–12 months, and 2 within 13–18 months from the date on which the Member State accepted responsibility. Regarding outgoing Dublin transfers, all 23 transfers implemented in 2025 took place within 1–6 months of the Member State accepting responsibility. More detailed data on the average duration of the Dublin procedure is not publicly available. In response to an official information request, the MO referred to the Eurostat data.

2.3 Personal interview

Indicators: Dublin: Personal Interview

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the Dublin procedure?
☒ Yes ☐ No
❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☒ Never

The interview of an asylum seeker in Dublin Procedure is mandatory and is conducted by the Dublin Centre of the MO in the same way as described under [Regular Procedure: Personal Interview](#). The

⁹⁵ Based on HRL's experience.

⁹⁶ Article 88a(1)(e) and Article 88(1)(c) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

⁹⁷ Article 8(2)(a) of the Regulation of the MoI No. 34/2014.

⁹⁸ Article 8(2)(b) of the Regulation of the MoI No. 34/2014.

information provided by the applicant during the interview is recorded on an official form, the Asylum Applicants Questionnaire (*Dotazník žiadateľa o udelenie azylu*), the same used under Regular Procedure. The only difference is that in the Dublin Procedure, asylum seekers are not asked question No. 37. – 42. of the Questionnaire that concerns ongoing or past criminal proceedings against the applicant, membership in a political party, movement or other organisation, and grounds for applying for asylum or subsidiary protection in Slovakia.

2.4 Appeal

Indicators: Dublin: Appeal

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against the decision in the Dublin procedure?

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| ❖ If yes, is it | ☒ Yes | ☐ No |
| ❖ If yes, is it suspensive | ☒ Judicial | ☐ Administrative |
| | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |

Given that the outcome of the Dublin procedure may be the issuance of a decision rejecting the asylum application as inadmissible on the ground that another State is responsible pursuant to Article 11(1)(c) of the Asylum Act, the appeal procedure in such cases is the same as that described in the section [Admissibility Procedure: Appeal](#), including time limits for issuing a decision, oral hearings, and further appeals.

The lodging of an administrative appeal against a decision rejecting an asylum application as inadmissible **does not have an automatic suspensive effect**. The applicant may request that suspensive effect be granted to the administrative appeal. Such a request must be submitted together with the administrative appeal, and the administrative court must decide on the request within 15 days of its submission.

The same rules also apply to the appeal procedure against a decision issued under the procedure for transfer to another State

As grounds for the administrative appeal, the claimant may argue that the contested decision was based on an incorrect legal assessment of the case⁹⁹ and, consequently, challenge the application of the relevant Dublin criteria.

2.5 Legal assistance

Indicators: Dublin: Legal Assistance

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| ❖ Does free legal assistance cover: | ☒ Yes | ☐ With difficulty | ☐ No |
| | ☒ Representation in interview | | |
| | ☒ Legal advice | | |

2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against a Dublin decision in practice?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|
| ❖ Does free legal assistance cover | ☒ Yes | ☐ With difficulty | ☐ No |
| | ☒ Representation in courts | | |
| | ☒ Legal advice | | |

Free legal assistance for asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected as inadmissible in Dublin Procedure and free legal assistance for third-country nationals process under the procedure for transfer to another state is provided under the same conditions and in the same context as described in [Regular Procedure: Legal assistance](#). The free legal assistance is guaranteed only in an appeal procedure by the

⁹⁹ Article 191(1)(c) of the AJC.

Centre for Legal Aid.¹⁰⁰ Legal assistance in the first instance and appeal procedure is predominantly provided by NGOs (mainly HRL and SHC), which are funded through projects.

2.6 Suspension of transfers

Indicators: Dublin: Suspension of Transfers

1. Are Dublin transfers systematically suspended as a matter of policy or jurisprudence to one or more countries?
☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If yes, to which country or countries? n/a

In Slovakia, there is no officially adopted policy suspending all Dublin transfers to a specific country.

The key judgment of the national jurisprudence on the suspension of Dublin transfers is the 2011 judgment of the Slovak Constitutional Court concerning the transfer of an Afghan asylum applicant to Greece under the Dublin II Regulation. The applicant argued that his transfer to Greece would expose him to deficiencies in the Greek asylum system, inadequate reception conditions, and a risk of onward refoulement to Afghanistan, contrary to Article 3 ECHR. The Supreme Court had upheld the Migration Office's decision rejecting the asylum application as inadmissible and declined to review the appropriateness of not applying the sovereignty clause under Article 3(2) of the Dublin Regulation, treating it as a matter of administrative discretion.

In its judgment of 31 May 2011 (II. ÚS 110/2011-39), the Constitutional Court annulled the Supreme Court's decision and referred the case back for reconsideration. Relying extensively on the ECtHR judgment in *M.S.S. v Belgium and Greece*, the Constitutional Court held that the absolute prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment under Article 3 ECHR and Article 16(2) of the Slovak Constitution imposed a duty on national courts to conduct a substantive assessment of the risks associated with a Dublin transfer. The Court criticised the Supreme Court for relying excessively on formal legality and administrative discretion, while failing to adequately assess publicly available information on systemic deficiencies in Greece's asylum system and reception conditions. It found that, despite the discretionary nature of the sovereignty clause, courts must examine whether non-application of that clause could result in a violation of fundamental rights. The Constitutional Court concluded that the transfer would expose the applicant to a real risk of inhuman or degrading treatment and that the Supreme Court had therefore violated his fundamental rights under Article 3 ECHR and the Slovak Constitution.

Greece: In the past 10 years (2016-2025), Slovakia has not carried out any Dublin transfer to Greece. However, a total of 126 outgoing Dublin requests to Greece were submitted by Slovakia in the same period (0 requests in 2025).

Hungary: Following the decision of Hungary to suspend all Dublin transfers in 2016 NGOs HRL and Forum for Human Rights (FORUM) have monitored that since that time, asylum seekers coming from Hungary (who applied for asylum in Hungary and are trying to come to other member states of EU) have been routinely detained, not to enforce Dublin transfer but based on the decision on their administrative expulsion to home countries, including Afghanistan, Iran or Pakistan. The Syrians are being issued decisions on administrative expulsion to "any other country, which will agree to take them".¹⁰¹

Bulgaria: Slovakia has not suspended transfers to Bulgaria, even after UNHCR's call for a temporary halt of such transfers from January 2014¹⁰² because of the risk of inhuman and degrading treatment due to systemic deficiencies in reception conditions and asylum procedures in Bulgaria. Based on the Eurostat data and the BBFP PFP publicly available statistics Slovakia has been carrying out Dublin transfers to

¹⁰⁰ Article 24a(1)(c)(6-7) of the Act on Legal Aid.

¹⁰¹ HRL and FORUM, *NGO Information to the United Nations Human Rights Committee on Islamophobia, Immigration Detention Including Single Women, Vulnerable Persons and Families with Minor Children and the Situation of Unaccompanied Minors in Slovakia*, September 2016, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹⁰² UNHCR, *UNHCR Observations on the Current Situation of Asylum in Bulgaria*, 2 January 2014, available [here](#).

Bulgaria regularly: 2014 – 16 transfers, 2015 – 4 transfers, 2016 – 31 transfers, 2017 – 8 transfers, 2018 – 5 transfers, 2019 – 5 transfers, 2020 – 0 transfers, 2021 – 5 transfers, 2022 – 8 transfers, 2023 – 42 transfers and 2025 – 2 transfers.

In 2018, there have been several judgments of administrative courts that annulled Dublin decisions on transfers to Bulgaria on the ground that Dublin Centre failed to sufficiently assess the situation of asylum applicants and their reception conditions in Bulgaria¹⁰³, however according to the latest national jurisprudence courts have been dismissing the appeals against such Dublin decisions arguing inter alia: *“Bulgaria is a full member of the European Union, has ratified international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, and is generally regarded by other European Union Member States as a safe country. The Court is not aware of any current binding decision or recommendation issued at the level of the European Union, whether by the European Court of Human Rights or the Court of Justice of the European Union, addressed to Member States of the European Union or the Council of Europe, which would unequivocally establish the existence of systemic deficiencies in the procedures concerning international protection and the reception of applicants for international protection in Bulgaria involving a risk of inhuman or degrading treatment. Nor is the Court aware of any currently issued position of a similar nature requiring Member States of the European Union to refrain from transferring applicants for international protection to Bulgaria, including by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as the principal body responsible for supervising compliance with the Geneva Convention and the New York Protocol.”*¹⁰⁴

2.7 The situation of Dublin returnees

Asylum applicants returning to Slovakia under the Dublin III Regulation usually arrive at the international airport in Košice, as it is the closest international airport to the Humenné Reception Centre, where all asylum applicants are accommodated during the initial phase of the asylum procedure. Their applications are further examined in the regular procedure.

Third-country nationals returned to Slovakia under the Dublin III Regulation (who, however, are not asylum applicants in Slovakia at the time of return) on the ground that Slovakia is responsible for examining their asylum applications are considered asylum applicants, and asylum proceedings shall commence upon their entry into the territory of Slovakia. However, this rule does not apply to third-country nationals whose asylum applications in Slovakia were previously rejected as inadmissible or manifestly unfounded, or who were previously denied asylum.¹⁰⁵ In such cases, they may lodge a new asylum application, which is considered a subsequent application.

3. Admissibility procedure

3.1 General (scope, criteria, time limits)

The national legislation does not regulate a separate admissibility procedure. According to the Art. 11(1)(a-f) of the Asylum Act, the determining authority, within the regular procedure, rejects the asylum application as inadmissible if:

- (a) The applicant has been granted asylum by a non-EU country and can effectively enjoy the protection. This does not apply if the applicant is unable to return to that country effectively (**First Country of Asylum**).
- (b) The applicant comes from a **safe third country**. This does not apply if that country cannot be considered safe in the applicant's case, if the applicant cannot be effectively returned there, or if

¹⁰³ See e.g. Regional Court Košice, 5Saz/50/2018, 16 May 2018 or Regional Court Košice, 4Saz/1/2018, 13 April 2018.

¹⁰⁴ Administrative Court in Bratislava, 13Saz/8/2023, 16 November 2023, para 36. A similar argumentation was used in: Administrative Court in Bratislava, 7SaZ/6/2023, 21 July 2023, Administrative Court in Bratislava, 8SaZ/16/2022, 8 March 2023, or Administrative Court in Bratislava, 8SaZ/15/2022, 8 March 2023.

¹⁰⁵ See Article 5(6) of the Asylum Act.

the applicant is an unaccompanied minor and returning him or her is not in his or her best interests.

- (c) **Another state is responsible for examining** the asylum application (Dublin Procedure).
- (d) An **EU Member State has granted the applicant asylum or subsidiary protection on grounds of serious harm**. This does not apply if Slovakia agreed to relocate the applicant to its territory.
- (e) The applicant is a **citizen of an EU Member State**.
- (f) it is a **subsequent asylum application**, and a final decision has already been issued in a previous asylum procedure concluding that the application is manifestly unfounded, asylum is not granted, asylum is withdrawn, subsidiary protection is not extended, or subsidiary protection is annulled, and there has been no substantial change in the factual situation since the final decision.

The authority that issues the decision to reject the asylum application as inadmissible is the same as in the regular procedure.

The decision to reject the application as inadmissible must be issued within the same time limits that apply for the regular asylum procedure.

In 2025, the MO rejected a total of 24 asylum applications as inadmissible.¹⁰⁶

Decisions on rejecting the asylum application as inadmissible (Article 11 of the Asylum Act)	
Inadmissibility Ground	A total No. of decisions issued in 2025
First Country of Asylum (Article 11(1)(a))	0
Safe Third Country (Article 11(1)(b))	0
Another State Responsible (Article 11(1)(c))	10
Beneficiary of international protection in another EU Member State (Article 11(1)(d))	2
Citizen of an EU Member State (Article 11(1)(e))	6
Subsequent Asylum Application (Article 11(1)(f))	6

3.2 Personal interview

Indicators: Admissibility Procedure: Personal Interview

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the admissibility procedure?
 - ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ If so, are questions limited to nationality, identity, travel route? ☐ Yes ☒ No
 - ❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☒ Never

The interview of an asylum seeker is mandatory, also before issuing the decision to reject the application as inadmissible and is conducted by the MO in the same way as described under [Regular Procedure: Personal Interview](#).

¹⁰⁶ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

3.3 Appeal

Indicators: Admissibility Procedure: Appeal

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against an inadmissibility decision?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ❖ If yes, is it | ☒ Yes | ☐ No |
| ❖ If yes, is it automatically suspensive | ☒ Judicial | ☐ Administrative |
| | ☐ Yes | ☒ Some grounds ☐ No |

The decision to reject the asylum application as inadmissible may be appealed by submitting an administrative appeal to the administrative courts. The administrative appeal must be filed within **20 days** of the notification of such a decision.¹⁰⁷ Filing the administrative appeal against the decision to reject the asylum application as inadmissible **does not have an automatic suspensive effect**, with the exception that the decision to reject the application as inadmissible was issued on the grounds that the applicant comes from a **safe third country** (Article 11(1)(b) of the Asylum Act). The claimant may request the granting of the suspensive effect of the administrative appeal. Such a request must be submitted together with the administrative appeal, and the administrative court must decide on it within 15 days of its submission.¹⁰⁸ Otherwise, the appeal system, including the time limits for issuing the decision, oral hearing and onward appeal, is the same as in the [Regular Procedure: Appeal](#).

3.4 Legal assistance

Indicators: Admissibility Procedure: Legal Assistance

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance during admissibility procedures in practice?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| ❖ Does free legal assistance cover: | ☒ Yes | ☐ With difficulty | ☐ No |
| | ☒ Representation in interview | | |
| | ☒ Legal advice | | |

2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against an inadmissibility decision in practice?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|
| ❖ Does free legal assistance cover | ☒ Yes | ☐ With difficulty | ☐ No |
| | ☒ Representation in courts | | |
| | ☒ Legal advice | | |

Free legal assistance for asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected as inadmissible is provided under the same conditions and in the same context as described in [Regular Procedure: Legal assistance](#). The free legal assistance is guaranteed only in an appeal procedure by the Centre for Legal Aid. Legal assistance in the first instance and appeal procedure is predominantly provided by NGOs (mainly HRL and SHC), which are funded through projects.

4. Border procedure (border and transit zones)

As of 31 December 2025, there is no border procedure in Slovakia. The new IPA envisages the introduction of a new border procedure in Articles 9 – 10 of the Act. Based on the new legislation that comes into force on 12 June 2026, if the BBFP PFP determines that an application for international protection is to be examined in the border asylum procedure, it shall issue a decision restricting the freedom of movement of the applicant for international protection. Such a decision may be challenged before the administrative courts by way of an administrative appeal; however, the submission of such an action does not have automatic suspensive effect.

During the border asylum procedure, applicants will be accommodated in a specialised border asylum facility where they will be required to reside. The conditions for leaving the facility will be laid down in the

¹⁰⁷ Article 211(2) of the AJC.

¹⁰⁸ Article 213(2) of the AJC.

internal rules of the facility. Where an applicant is required to appear before a public authority or a court, they must notify the facility at least two days in advance.

5. Accelerated procedure

5.1 General (scope, grounds for accelerated procedures, time limits)

The Asylum Act does not provide for a separate accelerated procedure; however, under circumstances defined by law, the MO may, in regular procedure, reject the asylum application as manifestly unfounded. The asylum application may be rejected as manifestly unfounded **only within 60 days** from the beginning of the asylum procedure.¹⁰⁹ Upon the expiry of this time period, the MO must continue the regular procedure. The asylum application of an UAM cannot, under any exception, be rejected as manifestly unfounded.¹¹⁰

According to Article 12(1) of the Asylum Act, the MO, within the regular procedure, rejects the asylum application as manifestly unfounded if the applicant:

- (1) substantiates his or her application with **reasons that are not relevant for granting asylum, subsidiary protection or for granting national protection status** (asylum for the purpose of family reunification or subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification),
- (2) comes from a **safe country of origin**. This does not apply if that country cannot be considered safe in the applicant's case.

According to Article 12(2) of the Asylum Act, the determining authority **may** also reject the asylum application as manifestly unfounded if the applicant does not meet the conditions for granting asylum or subsidiary protection or for granting national protection status (asylum for the purpose of family reunification or subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification) and:

- (1) entered the territory of Slovakia irregularly and, without a serious reason, did not apply for international protection immediately upon entry,
- (2) refused to submit his or her fingerprints,
- (3) provided false information or documents, forged or altered documents, or withheld essential information or documents important for the asylum procedure with the intention of hindering the assessment of the application,
- (4) justified the application with statements that are manifestly irrelevant, contradictory, false, or improbable, and which are inconsistent with verified country of origin information,
- (5) it is likely that the applicant has destroyed or disposed of his or her travel document or other identity document with the intention of creating a false identity in the procedure or otherwise hindering the assessment of the application,
- (6) submitted the application solely for the purpose of averting an imminent threat of expulsion from Slovakia,
- (7) submitted a subsequent application, but the determining authority cannot reject the application as inadmissible because the facts of the case changed substantively,
- (8) poses a threat to the security of the Slovak Republic,

¹⁰⁹ Article 12(3) of the Asylum Act.

¹¹⁰ Article 12(4) of the Asylum Act.

(9) poses a threat to society.

The authority that issues the decision to reject the asylum application as manifestly unfounded is the same as in the regular procedure. In 2025, the MO rejected one asylum application as manifestly unfounded.¹¹¹

5.2 Personal interview

Indicators: Accelerated Procedure: Personal Interview

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Is a personal interview of the asylum seeker in most cases conducted in practice in the accelerated procedure?

☒ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☒ No

 - ❖ If so, are questions limited to nationality, identity, travel route?

☐ Yes ☒ No
 - ❖ If so, are interpreters available in practice, for interviews?

☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Are interviews conducted through video conferencing? ☐ Frequently ☐ Rarely ☒ Never

The interview of an asylum seeker is mandatory, also before issuing the decision to reject the application as manifestly unfounded, and is conducted by the determining authority in the same way as described under [Regular Procedure: Personal Interview](#).

5.3 Appeal

Indicators: Accelerated Procedure: Appeal

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Does the law provide for an appeal against the decision in the accelerated procedure?

☒ Yes ☐ No

☒ Judicial ☐ Administrative

 - ❖ If yes, is it

☐ Yes ☒ Some grounds ☐ No
 - ❖ If yes, is it suspensive

The decision to reject the asylum application as manifestly unfounded may be appealed by filing an administrative appeal to the administrative courts. The administrative appeal must be filed within **20 days** of the notification of such a decision.¹¹² Filing the administrative appeal against the decision to reject the application as manifestly unfounded **does not have an automatic suspensive effect**. The only exception to this rule occurs if the decision to reject the application as manifestly unfounded was issued on the ground that the applicant entered the territory of Slovakia irregularly and, without a serious reason, did not apply for international protection immediately upon entry (Article 12(2)(a) of the Asylum Act). The claimant may request the granting of the suspensive effect of the administrative appeal. Such a request must be filed together with the administrative appeal, and the administrative court must decide on it within 15 days of its submission.¹¹³ Otherwise, the appeal system, including the time limits for issuing the decision, oral hearing and onward appeal, is the same as in the [Regular Procedure: Appeal](#).

¹¹¹ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹¹² Article 211(2) of the AJC.

¹¹³ Article 213(2) of the AJC.

5.4 Legal assistance

Indicators: Accelerated Procedure: Legal Assistance

☒ Same as regular procedure

1. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
❖ Does free legal assistance cover: ☒ Representation in interview
☒ Legal advice
2. Do asylum seekers have access to free legal assistance on appeal against a decision in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
❖ Does free legal assistance cover ☒ Representation in courts
☒ Legal advice

Free legal assistance for asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected as manifestly unfounded is provided under the same conditions and in the same context as described in [Regular Procedure: Legal assistance](#). The free legal assistance is guaranteed only in an appeal procedure by the Centre for Legal Aid. Legal assistance in the first instance and appeal procedure is predominantly provided by NGOs (mainly HRL and SHC), which are funded through projects.

6. National protection statuses and return procedure

6.1 National forms of protection

Apart from international protection statuses harmonised by the EU law (asylum and subsidiary protection), the national legislation provides for the following national forms of protection:

- (1) Constitutional Asylum
- (2) Asylum for the Purpose of Family Reunification (asylum for family reunification)
- (3) Subsidiary Protection for the Purpose of Family Reunification (subsidiary protection for family reunification)
- (4) Asylum on Humanitarian Grounds

Constitutional Asylum

Based on Article 53 of the Act No. 460/1992 Coll. Constitution of the Slovak Republic (Constitution of the Slovak Republic), “the Slovak Republic shall grant asylum to foreigners *persecuted for the exercise of political rights and freedoms*. Asylum may be denied to those who have acted in contradiction to fundamental human rights and freedoms. A law shall lay down the details.” This was transposed into the Asylum Act, which in Article 8(b) provides that the MO shall grant asylum to an applicant who is persecuted in his or her country of origin for the exercise of political rights and freedoms. In the Slovak legal context, the constitutional asylum is considered equivalent to asylum granted based on the 1951 Geneva Convention. However, the conditions for granting the two forms of asylum differ in terms of the standard of proof, the protected reasons of persecution, and the grounds for refusal or withdrawal of asylum. Firstly, for granting constitutional asylum, the determining authority must be satisfied that the persecution *occurred in the past* or that *the person concerned must be regarded as having been persecuted*. The standard of proof required is therefore higher in this case than in cases of asylum based on the 1951 Geneva Convention when the determining authority assesses the existence of a well-founded fear of persecution. Secondly, the constitutional asylum is granted to foreigners persecuted for the exercise of political rights and freedoms. In contrast to the 1951 Geneva Convention, asylum granted for reasons of, inter alia, political opinion, the exercise of political rights and freedoms as a reason of persecution applies *to broader protection of other political rights as well*. Lastly, the constitutional asylum may be refused or withdrawn only in case the asylum seeker/holder acted in contradiction to fundamental human rights and

freedoms. Grounds for refusal/withdrawal of the 1951 Geneva Convention asylum are defined more broadly.¹¹⁴ See [Withdrawal of protection status](#).

The possibility of granting constitutional asylum is assessed in a regular asylum procedure simultaneously with the other forms of international protection.

In 2025, no asylum seeker was granted constitutional asylum. According to the HRL's opinion, this may be a result of the fact that asylum seekers meeting the conditions for granting constitutional asylum also qualified for the 1951 Geneva Convention asylum, which was eventually granted to them.

Asylum for family reunification

According to Article 10(1) of the Asylum Act, the determining authority grants asylum for family reunification to:

- (1) the spouse of an asylum holder, if their marriage continues, and continued, also at the time when the asylum holder left the country of origin, and if the asylum holder gives a prior written consent to the reunification,
- (2) unmarried children of an asylum holder or unmarried children of a spouse of an asylum holder, or
- (3) parents or a person entrusted with the personal guardianship of an unmarried asylum holder younger than 18 years of age, if the asylum holder gives a prior written consent to the reunification.

The asylum for family reunification may be granted to the family member only in case he or she is physically present in Slovakia and has not been granted permanent residence according to the Act on Residence of Foreigners.¹¹⁵ In addition, the asylum seekers may be granted asylum for family reunification if the sponsor was granted the 1951 Geneva Convention asylum or constitutional asylum. This is to avoid successive family reunification procedures.¹¹⁶

According to Article 10(4) of the Asylum Act, the determining authority grants asylum for family reunification also to children of asylum holders who were born in Slovakia. However, in practice, some of these children have not been granted "asylum for family reunification but a "separate" asylum status based on the 1951 Geneva Convention.¹¹⁷

The possibility of granting asylum for family reunification is assessed automatically in a regular procedure after the determining authority refuses to grant asylum or subsidiary protection.¹¹⁸ The result of the proceedings is in one decision.

In contrast to the 1951 Geneva Convention asylum, constitutional asylum and asylum on humanitarian grounds, asylum for family reunification is first granted for three years. Upon request, the protection can then be renewed for an unlimited time.

In 2025, 6 persons were granted asylum for family reunification.¹¹⁹

Subsidiary protection for family reunification

According to Article 13b(1) of the Asylum Act, the MO grants subsidiary protection for family reunification to:

¹¹⁴ Hrnčárová N., Meššová B., Srebalová M., and Macková D., *Zákon o azyle: Komentár*. 1st Ed. Praha: C. H. Beck, 2012, p. 123-124.

¹¹⁵ Article 10(2) of the Asylum Act.

¹¹⁶ Article 10(3) of the Asylum Act.

¹¹⁷ Based on HRL's experience.

¹¹⁸ Article 20(5) of the Asylum Act.

¹¹⁹ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

- (1) the spouse of a subsidiary protection holder, if their marriage continues, and continued, also at the time when the subsidiary protection holder left the country of origin, and if the subsidiary protection holder gives a prior written consent to the reunification,
- (2) unmarried children of a subsidiary protection holder or unmarried children of a spouse of a subsidiary protection holder, or
- (3) parents or a person entrusted with the personal guardianship of an unmarried subsidiary protection holder younger than 18 years of age if the subsidiary protection holder gives a prior written consent to the reunification.

The subsidiary protection for family reunification may be granted to the applicant only if he or she is physically present in Slovakia and has not been granted permanent residence according to the Act on Residence of Foreigners.¹²⁰ The status of subsidiary protection for family reunification may not be granted to family members of a sponsor who was granted subsidiary protection for family reunification. This is to avoid successive family reunification procedures.

The possibility of granting subsidiary protection for family reunification is assessed automatically in a regular asylum procedure after the determining authority refuses to grant asylum, subsidiary protection or asylum for family reunification.¹²¹ The result of the proceedings is in one decision.

In 2025, 4 persons were granted subsidiary protection for family reunification.¹²²

Asylum on humanitarian grounds

Asylum on humanitarian grounds is a form of protection under the national legislation granted when the applicant does not qualify for international protection under international and EU law. According to Article 9 of the Asylum Act, the determining authority may grant asylum on humanitarian grounds if the applicant is not granted asylum, subsidiary protection, asylum for family reunification or subsidiary protection for family reunification. There is no legal entitlement to asylum on humanitarian grounds, and its granting is under the discretionary power of the MO. The Asylum Act does not specify what is considered as humanitarian grounds relevant for granting asylum on humanitarian grounds, however, Article 13 of the Regulation of the MoI No. 34/2014: *Humanitarian grounds (...) include in particular cases of unsuccessful applicants who are elderly, traumatised, or seriously ill, and whose return to the country of origin could result in significant physical or psychological suffering, or even death.* The list of humanitarian grounds in the regulation is non-exhaustive, which means that the MO can consider other grounds sufficient for granting asylum on humanitarian grounds.

The possibility of granting asylum on humanitarian grounds is assessed in a regular asylum procedure. However, there is an ongoing legal uncertainty as to whether the applicant must explicitly present their reasons as humanitarian, or whether it is for the determining authority to classify the reasons contained in the applicant's statements as humanitarian.

On 3 February 2016, the Supreme Court of the SR issued the 10SŽa/41/2015 judgement and stated: *“Regarding the applicant’s objection that the defendant did not consider the option to grant asylum on humanitarian grounds stated in Section 9 of Act on Asylum to the applicant the Court of Appeal states that the decision to grant/not grant asylum on humanitarian grounds under Section 9 of Act on Asylum depends on the discretion of the defendant and judicial review is not possible with regards to the results of this decision. Defendant’s reasoning shows that the applicant’s reasons were assessed and individually evaluated. No real threat of serious injustice was found. This is the reason why the applicant does not belong to any of the categories of persons who need some type of international protection and therefore the defendant in their case did not deem it needed to provide any form of protection to them. If the defendant did not consider the applicant’s reasons for granting asylum to be such subjective circumstance which would in itself constitute a reason for granting asylum on humanitarian grounds and stated this*

¹²⁰ Article 10(2) of the Asylum Act.

¹²¹ Article 20(5) of the Asylum Act.

¹²² The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

consideration in the reasoning of their decision, it was not possible to regard the above objection of the applicant as justified.”

Asylum on humanitarian grounds is granted for an unlimited time.¹²³ Family members of the person granted asylum on humanitarian grounds do not qualify for granting asylum for family reunification. However, they may be granted a regular (temporary) residence permit for family reunification under the Act on Residence of Foreigners. The family reunification procedure under the Act on Residence of Foreigners is the same as in the case of asylum holders and is described in the section on [Family Reunification](#).

In 2025, 2 persons were granted asylum on humanitarian grounds.¹²⁴

The following chart illustrates the hierarchy of the different forms of international protection granted in Slovakia, which governs the order in which the determining authority assesses the conditions for their granting:

Hierarchy of the different forms of international protection		
I.	1951 Geneva Convention Asylum	Constitutional Asylum
II.	Subsidiary Protection	
III.	Asylum For Family Reunification	
IV.	Subsidiary Protection of Family Reunification	
V.	Asylum on Humanitarian Grounds	

Generally, the holders of constitutional asylum, asylum for family reunification and asylum for humanitarian grounds have the same rights and are entitled to the same benefits as holders of 1951 Geneva Convention asylum. Similarly, holders of subsidiary protection for family reunification have the same rights and are entitled to the same benefits as holders of subsidiary protection.

Additionally, **tolerated stay** and **remaining of a foreigner in the territory of the Slovak Republic** (remaining) may also be considered as national forms of protection.

Tolerated stay is one of the three forms of residence permits for third-country nationals granted under the Act on Residence of Foreigners. It can be granted, inter alia, to:

- (1) a minor detected in the territory of Slovakia¹²⁵,
- (2) a victim of human trafficking older than 18 years of age¹²⁶,
- (3) a foreigner who was illegally employed under particularly exploitative working conditions, or to an illegally employed minor, where the presence of that foreigner in Slovakia is necessary for criminal proceedings.¹²⁷

The status of a tolerated stay is independent of the asylum procedure. A foreigner submits the application for a tolerated stay at the BBFP PFP.¹²⁸ The police will not register the application if the foreigner is in an ongoing asylum procedure.¹²⁹ On the other hand, a foreigner who is subject to a return procedure may apply for a tolerated stay. The police must decide the application for tolerated stay within 15 days of its submission.¹³⁰ Tolerated stay is granted for a maximum of 180 days with the possibility of its extension.¹³¹ There is no limit to the number of times a tolerated stay can be extended.

¹²³ Article 20(2) of the Asylum Act.

¹²⁴ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹²⁵ Article 58(1)(a) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹²⁶ Article 58(1)(b) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹²⁷ Article 58(2) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹²⁸ Article 59(1) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹²⁹ Article 59(2) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹³⁰ Article 59(7) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners

¹³¹ Article 59(1) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners

In 2025, tolerated stay was granted to 10 minors detected in the territory of Slovakia and to 3 victims of human trafficking over 18 years of age.¹³²

Lastly, remaining is a legal institute that allows foreigners residing irregularly in Slovakia to remain in the country, inter alia, for the duration of obstacles to their administrative expulsion. The remaining constitutes an expression of the principle of non-refoulement. However, it is not considered a form of residence, and no specific rights are attached to this status.

6.2 Return procedure

Return decisions and decisions in asylum proceedings are issued by two different state authorities: the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police and the Migration Office, respectively. The decisions are not issued jointly.

In case a third country national is subject to administrative expulsion proceedings (return procedure) and applies for asylum, the police department issues a decision on suspension of the return procedure.¹³³ The return procedure is suspended until the final asylum decision is issued. This means that the return procedure is also suspended during the appeal procedure of the asylum decision. In practice, if the foreigner is staying in Slovakia irregularly and applies for asylum, the competent police department receiving the foreigner's declaration for seeking international protection always formally starts the return procedure that is immediately suspended.¹³⁴ At that moment, the police department also decides whether the asylum applicant will be detained or not.

If a person is granted asylum or subsidiary protection, or if the suspension lasts longer than two years, the police department terminates the return procedure.¹³⁵ Conversely, if international protection is not granted, the police department resumes the return procedure, which may result in the issuance of a decision on administrative expulsion and, where applicable, an entry ban to Slovakia and other Schengen States. If a third-country national applies for asylum after a decision on administrative expulsion or an entry ban has become enforceable, the police department must refrain from enforcing the decision until a final asylum decision has been taken.¹³⁶

D. Guarantees for vulnerable groups

1. Identification

Indicators: Special Procedural Guarantees

1. Is there a specific identification mechanism in place to systematically identify vulnerable asylum seekers?
☒ Yes ☐ For certain categories ☐ No
❖ If for certain categories, specify which: n/a
2. Does the law provide for an identification mechanism for unaccompanied children?
☒ Yes ☐ No

The Act on Residence of Foreigners defines a "vulnerable person" as, in particular, a minor, a person with a disability, a victim of trafficking in human beings, a person over 65 years of age, a pregnant woman, a single parent with a minor child, and a person who has been subjected to torture, rape, or other serious forms of psychological, physical, or sexual violence. In justified cases, a person younger than 65 years of

¹³² BBFP PFP, *Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie cudzincov v Slovenskej republike za rok 2025*, 2026, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹³³ Article 77(5) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹³⁴ Based on HRL's experience.

¹³⁵ Article 77(6) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹³⁶ Article 77(7) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

age may also be considered as an older person.¹³⁷ The definition of vulnerable persons is applicable also to asylum seekers.¹³⁸

Additionally, in Part Six of the Asylum Act regulating Asylum Facilities defines “vulnerable persons” as, in particular, minors, persons with disabilities, older persons, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of trafficking in human beings, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders, and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape, or other serious forms of psychological, physical, or sexual violence.¹³⁹

1.1 Screening of vulnerability

The mechanism for the identification of vulnerable groups of asylum seekers is regulated by the Internal Regulation of the MO Mol, No. 4/2015, entitled Instruction of the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic of 3 August 2015 on Maintaining the Documentation “Social Profile of an Asylum Applicant” (*Pokyn migračného úradu Ministerstva vnútra Slovenskej republiky o vedení dokumentácie „Sociálny profil osobnosti žiadateľa o udelenie azylu“*) (Internal Regulation No. 4/2015).¹⁴⁰

The identification of vulnerable asylum seekers is carried out by social workers of the MO. Social workers obtain information on vulnerability through one or more social interviews with the applicant, as well as through other methods of social work. During the identification process, social workers apply *the List of Vulnerability Indicators and Questions for the Identification of Vulnerable Asylum Applicants* which are annexed to Internal Regulation No. 4/2015.

The List of Vulnerability Indicators contains seven groups of indicators, namely:

1. Age,
2. Sex,
3. Gender identity and sexual orientation,
4. Family status (in relation to the asylum procedure),
5. Physical indicators, including physical appearance, health condition, disability, sexual health, and pregnancy,
6. Psychosocial indicators related to trauma, depression, and social circumstances, and
7. Indicators related to the external environment

The Questions for the Identification of Vulnerable Asylum Applicants contain guiding questions for social workers conducting the vulnerability screening. The questions are divided into six groups according to categories of vulnerable asylum seekers, namely:

1. Minors,
2. Persons with disabilities, including persons with serious illnesses or physical or mental disorders;
3. Older persons,
4. Pregnant women,
5. Single parents with minor children, and
6. Persons with a different sexual orientation – LGBT persons.

During the vulnerability screening, social workers cooperate with employees of the Asylum Facilities Unit and the Procedural Department, healthcare personnel in asylum facilities, and asylum facility staff. Social workers are required to inform the organisational units of the MO of the applicants’ specific vulnerabilities.

¹³⁷ Article 2(7) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹³⁸ Article 1(2) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹³⁹ Article 39(1) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁴⁰ HRL does not have access to the current version of this internal regulation, but only to the version effective as of 3 August 2015. The current version of this internal regulation was not disclosed to HRL in response to an information request submitted to the Mol on 6 February 2026. For this reason, the described vulnerability screening may differ from the practice currently applied.

1.2 Age assessment of unaccompanied children

The age assessment procedure is regulated by the Act on the Residence of Foreigners and the Asylum Act. Medical age assessments are carried out at the request of the BBFPF PFP, the MO, or the guardian.

According to Article 23(8) of the Asylum Act where the MO has doubts regarding the age of an asylum applicant, the applicant is required to undergo a medical examination. Accordingly, an age assessment may only be conducted where the MO has reached the conclusion that there are reasonable doubts regarding the applicant's age.

Doubts concerning age may arise in two situations: where the applicant claims to be an adult, but doubts arise as to their adulthood, or where the applicant claims to be a minor but doubts arise as to their minority.

Where the MO has doubts regarding the age of a minor applicant, the consent of the guardian is required for the medical examination to be carried out. Until the examination results are available, the asylum applicant is treated as a minor; accordingly, a rebuttable presumption of minority applies. A person whose age cannot be determined is also regarded as a minor, reflecting the application of the principle of the benefit of the doubt in favour of the minority.

If the third-country national refuses to undergo the medical examination, or if the legal representative or guardian does not provide consent for it to be carried out, the person shall, for the purposes of asylum proceedings, be considered an adult. If the examination determines that a person claiming to be a minor is in fact an adult, the MO proceeds with the applicant as an adult and informs both the guardian and the competent court of the examination results.

The law does not specify the form, method, or type of examination, nor does it designate the physician responsible for carrying it out. In practice, medical age assessment is conducted through X-ray imaging of the hands and elbow joints performed at a radiology clinic. The resulting medical report indicates whether the bone development shown in the X-ray corresponds to the development and growth of a person over 18 years of age.

Asylum seekers have no possibility to appeal against the age assessment decision.

The Asylum Act emphasises the MO's duty to provide information, under which the MO is required to inform the asylum applicant, prior to the entry interview, of the possibility that a medical age assessment may be ordered, how such an examination is conducted, and the potential consequences of its results for the asylum procedure itself.

In 2025, no asylum applicant underwent age assessment procedure pursuant to Article 23(8) of the Asylum Act.¹⁴¹

Doubts regarding the age of a third-country national may arise even before the commencement of the asylum procedure, particularly in proceedings before the BBFP PFP. The age assessment procedure under the Act on the Residence of Foreigners is, to a large extent, similar to the procedure regulated by the Asylum Act.

Article 111(6) of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners provides that a third-country national who declares themselves to be an UAM is required to undergo a medical examination to determine their age where there are doubts as to whether the person is in fact an adult.

If the third-country national refuses to undergo a medical age assessment, they are considered an adult for the purposes of proceedings under the Act on the Residence of Foreigners.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹⁴² Article 127(1) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

If the person undergoes the medical examination, they are considered an adult pending the outcome of the medical age assessment.¹⁴³

The result of the medical examination is prepared by a physician in the form of an expert opinion. Where it is not possible to determine, on the basis of the medical examination, whether the person is an adult or a minor, the person is considered a minor for the purposes of proceedings under the Act.¹⁴⁴

The BBFP PFP is required to inform the third-country national of its power to order a medical age assessment, the manner in which the examination is conducted, the consequences of the examination for proceedings, as well as the consequences of refusing to undergo the examination.¹⁴⁵

2. Special procedural guarantees

Indicators: Special Procedural Guarantees

1. Are there special procedural arrangements/guarantees for vulnerable people?

☐ Yes

☒ For certain categories

☐ No

❖ If for certain categories, specify which: unaccompanied minors

There are no specialised units within the MO which would deal with claims by vulnerable groups of applicants. All asylum applications are examined by the Procedural Department of the MO.

According to Article 39(4) of the Asylum Act, persons working with third-country nationals in asylum facilities shall receive training and, where appropriate, refresher training, particularly regarding the needs of vulnerable persons. Asylum applications lodged by UAMs must be examined by an employee with adequate expertise in the field of asylum and the specific needs of UAMs.¹⁴⁶

Staff of the MO regularly receive training in various areas, primarily through EUAA training modules. In 2022, two national trainings were organised on the topics of *Conducting Interviews with Children* and *Conducting Interviews with Vulnerable Persons*. In addition, two trainers were certified for the modules *Identification of Possible Dublin Cases* and *Application of Exclusion Clauses in Cases of Persons Undeserving of International Protection*. In response to the war in Ukraine, staff also participated in thematic EUAA trainings focused on communication with displaced children, communication with persons who had experienced trauma, the provision of information and communication with people displaced from Ukraine, *Temporary Protection: Understanding the Current Framework in the Context of the War in Ukraine*, and *Ad hoc Training on Temporary Protection*. Additional EUAA training completed in 2022 included: *Introduction to MedCOI*, *Trafficking in Human Beings*, *Introduction to Ethical and Professional Standards*, *Introduction to Communication for Asylum and Reception Practitioners*, *Introduction to the EU Legal Framework on International Protection*, and further professional training on the inclusion of applicants for international protection from Afghanistan.¹⁴⁷

At the turn of 2023 and 2024, all professional staff of the Procedural Department of the MO involved in asylum procedures underwent training on the EUAA module *Trafficking in Human Beings*, which is specifically designed for applicants for international protection.¹⁴⁸

2.1 Adequate support during the interview

Article 17ab of the Asylum Act establishes a general obligation for the MO to apply a specific approach in asylum proceedings towards applicants requiring special procedural guarantees. The Act defines an asylum seeker requiring special procedural guarantees as a third-country national whose ability to

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Article 19a of the Asylum Act.

¹⁴⁷ EMN, *Annual Report on Migration and Asylum in the Slovak Republic in 2022*, September 2023, available [here](#).

¹⁴⁸ EMN, *Annual Report on Migration and Asylum in the Slovak Republic in 2023*, July 2024, available [here](#).

exercise their rights and fulfil the obligations arising under asylum procedure is limited due to the circumstances of their particular case.

Nevertheless, specific special procedural guarantees are regulated by law only in respect of minor asylum seekers. During an interview with a minor, an MO employee is required to take into account the applicant's age and level of intellectual and emotional maturity.¹⁴⁹ In the case of an UAM, an interview may only be conducted in the presence of his or her guardian. The guardian must be afforded the opportunity, prior to the interview, to inform the UAM of the purpose and possible consequences of the interview and to prepare the child accordingly.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, the guardian is entitled to ask questions and raise observations throughout the interview, rather than only at its conclusion, as applies in other cases.

2.2 Exemption from special procedures

The law provides for the exemption from accelerated procedure only for UAMs.¹⁵¹ No other vulnerable groups of asylum seekers or asylum seekers with special procedural needs are exempted from the accelerated procedure. (See also [Accelerated procedure](#))

Currently, the law does not codify a border procedure. The new IPA, which will enter into force on 12 June 2026, introduces a border procedure in Articles 9 – 10. (See also [Border procedure \(border and transit zones\)](#))

In 2025, the MO issued only one decision rejecting an application as manifestly unfounded under the accelerated procedure.¹⁵² However, no publicly available data exist on the number of applicants exempted from the accelerated procedure on grounds of vulnerability, or on whether applications examined under the accelerated procedure were submitted by vulnerable applicants.

3. Use of medical reports

Indicators: Use of medical reports

1. Does the law provide for the possibility of a medical report in support of the applicant's statements regarding past persecution or serious harm? ☒ Yes ☐ In some cases ☐ No
2. Are medical reports taken into account when assessing the credibility of the applicant's statements? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Pursuant to the Asylum Act, asylum applicants are required to truthfully and fully present all facts relevant to their application for asylum.¹⁵³ This obligation also entails an effort to substantiate their statements with available evidence or, where such evidence is unavailable, to provide the MO with an adequate explanation for its absence. In practice, this can also include medical reports regarding their past persecution or serious harm.

According to Article 19c of the Asylum Act, the MO, where deemed necessary for the assessment of the asylum application, shall ensure a medical examination concerning indications of persecution or serious harm. The applicant's consent is required for such examination, and the costs are covered by the MO. If the MO does not consider the examination necessary, it is required to inform the applicant that they may independently obtain, at their own expense, a medical examination concerning indications of past persecution or serious harm. The outcome of such a medical examination is a medical report, which serves as evidence in the further examination of the asylum application.

The law does not lay down any criteria for determining when such a medical examination should be carried out.

¹⁴⁹ Article 6(5) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁵⁰ Article 6(6) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁵¹ Article 12(4) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁵² The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹⁵³ Article 6(3) of the Asylum Act.

In addition, the MO may also proceed in accordance with Article 36 of the APC, pursuant to which an administrative authority may appoint an expert where an expert opinion is necessary for the professional assessment of facts relevant to the decision. The performance of expert activities is governed by Act No. 382/2004 Coll., and related legislation. The list of experts is maintained by the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (MoJ) and is [publicly accessible](#).

Furthermore, the law also permits the appointment of an *ad hoc expert*, i.e. a person who is not registered in the official list of experts. Such an appointment is possible provided that the person consents and:

- (a) no person is registered in the relevant field or specialisation; or
- (b) a registered expert is unable to perform the task, or carrying out the task would involve disproportionate difficulties or costs.¹⁵⁴

The outcome of expert activity is an *expert opinion*, which serves as evidence in administrative proceedings. However, the expert opinion itself is assessed by the administrative authority in the same manner as other evidence, namely in accordance with the principle of free assessment of evidence.

In practice, psychiatric and other medical reports have, in some cases, successfully influenced decisions regarding an applicant's credibility.¹⁵⁵

4. Legal representation of unaccompanied children

Indicators: Unaccompanied Children

1. Does the law provide for the appointment of a representative to all unaccompanied children?
☒ Yes ☐ No

In case the asylum application is submitted by a minor, the asylum procedure shall not automatically commence.¹⁵⁶

Pursuant to Article 16(2) of the Asylum Act, legal acts on behalf of a third-country national who has not attained the age of majority are performed by their legal representative. Where the person is present in Slovakia without a legal representative, the court shall appoint a guardian. This provision refers to additional legislation, namely Act No. 40/1964 Coll., the Civil Code (The Civil Code), and Act No. 36/2005 Coll. on the Family and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (the Family Act), which further specify the concepts of majority and guardianship.

Under the Civil Code, majority is attained upon reaching the age of eighteen. Prior to reaching this age, the majority may only be attained through marriage. The majority acquired in this way is not lost upon the dissolution of the marriage or upon a declaration that the marriage is void.¹⁵⁷

It follows from the above that a guardian must be appointed to all UAMs who are considered minors under the Civil Code.

Regarding the guardianship of UAMs, the Asylum Act refers to Article 60 of the Family Act, which allows for the appointment of a guardian to a minor child where necessary for *other reasons and where this is in the best interests of the child*. In such cases, the court may also appoint a municipality as guardian.¹⁵⁸

The identification of a UAM generally takes place prior to the initiation of the asylum procedure, primarily by officers of the BFPB PFP. The police are required to *immediately* notify and transfer the UAM to the

¹⁵⁴ Article 15(1) of the Act No. 382/2004 Coll.

¹⁵⁵ Based on HRL's experience.

¹⁵⁶ Article 3(1) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁵⁷ Article 8(2) of the Civil Code.

¹⁵⁸ Article 60 of the Family Act.

Department of Social and Legal Protection of Children and Social Curatorship of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (OLSAF) within whose territorial jurisdiction the child was found.¹⁵⁹

Where the UAM cannot be entrusted to the personal care of another person or a relative, the OLSAF must *immediately* file a motion for an interim measure (*neodkladné opatrenie*), on the basis of which the child is placed in a facility.¹⁶⁰ In practice, UAMs are placed in the Centre for Children and Families in Medzilaborce. The law also allows the court to act *ex officio*, i.e. without a motion, particularly in cases where the court becomes aware of the discovery of a UAM and no request for an interim measure has yet been submitted by the competent OLSAF.

The court must decide on the interim measure by means of a resolution within *24 hours* of receiving the motion for the interim measure.¹⁶¹ After the implementation of the interim measure, i.e. following the child's placement in the Centre for Children and Families, the court appoints a guardian for the UAM.

The role of guardian may be performed by a natural person or, where no such person is available, by the Department of Social and Legal Protection of Children and Social Curatorship of OLSAF. In practice, the OLSAF is usually appointed as guardian for UAM. The guardian is required to perform their duties in the best interests of the child and is entrusted by the court with a defined scope of rights and obligations to ensure the purpose of the guardianship and the adequate protection of the child's interests.

Given the low number of UAM asylum applicants, HRL is not aware of problems relating to an insufficient number of OLSAF guardians for UAMs. National legislation does not establish a maximum number of UAMs for whom a representative may be responsible at the same time.

A guardian appointed by the court may, on behalf of the UAM, perform all legal acts in asylum proceedings that are available to asylum applicants. In particular, the guardian may submit an asylum application, be present during all interviews, give consent to medical examinations conducted as part of the age assessment procedure, and access the asylum file. Decisions issued in asylum proceedings are served exclusively on the guardian.

In asylum proceedings, the guardian may be represented by a legal representative. However, despite the fact that OLSAF guardians are, in most cases, not specialists in asylum law, they rarely make use of this possibility.

There is no effective state-run monitoring and evaluation system of UAM guardianship in place.

¹⁵⁹ Article 127(4) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁶⁰ Article 27(1) of the Act No. 305/2005 Coll. On on Social and Legal Protection of Children and Social Guardianship and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (The Act No. 305/2005 Coll.).

¹⁶¹ Article 365(2) of the Act No. 161/2015 Coll., The Code of Non-Contentious Civil Procedure (The Non-Contentious Civil Procedure Code).

E. Subsequent applications

Indicators: Subsequent Applications

1. Does the law provide for a specific procedure for subsequent applications? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Is a removal order suspended during the examination of a first subsequent application?
 - ❖ At first instance ☒ Yes ☐ No
 - ❖ At the appeal stage ☐ Yes ☒ No
3. Is a removal order suspended during the examination of a second, third, subsequent application?
 - ❖ At first instance ☐ Yes ☒ No
 - ❖ At the appeal stage ☐ Yes ☒ No

The Asylum Act does not foresee a separate procedure for subsequent asylum applications. Subsequent applications (including second, third, fourth, etc., subsequent applications) are processed in Regular Procedure and decided by the MO. The law does not provide for any time limits that apply for lodging a subsequent application, nor any limitation as to how many times a person can lodge a subsequent application.

The MO shall reject a subsequent application as inadmissible where a final decision has previously been taken to (1) reject the application as manifestly unfounded, (2) refuse asylum, (3) withdraw asylum, (4) refuse to extend subsidiary protection, or (5) withdraw subsidiary protection, and no substantial change of the facts in the case has occurred.¹⁶² In this case, the determining authority may also decide that the subsequent application was filed solely for the purpose of averting the imminent enforcement of the return decision from Slovakia.¹⁶³ Such a decision has further implications for the applicant's right to stay in Slovakia during the appeal procedure – see details below. In case there was a substantial change of the facts, but these new elements do not justify granting asylum or subsidiary protection, the MO may reject the application as manifestly unfounded in an accelerated procedure – within 60 days from lodging the subsequent application.¹⁶⁴

The Asylum Act does not provide a definition of what is considered a “substantial change of the facts”. In Article 11(2) of the Asylum Act, it only provides that new elements or findings that existed before the final decision on the first asylum application was taken but were not produced by the applicant for reasons beyond his or her control are considered as a substantial change of the facts. A substantial change of the facts is assessed mainly during the interview at the stage of lodging the application and during the entry interview, which are conducted in the same manner as described in the [Regular Procedure: Personal Interview](#).

The administrative courts have sought to eliminate legal uncertainty regarding the interpretation of the term “substantial change in the facts”; however, their approach has been rather restrictive. In the judgment No. 1Sak/12/2023 from 18 August 2023¹⁶⁵, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled that

*49. In this regard, the Court of Cassation stated that not every new fact or finding may be regarded as a “new element or finding,” but only those that could have a direct impact on the applicant’s legal position. **The institution of a subsequent application for international protection does not serve the purpose of clarifying or supplementing the factual basis of a previous application.** Its main objective and purpose is to address situations in which serious new circumstances arise that could affect the applicant’s status and which, through no fault of their own, could not have been invoked in the previous proceedings that were concluded by a final decision on international protection.*

¹⁶² Article 11(1)(f) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Article 12(2)(g) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁶⁵ Supreme Administrative Court of the Slovak Republic, 1Sak/12/2023, 18 August 2023, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

(...)

51. In the view of the Court of Cassation, a substantial change of the facts must be understood as the emergence of a situation capable of leading to a different decision in the case. Accordingly, not every change is sufficient; the decisive factor is its materiality. Since the previous decision on the applicant's asylum application became final (on 18 July 2022), the applicant has not presented any facts that could be regarded as a substantial change in the factual circumstances and that would affect their legal position.

In the judgement No. 2Sak/12/2023 from 22. December 2023¹⁶⁶, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled that:

40. A decision rejecting an application as inadmissible pursuant to § 11(2)(f) of the Asylum Act must always contain a reasoned conclusion by the administrative authority that: (1) in the subsequent application for international protection, the applicant does not present any new facts or findings relevant to asylum or subsidiary protection, whereby "new facts" cannot be understood as any facts or findings whatsoever, but only those which, at first sight, could have an impact on the granting of international protection; and (2) no fundamental change has occurred in the situation in the country of origin that could give rise to the well-foundedness of a new application for international protection.

First subsequent application

A decision rejecting the first subsequent application as inadmissible or manifestly unfounded is subject to judicial review by an administrative court. An administrative appeal must be filed within 20 days of notification of the decision¹⁶⁷; however, filing the appeal does not have a suspensive effect.¹⁶⁸ The claimant may request that a suspensive effect be granted, and such a request must be submitted together with the administrative appeal.¹⁶⁹ The administrative court must decide on the request for granting the suspensive effect within 15 days of its submission.¹⁷⁰

As a rule, an asylum seeker who filed a first subsequent application has the right to remain in Slovakia during the first instance procedure, during the time limit for filing the administrative appeal, and until the court has decided on the request for suspensive effect.¹⁷¹ In a specific case, when the first subsequent application was rejected as inadmissible, and the MO has decided that the subsequent application was filed solely for the purpose of averting the imminent enforcement of the return decision from Slovakia, the applicant does not have a right to remain in the country during the time limit for filing the administrative appeal or pending the court's decision on the request for suspensive effect.¹⁷² This means that the BBFP PFP resumes the suspended administrative expulsion proceedings, and the applicant may be removed from Slovakia.¹⁷³

Second, (third, fourth, etc...,) subsequent application

The law does not distinguish between a second subsequent application and any further subsequent applications; all such applications are treated equally. In the following section, the term "second subsequent application" is used to refer to all subsequent applications beyond the first.

An asylum seeker whose first subsequent application has already been rejected as inadmissible or manifestly unfounded does not have a right to remain in Slovakia during the first instance and appeal procedure on the second subsequent application. In such cases, the BBFP PFP resumes the suspended administrative expulsion proceedings, and the applicant may be removed from Slovakia.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁶ Supreme Administrative Court of the Slovak Republic, 2Sak/12/2023, 22 December 2023, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹⁶⁷ Article 211(2) of the AJC.

¹⁶⁸ Article 21(2) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁶⁹ Article 213(2) of the AJC.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Article 22(1) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁷² Article 22(1) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁷³ Article 77(5) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹⁷⁴ Article 77(5) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

Decision on rejecting the second subsequent application as inadmissible or manifestly unfounded is subject to judicial review by an administrative court under the same conditions as first subsequent application.

An asylum seeker who filed subsequent applications has access to legal aid in the first instance and an appeal procedure under the same conditions as described in the [Regular Procedure: Legal Aid](#). In the context of subsequent applications, one of the factors assessed by the Centre for Legal Aid in the merits test is whether a substantial change in the facts has occurred.¹⁷⁵ This factor is, however, not decisive.

In 2025, the MO rejected a total of 6 subsequent asylum applications as inadmissible.¹⁷⁶

F. The safe country concepts

Indicators: Safe Country Concepts

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Does national legislation allow for the use of “safe country of origin” concept? | ☒ Yes ☐ No |
| ❖ Is there a national list of safe countries of origin? | ☒ Yes ☐ No |
| ❖ Is the safe country of origin concept used in practice? | ☐ Yes ☒ No |
| 2. Does national legislation allow for the use of “safe third country” concept? | ☒ Yes ☐ No |
| ❖ Is the safe third country concept used in practice? | ☐ Yes ☒ No |
| 3. Does national legislation allow for the use of “first country of asylum” concept? | ☒ Yes ☐ No |

1. Safe country of origin

Article 2(l) of the Asylum Act defines a safe country of origin as a stable State governed by the rule of law with a democratic system, of the foreigner's citizenship or, in the case of a stateless person, of the foreigner's former residence:

- (1) in which the State power protects human rights and fundamental freedoms and ensures their observance,
- (2) which is, in general, not left by its citizens or stateless persons residing in it for the reasons of persecution or serious harm
- (3) which ratified and complies with international treaties on human rights and fundamental freedoms, and
- (4) which allows performance of activities by legal entities overseeing the observance of human rights in the country.

Apart from the legal definition of 'safe country of origin', there is no public information on the procedure followed for the designation of countries or the criteria for the designation of safe countries of origin that are taken into consideration.

The safe country of origin is recognised by national legislation as a ground for rejecting the application as manifestly unfounded.¹⁷⁷ The decision may be issued within 60 days from starting the asylum procedure, and if the time limit is not respected, the application can no longer be rejected as manifestly unfounded.¹⁷⁸ The determining authority cannot reject the application as manifestly unfounded in case the applicant comes from a safe country of origin, but the country in his or her case cannot be considered as a safe country of origin.¹⁷⁹ The conditions for accessing legal aid and reviewing the decision on rejecting the application as manifestly unfounded are the same as described in the [Accelerated Procedure](#).

¹⁷⁵ Article 24a(2)(c) of the Act on Legal Aid.

¹⁷⁶ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹⁷⁷ Article 12(1)(b) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁷⁸ Article 12(3) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁷⁹ Article 12(1)(b) of the Asylum Act.

Article 53 of the Asylum Act provides that the Slovak Government shall issue a list of countries which it considers safe countries of origin and safe third countries. The list of safe countries of origin was thus set by the Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 716/2002 (Regulation of the Government No. 716/2002). The list is, however, not used in practice, mainly due to the fact that there are generally no applications submitted by asylum seekers coming from countries designated as safe countries of origin. Currently, the following countries are included in the list of **safe countries of origin**:

Safe Countries of Origin	No. asylum applicants in 2025
The Commonwealth of Australia	0
Montenegro	0
The Republic of Ghana	0
The Republic of Iceland	0
Japan	0
The Republic of South Africa	0
Canada	0
The Republic of Kenya	0
The Principality of Liechtenstein	0
The Republic of Mauritius	0
The Kingdom of Norway	0
New Zealand	0
The Republic of Seychelles	0
United States of America	0
The Swiss Confederation	0

The list does not mention any exceptions for specific geographical areas or profiles of asylum seekers within a country of origin.

The process of reviewing the conditions in the countries designated as safe countries of origin is not clear. Lastly, the list was updated in July 2013, when the Commonwealth of Australia and Montenegro were added to the list, and Croatia was removed from the list.

The safe country of origin concept is not applied in practice. In 2025, the MO did not issue any decision rejecting an application as manifestly unfounded under Article 12(1)(b) of the Asylum Act.¹⁸⁰

2. Safe third country

Art. 2(m) of the Asylum Act defines a safe third country as a stable State governed by the rule of law with a democratic system, other than the country of origin,

- (1) if before the applicant's arrival in the territory of the Slovak Republic, the foreigner stayed there and had an opportunity to seek protection under the international treaty¹⁸¹
- (2) to which the foreigner can be returned and where he or she can seek protection under an international treaty without being exposed to persecution or serious harm
- (3) provided that it is not a State, to which a ban on expulsion or refoulement applies
- (4) provided that this State ensures protection against expulsion or refoulement similarly like the Slovak Republic

Article 53 of the Asylum Act provides a legal basis for adopting the list of safe third countries. The Slovak Government adopted the Regulation of the Government No. 716/2002, which established the list of safe countries of origin and the list of safe third countries (see section on [Safe Country of Origin](#)); however, at the moment, there is **no country included in the list of safe third countries**.

If the applicant comes from a safe third country, according to Art. 11(1)(b) the MO rejects the application as inadmissible. The application cannot be rejected as inadmissible if the country cannot, in the case of the applicant, be considered as a safe third country or he or she cannot be effectively returned to this

¹⁸⁰ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹⁸¹ The provision refers specifically to the 1951 Geneva Convention or the European Convention on Human Rights.

country.¹⁸² Additionally, the application of a UAM cannot be rejected as inadmissible if such a decision is not in his or her best interest.¹⁸³

In case the MO rejects the application as inadmissible based on the safe third country ground, it issues the applicant with a document confirming that his or her claim was not examined on the merits. Such confirmation is also provided to the applicant in the language of the country to which he or she will be returned.¹⁸⁴

However, the safe third country concept is not applied in practice as a ground for inadmissibility. In 2025, the MO did not issue any decision rejecting an application under Article 11(1)(b) of the Asylum Act.¹⁸⁵

3. First country of asylum

First country of asylum is a ground for inadmissibility. Article 11(1)(a) of the Asylum Act provides that the MO shall reject the application submitted by the applicant who has been granted asylum in a country that is not a member of the EU, and the applicant may use the provided protection effectively. The application cannot be rejected as inadmissible if the applicant may not effectively return to the first country of asylum.¹⁸⁶ The provision makes an explicit reference to asylum based on the 1951 Geneva Convention; for that reason, the application may not be rejected as inadmissible on this ground if the applicant has been provided with subsidiary, other form of international protection or “sufficient protection” in a third country.¹⁸⁷

In 2025, the MO did not issue any decision rejecting an application as inadmissible under Article 11(1)(a) of the Asylum Act.¹⁸⁸

G. Information for asylum seekers and access to NGOs and UNHCR

1. Provision of information on the procedure

Indicators: Information on the Procedure

1. Is sufficient information provided to asylum seekers on the procedures, their rights and obligations in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ With difficulty ☐ No

❖ Is tailored information provided to unaccompanied children? ☐ Yes ☒ No

The Asylum Act provides that the employee of the MO shall, prior to conducting the entry interview, but no later than 15 days from the commencement of the asylum procedure, instruct the applicant about the asylum procedure, in particular regarding:

- his or her rights and obligations,
- the possible consequences of failing to fulfil or breach those obligations,
- the possible consequences of non-compliance,
- the consequences of the explicit or implicit withdrawal of the application,
- time limits,
- possibility of requesting legal representation and access to legal aid.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸² Article 11(1)(b) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Article 11(3) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁸⁵ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹⁸⁶ Article 11(1)(a) of the Asylum Act.

¹⁸⁷ Hrnčárová N., Meššová B., Srebalová M., and Macková D., *Zákon o azyle: Komentár*. 1st Ed. Praha: C. H. Beck, 2012, p. 142.

¹⁸⁸ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

¹⁸⁹ Article 4(2) the Asylum Act.

Additionally, the determining authority shall also provide information on NGOs providing assistance to asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection.¹⁹⁰

The instruction and information shall, where possible, be provided in writing and in a language which it may reasonably be assumed the applicant understands; in the case of a minor, the instruction and information shall be provided in a manner appropriate to his or her age and level of intellectual and volitional maturity.¹⁹¹

In practice, the asylum applicants are provided with an 18-page brochure with instructions on their rights and obligations. The brochure is publicly available in [Slovak](#) and [English](#) on the website of the MOI. The applicants are provided with one printed copy of the brochure, and/or the content of the brochure is interpreted into a language which it may reasonably be assumed the applicant understands. The applicants must sign a declaration confirming that they have received the brochure or that the instructions were interpreted to them.

UAMs are provided with the same brochure, which includes a separate section addressed to applicants placed in Centres for Children and Families. However, the information contained in this section is relatively brief and primarily focuses on the obligations associated with staying in the Centre for Children and Families. The language and visual design of this section do not differ from the rest of the brochure.

Although the Asylum Act explicitly provides that asylum applicants must be informed about NGOs offering assistance to asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, the brochure does not include the contact details of any specific organisation providing such assistance. Instead, it merely informs applicants of their right to make use of NGO services and states that more detailed information can be obtained at the facility where they are accommodated, from information leaflets, or from employees of the MO.

Additionally, in 2024, the MO, in cooperation with the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University in Bratislava and UNHCR, prepared a simplified version of the instructions for asylum seekers drafted in plain language, which is also available online in 13 languages.¹⁹² This simplified version does not replace the official brochure containing information on the rights and obligations of asylum seekers; rather, it is provided to applicants together with the original version.

1.1 Information on Dublin

The brochure containing instructions for asylum seekers on their rights and obligations, referred to in the previous section, is provided to all applicants for international protection, including those subject to the Dublin procedure. It includes a dedicated section outlining the Dublin Regulation and the Dublin procedure. While the information presented in the brochure is of a general nature, applicants whose cases are channelled into the Dublin procedure are subsequently provided with more detailed information. They are provided with a four-page information leaflet entitled “Information on the Dublin Regulation for Applicants for International Protection under Article 4 of Regulation (EU) No. 604/2013” (*Informácie o Dublinskom nariadení pre žiadateľov o medzinárodnú ochranu podľa článku 4 Nariadenia (EÚ) č. 604/2013*). The document is in a Q&A format and also contains contact details for the MO, the Office for Personal Data Protection, the BBFP PFP, the UNHCR, the Centre for Legal Aid, and the IOM. However, it does not include contact details for NGOs providing assistance to refugees. Additionally, they are also provided with Dublin leaflet prepared by the EUAA.

1.2 Information at the border

There is insufficient information about the right to apply for asylum provided to foreigners at the border crossing points and the foreign police departments.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Plain version of the brochure in [English](#).

The Act on Residence of Foreigners provides that where circumstances indicate that an individual intends to seek international protection, the police department at the border crossing point shall provide information on the possibility of applying for asylum.¹⁹³ The interpretation shall be ensured to the extent necessary to facilitate access to the asylum procedure.¹⁹⁴ In practice, the provision is rarely applied.¹⁹⁵

2. Access to NGOs and UNHCR

Indicators: Access to NGOs and UNHCR

1. Do asylum seekers located at the border have effective access to NGOs and UNHCR if they wish so in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No
2. Do asylum seekers in detention centres have effective access to NGOs and UNHCR if they wish so in practice? ☐ Yes ☒ With difficulty ☐ No
3. Do asylum seekers accommodated in remote locations on the territory (excluding borders) have effective access to NGOs and UNHCR if they wish so in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

The main organisations providing assistance to asylum seekers in Slovakia are the Human Rights League (HRL) and the Slovak Humanitarian Council (SHC). For more information on the legal services provided by HRL to refugees and asylum seekers, see [Regular Procedure: Legal Assistance](#).

From April 2024 to December 2026, SHC has been implementing the E.S.O. project funded through AMIF, aimed at ensuring comprehensive care and complementary support for asylum seekers, applicants for temporary protection, and holders of temporary protection accommodated in asylum facilities of the MO, and UAMs applying for asylum accommodated in the Centre for Children and Families in Medzilaborce. The project's main activities include the provision of social, psychological, and legal assistance to the target groups.¹⁹⁶

Following the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, SHC provided information services to incoming third-country nationals at three border crossing points on the Slovak-Ukrainian border, namely Ubl'a, Vyšné Nemecké, and Veľké Slemence. The provision of information was carried out in cooperation with the local border police departments and the UNHCR. These services are no longer available.

Regarding the access of NGOs to reception facilities, see [Access to reception centres by third parties](#) and to detention centres, see [Access to detention facilities](#).

H. Differential treatment of specific nationalities in the procedure

Indicators: Treatment of Specific Nationalities

1. Are applications from specific nationalities considered manifestly well-founded? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Are applications from specific nationalities considered manifestly unfounded?¹⁹⁷ ☐ Yes ☒ No

There are no formal policies or guidelines providing for differential treatment based on nationality. However, certain recurring practices and trends can be identified.

According to statistical data from the determining authority over the past five years (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025), applications lodged by **Afghan, Syrian and Belarusian** nationals have generally been regarded as well-founded. Afghan and Belarusian applicants are typically granted asylum, while Syrian

¹⁹³ Article 126(9) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Based on HRL's experience.

¹⁹⁶ More details about the SHC's AMIF project E.S.O. can be found (in Slovak) [here](#).

¹⁹⁷ Whether under the "safe country of origin" concept or otherwise.

applicants are predominantly provided with subsidiary protection. The fall of the Assad regime did not result in any observable change in this practice. By contrast, the majority of applications submitted by **Moroccan** nationals are either rejected as inadmissible/manifestly unfounded or refused on the merits.

Reception Conditions

Short overview of the reception system

Responsibility for the reception of applicants for international protection in Slovakia lies with the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior (MO), which operates the national reception system and accommodation facilities. Applicants are granted access to material reception conditions from the moment they express the intention to apply for asylum and are subsequently registered in the asylum procedure. Initial accommodation is provided in a reception centre where basic needs, including accommodation, food and essential services, are ensured.

Applicants remain entitled to reception conditions for the duration of the asylum procedure. Following the granting of international protection, beneficiaries may continue to stay in accommodation facilities for a limited transitional period intended to facilitate integration and access to housing on the private market.

Reception conditions cease once a final decision is issued in the asylum procedure, including both negative decisions and decisions granting international protection, as the persons concerned no longer hold the status of asylum applicants.

The Slovak reception system is primarily based on collective accommodation centres operated by the state. The system includes a reception centre used mainly for newly arrived applicants and identification procedures, as well as open accommodation centres intended for applicants whose procedure is ongoing. Facilities differ in size and function but generally consist of shared accommodation units with common sanitary facilities and communal services. Families are typically accommodated together, while single adults are housed separately.

Applicants for international protection are placed in the Reception Centre in Humenné immediately after lodging their application with the Asylum Department of the Police Force in Humenné. They typically remain in this facility for approximately three weeks, until the completion of medical screening procedures aimed at excluding infectious diseases.

After completing the initial reception phase, applicants are either placed in an accommodation centre or allowed to reside outside the accommodation centre. The MOI may also place an applicant in an integration centre for a necessary period.¹⁹⁸ In practice, single men are accommodated in Accommodation Centre Rohovce. Women and families are accommodated in Accommodation Centre Opatovská Nová Ves. Unaccompanied children are accommodated in the Centre for Children and Families in Medzilaborce, regardless of their status as applicants for international protection. If the applicant is an unaccompanied child, he or she is obliged, unless prevented by serious reasons, to report to an accommodation centre within three days of reaching the age of majority; this shall not apply if the applicant has requested to remain in a child protection and social guardianship facility.¹⁹⁹

Applicants may be authorised to reside outside an accommodation centre upon a written request for a period of up to three months, which may be extended repeatedly. Such permission is conditional upon proof that the applicant is able to cover the costs of accommodation independently or that a third person legally residing in Slovakia undertakes to provide accommodation and cover all related expenses.²⁰⁰

Applicants accommodated in reception facilities may attend Slovak language courses organised by the MOI. The authorities are also required to provide psychological counselling, social counselling or other forms of support based on individual needs, including cultural orientation courses. In the case of minors, such services must also be provided where necessary for the child's development. In practice, these services are provided by SHC, within the AMIF-funded project E.S.O.

¹⁹⁸ Article 22(2) of the Asylum Act

¹⁹⁹ Article 23d(2) of the Asylum Act

²⁰⁰ Article 22(3) of the Asylum Act

A. Access and forms of reception conditions

1. Criteria and restrictions to access reception conditions

Indicators: Criteria and Restrictions to Reception Conditions

1. Does the law allow access to material reception conditions for asylum seekers in the following stages of the asylum procedure?

❖ Regular procedure	☒ Yes	☐ Reduced material conditions	☐ No
❖ Dublin procedure	☒ Yes	☐ Reduced material conditions	☐ No
❖ First appeal	☒ Yes	☐ Reduced material conditions	☐ No
❖ Onward appeal	☒ Yes	☐ Reduced material conditions	☐ No
❖ Subsequent application	☒ Yes	☐ Reduced material conditions	☐ No
2. Is there a requirement in the law that only asylum seekers who lack resources are entitled to material reception conditions?

☐ Yes	☒ No
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Asylum applicants are entitled to material reception conditions from the moment they acquire the status of an asylum applicant, i.e. immediately after their application for international protection has been registered by the Asylum Unit of the Police Force. Following the registration of their application, applicants are transferred to the Reception Centre in Humenné, where they are accommodated and provided with reception conditions. In practice, the allocation of a room may be delayed if the application is lodged during evening or night hours outside the working hours of the reception centre staff. In such cases, applicants spend the night in a designated waiting room before being assigned accommodation.

The entitlement to material reception conditions continues throughout the entire asylum procedure, including all judicial appeal proceedings, for as long as the individual retains the status of an asylum seeker. No distinction is made between different stages of the asylum procedure regarding access to reception conditions, and no reduced reception conditions apply in specific procedures.

As a general rule, material reception conditions are provided free of charge. However, the Ministry of the Interior may decide that an asylum seeker is required to contribute, in whole or in part, to the costs associated with accommodation in an asylum facility or integration centre, or to the costs of healthcare provided, where the applicant's financial or property situation indicates that such a contribution can reasonably be expected.²⁰¹ The assessment is carried out on an individual basis and the law does not establish a specific financial threshold triggering such an obligation. Due, at least in part, to the relatively low number of asylum seekers in Slovakia, material reception conditions are generally provided to all asylum seekers without any assessment of their financial situation and without requiring contributions towards accommodation, subsistence or healthcare costs.

Asylum seekers are asked about their financial situation at several stages of the asylum procedure. Information regarding financial resources is typically collected by police officers when the asylum application is lodged and is subsequently discussed during the initial asylum interview conducted by the MO. However, these questions are asked in the context of the asylum procedure rather than for the purpose of determining eligibility for reception conditions. Details concerning an applicant's financial resources are not routinely shared with the management or staff of reception facilities and do not appear to play a role in the day-to-day provision of reception conditions.

2. Forms and levels of material reception conditions

Indicators: Forms and Levels of Material Reception Conditions

1. Amount of the monthly financial allowance/vouchers granted to asylum seekers as of 31 December 2025: approx. 30 EUR

While residing in an asylum facility or integration centre, applicants are entitled to material reception conditions free of charge, including accommodation, food or financial allowance for food, basic hygiene

²⁰¹ Article 23(5) of the Asylum Act.

items and other items necessary for subsistence.²⁰² During their stay in the Accommodation Centre, asylum seekers may participate in Slovak language courses provided by the Ministry of the Interior.²⁰³ In addition to material reception conditions, asylum seekers may receive psychological counselling, social counselling, other specialised counselling services and cultural orientation courses. These services are provided on the basis of an individual assessment of the applicant's needs. For children, such support may also be provided where necessary to promote their healthy development and well-being.²⁰⁴

Applicants are also provided with a financial allowance ("pocket money"), paid monthly, in the amount of €1 per day for adults and €0.50 per day for children under 18,²⁰⁵ unless specific exclusion grounds apply.

Pocket money shall not be granted to an applicant:

- if the applicant has lodged a subsequent application for asylum and the previous asylum procedure was discontinued pursuant to Article 19(1)(a), (c), (f), (g) or (i) of the Asylum Act,
- if the applicant attempted to enter the territory of another state unlawfully,
- if the applicant voluntarily left the territory of the Slovak Republic and was subsequently returned to the territory of the Slovak Republic,
- if the applicant is employed or has other income at least in the amount of the subsistence minimum for one adult person under a special regulation,
- or if the Ministry has decided that the applicant is obliged to contribute proportionately to the costs associated with his or her stay in an asylum facility or integration centre or to the costs of provided healthcare, where the applicant's financial or property situation allows at least partial reimbursement of such costs.

In the Accommodation Centers in Rohovce and in Opatovská Nová Ves, the amount of financial allowance may be increased up to €1.50 per day for applicants performing work activities within the facility.²⁰⁶

Asylum seekers in Slovakia are treated less favourably than Slovak nationals regarding access to social benefits and material support. This difference stems from the fact that most social welfare schemes are linked either to Slovak citizenship or to a specific residence status, such as permanent or temporary residence. Asylum seekers, whose stay in the country is based on their status as applicants for international protection rather than a residence permit, are therefore excluded from a significant part of the social protection system available to nationals and legally residing third-country nationals.

3. Reduction or withdrawal of reception conditions

Indicators: Reduction or Withdrawal of Reception Conditions

1. Does the law provide for the possibility to reduce material reception conditions?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the law provide for the possibility to withdraw material reception conditions?
☒ Yes ☐ No

Slovak legislation provides for the possibility of reducing certain material reception conditions in specific circumstances. While accommodation and food remain available to asylum seekers throughout the asylum procedure as long as they retain asylum seeker status, the law allows for the withdrawal of pocket money and, in some cases, basic hygiene products.

Pocket money is not provided to asylum seekers in a number of situations prescribed by law, including where the applicant has lodged a subsequent application following the discontinuation of a previous asylum procedure, attempted an unauthorised entry into another country, voluntarily left the territory of Slovakia and was subsequently returned, or where the applicant is employed or receives an income at least equivalent to the subsistence minimum.²⁰⁷ Basic hygiene products may also be withheld where the

²⁰² Article 22(4) of the Asylum Act.

²⁰³ Article 22(6) of the Asylum Act.

²⁰⁴ Article 22(7) of the Asylum Act.

²⁰⁵ Article 2(3) of the Internal Rules of the Accommodation Center in Opatovská Nová Ves.

²⁰⁶ Article 2(3) of the Internal Rules of the Accommodation Centre Opatovská Nová Ves.

²⁰⁷ Article 22(8) of the Asylum Act.

applicant has an income at least equivalent to the subsistence minimum.²⁰⁸ Furthermore, the Ministry of the Interior may decide that an asylum seeker is required to contribute to the costs of accommodation in an asylum facility or integration centre, or to healthcare costs, if the applicant's financial or property situation is such that a contribution can reasonably be expected.²⁰⁹

In 2024 and 2025, HRL recorded two cases involving asylum seekers accommodated in the Accommodation Centre in Opatovská Nová Ves whose pocket money was withdrawn following alleged disputes with other asylum seekers and reception centre staff.

During the reference period, HRL is not aware of any cases in which the Ministry of the Interior applied Section 23(5) of the Asylum Act and required an asylum seeker to contribute to the costs of accommodation, healthcare or other reception-related expenses on the basis of their financial or property situation.

A relevant judgment concerning the reception conditions and their withdrawal was issued by the Administrative Court in Košice on 25 November 2024.²¹⁰ The case concerned an asylum applicant who had been accommodated in a reception facility and was subsequently detained on the grounds of alleged threats to public order following incidents in the accommodation centre. The court annulled the detention decision and ordered the applicant's immediate release.

The case arose after the MO reported escalating conflicts involving the applicant in the reception facility, including allegations of aggressive behaviour. The police authorities relied primarily on documentation provided by the reception facility and NGO staff when ordering detention. A significant part of the documentation submitted by the management of the reception facility consisted of official records relating to the applicant's complaints about material conditions in the centre, which were subsequently used as supporting evidence in the detention proceedings.

However, the court found substantial deficiencies in the reasoning of the detention decision, including the absence of a proper evaluation of evidence and insufficient justification of the necessity of detention. These shortcomings rendered the decision unreviewable and therefore unlawful.

The judgment also addressed the relationship between disciplinary measures within the reception system and detention. The applicant argued that, under the Reception Conditions Directive, violations of internal rules in reception centres may justify only measures such as restriction or withdrawal of material reception conditions, rather than deprivation of liberty. The court accepted the relevance of this argument in principle and criticised the authorities for failing to consider less severe measures available within the reception system before resorting to detention. In particular, the court noted that the MO has the power to impose sanctions for breaches of internal rules and that alternative measures — such as transfer to another reception facility or adjustment of internal regime — had not been properly examined.

Following his release from detention, the applicant was re-accommodated in the Accommodation Centre in Opatovská Nová Ves, where material reception conditions were provided in full.

4. Freedom of movement

Indicators: Freedom of Movement

1. Is there a mechanism for the dispersal of applicants across the territory of the country?
☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Does the law provide for restrictions on freedom of movement? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Asylum seekers in Slovakia who are not detained are not subject to a general legal restriction on freedom of movement within the territory of the State. There is no dispersal scheme allocating applicants to specific geographic regions. However, material reception conditions are provided only while the applicant resides

²⁰⁸ Article 22(9) of the Asylum Act.

²⁰⁹ Article 23(5) of the Asylum Act.

²¹⁰ Administrative court in Košice, 9Saz/4/2024, 25. November 2024, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

in an asylum facility operated by the MO. As a result, access to reception support is linked in practice to residence in a designated reception centre.

The allocation to a particular facility is organised administratively by the MO and is not based on a formal dispersal mechanism across regions. In practice, applicants usually remain in the same accommodation facility throughout the asylum procedure after the initial reception phase, and transfers between centres are relatively uncommon.

B. Housing

1. Types of accommodation

Indicators: Types of Accommodation

1. Number of reception centres: 3
2. Total number of places in the reception system:
3. Total number of places in private accommodation: not applicable
4. Type of accommodation most frequently used in a regular procedure:
☒ Reception centre ☐ Hotel or hostel ☐ Emergency shelter ☐ Private housing ☐ Other

Capacity and occupancy of the asylum reception system: (2025)		
Centre	Capacity	Occupancy at end (2025)
Reception Center Humenné	524	n/a
Accommodation Center Opatovská Nová Ves	148	n/a
Accommodation Center Rohovce	140	n/a
Total	812	

Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Interior.

The Slovak reception system for applicants for international protection consists of a small number of state-run reception facilities operated by the MO. The system includes three main types of centres: a **Reception Centre** used primarily for newly arrived applicants and initial procedures (Humenné), **Accommodation Centres** for applicants whose asylum procedure is ongoing (Rohovce and Opatovská Nová Ves), and an **Integration Centre** intended mainly for persons granted international protection during the initial integration phase (Zvolen).

The accommodation centres are generally open facilities providing collective housing. Reception centres are managed by the MO, which is responsible for the organisation of accommodation, provision of material reception conditions and overall functioning of the reception system. The management of reception facilities is centralised at the national level.

Non-governmental organisations play a complementary role within reception centres, primarily through project-based services funded by national or EU sources, including social counselling, psychological support, cultural mediation and integration-related activities (SHC). However, NGOs do not have responsibility for the overall management of the facilities.

Other types of accommodation, such as hotels or emergency shelters, are not used within the asylum reception framework and are not part of the standard reception scheme.

Reception facilities for asylum seekers are funded from the State budget and operated by the MO. The costs related to accommodation, material reception conditions and the operation of the facilities are

therefore borne by the State. Services and activities provided by non-governmental organisations within reception facilities, including psycho - social support, leisure activities, educational programmes and other complementary services, are primarily funded through projects supported by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

2. Conditions in reception facilities

Indicators: Conditions in Reception Facilities

1. Are there instances of asylum seekers not having access to reception accommodation because of a shortage of places? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. What is the average length of stay of asylum seekers in the reception centres? Not available
3. Are unaccompanied children ever accommodated with adults in practice? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Are single women and men accommodated separately? ☒ Yes ☐ No

2.1 Overall conditions

The Public Defender of Rights, acting in its capacity as the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under OPCAT, carried out unannounced monitoring visits to the reception facilities Rohovce and Opatovská Nová Ves in February 2025.²¹¹ Both facilities are operated by the MO and accommodate asylum applicants as well as other categories of foreign nationals, including persons granted temporary protection. At the time of the visits, occupancy levels were relatively low compared to the overall capacity of 140 places per facility. Rohovce is primarily used for single adult men, whereas Opatovská Nová Ves accommodates mainly families with children and other vulnerable persons.

Material reception conditions were generally assessed as adequate. Facilities appeared calm and spacious, with access to outdoor areas, shared kitchens, laundry rooms, and storage facilities. Residents had access to lockable storage for personal belongings. Bathrooms provided a degree of privacy through partitioned shower spaces. However, certain shortcomings were identified, particularly in Opatovská Nová Ves, including insufficient room size for larger families, damaged furniture in common areas, and missing equipment such as blinds or insect screens. The monitoring body recommended taking family needs into account when allocating accommodation and improving infrastructure during future renovations.

Nevertheless, some residents in Opatovská Nová Ves reported insufficient awareness of available activities and expressed a need for more organised group activities, particularly for children. The monitoring body identified physical separation between accommodation areas and staff offices as a possible factor affecting communication and recommended more proactive outreach by staff within residential areas.

Leisure and daily activities are organised with the support of cultural mediators and social workers. Activities include social events, language courses, sports opportunities, and, in some cases, participation in local community initiatives such as sports clubs. Children accommodated in Opatovská Nová Ves attend school in a nearby municipality and may receive additional language support. Residents may also participate in maintenance work within the facilities and receive small remuneration. Nevertheless, some residents in Opatovská Nová Ves reported insufficient awareness of available activities and expressed a need for more organised group activities, particularly for children. The monitoring body identified physical separation between accommodation areas and staff offices as a possible factor affecting communication and recommended more proactive outreach by staff within residential areas.

Food is provided three times daily in both facilities, with the possibility for residents to cook independently using their own supplies. While satisfaction with catering improved in Rohovce after a change of provider, residents in Opatovská Nová Ves reported dissatisfaction with the quality and diversity of food, including

²¹¹ Public Defender of Rights, *Pobytové tábory: Rohovce a Opatovská Nová Ves – Správa z monitoringu národného preventívneho mechanizmu*, 17 June 2025, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

insufficient fruit, vegetables, and dairy products, particularly for children. The monitoring body recommended improvements in dietary diversity.

Clothing and hygiene items are distributed periodically, supplemented by donations and project funding managed by NGOs. While basic needs are generally met, some residents raised concerns regarding the limited quantity and choice of hygiene products. The monitoring body recommended ensuring sufficient supplies for persons with higher needs.

Healthcare is provided at a basic level, with visiting medical staff and referral to external specialists where necessary. In Rohovce, a doctor attends weekly and a health assistant is present several times per week, while in Opatovská Nová Ves a nurse attends twice per week. Residents may be accompanied to local healthcare providers when needed, including specialist and psychiatric services. The monitoring body concluded that access to healthcare and medication was generally ensured, including for persons without financial resources.

Psychological support is available in both facilities but with important differences. In Opatovská Nová Ves, psychological services are provided during working hours on weekdays. In Rohovce, however, psychological services are limited to approximately once per week due to staffing constraints, despite evidence of significant mental health needs among residents. The monitoring body therefore recommended strengthening psychological staffing, ideally through the recruitment of a full-time psychologist.

The monitoring also examined mechanisms for identifying vulnerable persons. Initial screening primarily takes place in the reception centre Humenné, with information recorded in an internal database accessible to staff across facilities. A structured “social profile” tool is used to document vulnerabilities and guide interventions. Nevertheless, the monitoring body recommended further staff training, particularly in line with the Istanbul Protocol, to improve identification of victims of torture and trauma.

The MO provided a written response to the recommendations issued by the Public Defender of Rights following the monitoring visits to the reception centres in Rohovce and Opatovská Nová Ves in February 2025.²¹² The authorities generally acknowledged the identified issues and expressed willingness to implement several measures, while also pointing to structural or legislative constraints affecting certain recommendations.

Concerning vulnerability identification and staff training, the MO stated that employees of reception facilities regularly participate in training activities organised by UNHCR, IOM and the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), including modules related to vulnerability. Additional regional training activities were planned for the near future.

In response to the recommendation to strengthen psychological support in Rohovce, the MO reported that it had contacted the SHC, acting as an implementing partner under an AMIF-funded project, with the aim of ensuring the presence of a full-time psychologist in the facility.

Regarding accommodation conditions in Opatovská Nová Ves, the authorities indicated that efforts are made within existing capacity constraints to take into account the needs of families when allocating rooms. Planned renovations include structural adjustments to create larger rooms suitable for families, as well as the installation of blinds and insect screens, while improvements of common areas would depend on available financial resources.

With respect to communication with residents and organisation of leisure activities, staff and cultural mediators were instructed to regularly display information about activities on notice boards and to proactively engage residents in available programmes.

²¹² The response is available [here](#).

Finally, concerning nutrition, the MO reported cooperation with the SHC within a national food redistribution project aimed at increasing the provision of fruit, vegetables and dairy products in asylum facilities.

Prosecutorial supervision in asylum facilities and integration centres is governed by an internal regulation of the General Prosecutor's Office adopted in May 2023²¹³. Under this framework, competent prosecutors are required to verify whether the authorities managing asylum facilities comply with applicable legislation, including respect for the rights of foreign nationals, protection of vulnerable persons, and lawful conduct of asylum procedures. Supervision also covers procedural aspects such as the timely delivery of decisions, access to information in a language understood by the person concerned, handling of complaints submitted by residents, and compliance of administrative measures with legal requirements. Prosecutorial inspections are to be carried out regularly, at least once every six months, as well as on an ad hoc basis where necessary, including in response to complaints, information obtained from the media, or other relevant findings. During inspections, prosecutors examine documentation, including case files of the MO related to asylum proceedings of persons accommodated in the facilities, as well as the legality of decisions concerning accommodation arrangements, including permissions for residence outside accommodation centres.

Where violations of law are identified, prosecutors are required to adopt appropriate measures under the Act on Prosecution, including initiating corrective actions, notifying competent authorities, or, where relevant, initiating judicial proceedings or lodging protests against unlawful decisions. The regulation also establishes obligations to report serious incidents occurring in asylum facilities, such as injuries, allegations of ill-treatment, escapes, or violent incidents involving residents.

A relevant judgment concerning the reception conditions was issued by the Administrative Court in Košice on 25 November 2024.²¹⁴ The case concerned an asylum applicant who had been accommodated in a reception facility and was subsequently detained on the grounds of alleged threats to public order following incidents in the accommodation centre. The court annulled the detention decision and ordered the applicant's immediate release.

The case arose after the MO reported escalating conflicts involving the applicant in the reception facility, including allegations of aggressive behaviour. The police authorities relied primarily on documentation provided by the reception facility and NGO staff when ordering detention. A significant part of the documentation submitted by the management of the reception facility consisted of official records relating to the applicant's complaints about material conditions in the centre, which were subsequently used as supporting evidence in the detention proceedings.

However, the court found substantial deficiencies in the reasoning of the detention decision, including the absence of a proper evaluation of evidence and insufficient justification of the necessity of detention. These shortcomings rendered the decision unreviewable and therefore unlawful.

The judgment also addressed the relationship between disciplinary measures within the reception system and detention. The applicant argued that, under the Reception Conditions Directive, violations of internal rules in reception centres may justify only measures such as restriction or withdrawal of material reception conditions, rather than deprivation of liberty. The court accepted the relevance of this argument in principle and criticised the authorities for failing to consider less severe measures available within the reception system before resorting to detention. In particular, the court noted that the MO has the power to impose sanctions for breaches of internal rules and that alternative measures - such as transfer to another reception facility or adjustment of internal regime - had not been properly examined.

²¹³ Instruction of the Prosecutor General of the Slovak Republic No. 5/2023 of 26 May 2023 on the procedure of prosecutors in the supervision of compliance with legality in asylum facilities and integration centres

²¹⁴ Administrative court in Košice, 9Saz/4/2024, 25 November 2024, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

2.2 Activities in the centres

Activities and leisure opportunities are available in asylum reception centres. Asylum seekers may move freely within the premises of the reception facility and have access to common rooms, outdoor recreational areas, playgrounds and spaces designated for sports and exercise. Additional educational, social and leisure activities may also be organised by non-governmental organisations operating in the facilities, depending on available funding and project activities. These activities are available to both adults and children and may include language courses, workshops, recreational events and other integration-oriented activities.

Information on the number of staff employed in asylum reception centres is not publicly available. However, based on testimonies collected by the HRL from asylum seekers residing in the facilities, staffing levels generally appear to be sufficient to ensure the day-to-day functioning of the centres and the provision of basic services. According to the Asylum Act, persons working with foreign nationals in asylum facilities are required to receive appropriate training and, where necessary, refresher training, particularly with regard to the needs of vulnerable persons.²¹⁵ However, no information is publicly available on the frequency, content or practical implementation of such training programmes.

2.3 Length of stay

Accommodation in asylum reception facilities is directly linked to the status of an applicant for international protection. As long as a person retains the status of an asylum seeker, regardless of the stage of the asylum procedure, he or she is entitled to reside in and receive accommodation in the asylum reception system. This entitlement ceases immediately once the person loses asylum seeker status. This may occur either because international protection has been granted or because all available remedies against a negative asylum decision have been exhausted, including the dismissal of a cassation appeal. In such cases, individuals are required to leave the reception facility without delay.

Information on the average length of stay of asylum seekers in reception facilities in Slovakia is not publicly available.

C. Employment and education

1. Access to the labour market

Indicators: Access to the Labour Market

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Does the law allow for access to the labour market for asylum seekers?
❖ If yes, when do asylum seekers have access the labour market?
after 6 months from the initiation of the asylum procedure | ☒ Yes ☐ No
generally |
| 2. Does the law allow access to employment only following a labour market test? | ☐ Yes ☒ No |
| 3. Does the law only allow asylum seekers to work in specific sectors?
❖ If yes, specify which sectors: | ☐ Yes ☒ No
Insert |
| 4. Does the law limit asylum seekers' employment to a maximum working time?
❖ If yes, specify the number of days per year | ☐ Yes ☒ No
Insert |
| 5. Are there restrictions to accessing employment in practice? | ☒ Yes ☐ No |

Applicants for international protection are entitled to access the labour market after six months from the initiation of the asylum procedure, except where the administrative action against the decision of the Ministry issued in the asylum procedure does not have suspensive effect and the administrative court has not granted suspensive effect, or where the cassation court has not granted suspensive effect to a

²¹⁵ Article 39(4) of the Asylum Act.

cassation complaint against the decision of the administrative court concerning the administrative action against the Ministry's decision in the asylum procedure.²¹⁶

Applicants remain entitled to remain employed during the court's examination of the request for suspensive effect pursuant to the previous paragraph, provided that, at the time of employment, the applicant fulfilled the conditions set out therein.²¹⁷

In practice, upon request by an applicant for international protection, the MO issues a confirmation certifying the applicant's entitlement to access the labour market. However, many employers are unfamiliar with this type of confirmation and with the legal status of asylum seekers more generally. Employers often express concerns about the risk of unlawful employment, particularly when the confirmation is presented together with asylum seeker identification documents that differ from standard residence permits. As a result, in some cases legal representatives supporting applicants need to communicate directly with employers to explain the applicable legal framework and confirm that employment is lawful. In addition, applicants face practical barriers to employment, including language difficulties and logistical challenges related to commuting to potential workplaces. Both accommodation centres for asylum seekers are located in rural areas, which may limit access to employment opportunities and increase transportation costs and time requirements.

Asylum seekers do not have access to state-funded vocational training schemes specifically designed for jobseekers or beneficiaries of social assistance.

2. Access to education

Indicators: Access to Education

1. Does the law provide for access to education for asylum-seeking children? ☒ Yes ☐ No

2. Are children able to access education in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Asylum-seeking children are subject to compulsory schooling under the same conditions as Slovak nationals. Compulsory education applies from the age of 6 until the age of 16.²¹⁸ In practice, however, access to education depends on the stage of the asylum procedure and the type of reception facility in which the child is accommodated. Children residing in the Reception Centre in Humenné do not attend school during their stay in the facility. Access to formal education is generally ensured only after transfer to the Accommodation Centre in Opatovská Nová Ves, where most families with children are accommodated.

Children residing in the Accommodation Centre attend the Primary School and Kindergarten in the nearby municipality of Nenince. Education is provided within the regular public education system and children are enrolled in a state school together with other pupils. No separate educational facilities for asylum-seeking children exist within the reception system. Children attending the local school are transported between the accommodation centre and the school by a dedicated school bus. The school provides access to a school psychologist, who conducts regular sessions with the children. The outcomes of these consultations are communicated to parents through written reports prepared in Slovak.

No specific accelerated education programmes for out-of-school youth have been identified. Similarly, no special educational schemes or vocational training programmes tailored specifically to asylum-seeking children or young adults are available within the reception system.

²¹⁶ Article 23(6) of the Asylum Act.

²¹⁷ Article 23(7) of the Asylum Act.

²¹⁸ Article 19(2) of the School Act.

D. Health care

Indicators: Health Care

1. Is access to emergency healthcare for asylum seekers guaranteed in national legislation?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Do asylum seekers have adequate access to health care in practice?
☐ Yes ☒ Limited ☐ No
3. Is specialised treatment for victims of torture or traumatised asylum seekers available in practice?
☐ Yes ☐ Limited ☒ No
4. If material conditions are reduced or withdrawn, are asylum seekers still given access to health care?
☒ Yes ☐ Limited ☐ No

Asylum seekers are entitled to emergency healthcare during the asylum procedure. Emergency healthcare covers situations involving a threat to life or a serious deterioration of the applicant's health condition. In certain individual cases, healthcare beyond emergency treatment may also be provided where justified by the applicant's medical condition. The necessity of such treatment is assessed by the physician working in the reception facility or by a medical specialist. Asylum seekers' health insurance contributions are not paid by the State.²¹⁹

Asylum seekers do not have the right to freely choose their doctor or healthcare provider.²²⁰ Primary healthcare is provided through medical staff operating within the asylum reception system, including doctors and nurses working in reception facilities. Where specialised medical treatment is required, the healthcare personnel of the facility arrange appointments with external specialists.

Applicants residing outside reception facilities remain entitled to the same scope of healthcare. However, they are generally required to travel to the designated reception facility in order to access medical services and referrals. Entitlement to healthcare is documented through a certificate issued by the MO, commonly referred to as the "yellow card", which asylum seekers are required to carry and protect against loss or damage.

Unlike asylum seekers, persons held in immigration detention are covered by health insurance contributions paid by the State. Asylum seekers accommodated in immigration detention facilities also have access to healthcare services. A nurse is available in the facility, while a physician visits on a regular basis. Where specialised medical examinations or treatment are required, applicants are transported to external healthcare providers under police escort.

Specialised treatment for asylum seekers with mental health problems, including survivors of torture, trafficking in human beings, gender-based violence or other forms of serious psychological and physical violence, is not regulated through a dedicated specialised reception framework. While Slovak legislation requires the authorities to take into account the special needs of vulnerable applicants and to provide appropriate reception conditions following an individual assessment, it does not establish a specific system of specialised rehabilitation or treatment services for these categories of applicants.

In practice, asylum seekers may be referred to psychologists, psychiatrists or other medical specialists where such needs are identified. However, specialised programmes specifically designed for torture survivors, victims of trafficking or gender-based violence are not generally available within the reception system. Access to mental health support therefore depends largely on the availability of local healthcare providers and, in some cases, on support provided by non-governmental organisations operating in reception facilities.

Similarly, there is no specific framework guaranteeing gender-sensitive healthcare services for vulnerable asylum seekers. Female applicants may access gynaecological care, prenatal healthcare and paediatric services through the general healthcare system where required. However, asylum seekers do not have the right to choose their healthcare provider and cannot generally request treatment by a medical

²¹⁹ Article 11(7) of the Health Insurance Act.

²²⁰ Article 11(6) of the Act on Healthcare.

professional of a particular gender. Access to psychosocial support is available only to a limited extent and depends on local capacities and available services.

Practical barriers include the absence of interpretation during medical examinations, which may significantly affect communication between patients and healthcare providers. Language barriers therefore remain one of the most important obstacles to effective healthcare access. Additional challenges may arise from limited availability of specialised services, geographical distance to healthcare providers and the dependency of asylum seekers on the reception system for arranging medical appointments and referrals.

E. Special reception needs of vulnerable groups

Indicators: Special Reception Needs

1. Is there an assessment of special reception needs of vulnerable persons in practice?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Under Slovak law, the authorities are required to take into account the special reception needs of vulnerable applicants identified through an individual assessment of their situation. The law provides that appropriate reception conditions shall be adapted to the specific needs of vulnerable persons and may include measures aimed at preventing attacks and violence, as well as the provision of protection to victims of trafficking in human beings.

For the purposes of reception conditions, vulnerable persons include in particular minors, persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of trafficking in human beings, persons suffering from serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders, and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence.²²¹

The identification of applicants with special reception needs prior to their placement in accommodation centres does not appear to follow a fully standardised or systematic procedure. According to findings of the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsperson) acting as the National Preventive Mechanism, vulnerability screening is primarily conducted during the initial reception phase, and information is subsequently recorded in internal documentation accessible to staff across facilities. However, the monitoring indicated that vulnerabilities are often identified only later during the stay in accommodation centres, for example through the work of social staff or healthcare providers.

There is no separate formal monitoring mechanism specifically dedicated to reviewing whether special reception needs continue to be adequately addressed throughout the asylum procedure. In practice, the needs of vulnerable applicants may be identified and followed up by social workers, healthcare staff or other employees of the accommodation centres, as well as by NGOs providing legal or social counselling in the facilities.

Depending on the nature of the vulnerability, applicants may receive medical treatment, psychological or psychiatric support, social counselling, or adapted accommodation arrangements within the existing reception facilities. There are no specialised reception centres for victims of sexual or gender-based violence, domestic violence, human trafficking, torture or other serious forms of physical or psychological violence. Such cases are therefore generally addressed within the ordinary reception system, with referrals to healthcare providers, psychologists, specialised NGOs or other relevant services where available.

Unaccompanied children are accommodated in the Centre for Children and Families in Medzilaborce, regardless of their status as applicants for international protection. If the applicant is an unaccompanied children, he or she is obliged, unless prevented by serious reasons, to report to an accommodation centre

²²¹ Article 39(1) of the Asylum Act.

within three days of reaching the age of majority; this shall not apply if the applicant has requested to remain in a child protection and social guardianship facility.

Measures to prevent gender-based violence or to ensure child protection within reception centres are not set out in a detailed specialised framework. In practice, protection is ensured mainly through the general operation of the facilities, the presence of social workers and healthcare staff, internal rules, and the possibility to report incidents to facility staff or competent authorities. Women may have access to female staff members in some facilities, including social workers or healthcare personnel, but this is not guaranteed in all situations, particularly as regards interpretation or interviews. No specific safe spaces for women or children appear to be systematically established in all reception centres.

Families are normally accommodated together in the same facility and, where possible, in the same room or accommodation unit. Separation of family members does not appear to be a standard practice and would generally occur only where required by specific circumstances, such as health, safety, capacity or child protection considerations.

There is no publicly available information indicating whether binding guidelines, standard operating procedures or regular specialised training specifically tailored to applicants with special reception needs are systematically applied across all reception facilities. Staff may receive training on vulnerable groups or child protection through ad hoc activities, including training organised by international organisations, NGOs or public institutions.

F. Information for asylum seekers and access to reception centres

1. Provision of information on reception

Under Slovak law, asylum seekers must be informed about their rights and obligations related to reception conditions, including the rules governing accommodation in reception facilities and the services available to them during the asylum procedure. Information on daily life within reception facilities is primarily provided through the internal rules of the respective facilities.

In practice, each asylum reception facility displays its internal house rules (“camp rules”) in a publicly accessible place, typically on notice boards located in common areas. These rules are generally available in Slovak and English and contain information on the functioning of the facility, residents’ rights and obligations, daily schedules, and behavioural requirements within the accommodation centre.

Based on the experience of the HRL and interviews conducted with asylum seekers residing in reception facilities, many residents rely on mobile translation applications to translate the camp rules into their native languages. In some cases, asylum seekers reported that they were not aware of the existence of these rules or had not received adequate information about them. For this reason, asylum seekers often seek information regarding the functioning of the reception facility, as well as their rights and obligations, from their legal representatives, reception facility staff, or officials of the MO who conduct their asylum interviews. Given the relatively low number of asylum seekers residing in reception facilities, applicants generally have regular and direct access to reception centre staff, including the management of the facilities, on a daily basis.

2. Access to reception centres by third parties

Indicators: Access to Reception Centres

1. Do family members, legal advisers, UNHCR and/or NGOs have access to reception centres?
- ☐ Yes ☒ With limitations ☐ No

The internal rules explicitly provide that access to the reception centre may be granted to selected representatives of applicants, representatives of non-governmental organisations and international organisations, in particular the Office of the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration

(IOM), as well as embassy staff and other persons authorised to enter the facility. In addition, applicants may receive personal visits within the reception centre during designated visiting hours in premises intended for that purpose (visiting room).

Access is subject to prior authorisation by the MO. External actors, including NGOs and international organisations, may enter only on the basis of a valid permit issued by the competent authority. In practice, legal representatives and other authorised actors must request an entry permit issued by the MO. Permits may be granted either for a single day or for a longer period covering repeated access to specific reception facilities. These permits are signed by the Director of the MO. According to the experience of the HRL, in 2025 all requests submitted for entry permits for the purpose of providing legal counselling in reception centres were approved.

G. Differential treatment of specific nationalities in reception

No cases of differential treatment based on nationality have been identified in the area of reception conditions for asylum seekers in Slovakia.

Detention of Asylum Seekers

A. General

Indicators: General Information on Detention

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Total number of asylum seekers detained in 2025: | 14 |
| 2. Number of asylum seekers in detention at the end of 2025: | 3 |
| 3. Number of detention centres: | 2 |
| 4. Total capacity of detention centres: | 376 |

During 2025, a total of 146 third-country nationals were placed in detention in Slovakia. Detention is carried out in two specialised facilities for third-country nationals, namely the Police Detention Facility for Foreigners (ÚPZC) in Sečovce and the Police Detention Facility for Foreigners (ÚPZC) in Medveďov, with a combined capacity of approximately 376 places. These facilities are used for the detention of irregular migrants, applicants for international protection, as well as third-country nationals for whom expulsion has been ordered by a criminal court in criminal proceedings.

Under Slovak law, the authority responsible for ordering detention is the Police Force, specifically the Border and Foreign Police Directorate of the MoI. Detention decisions are administrative decisions issued by police authorities in accordance with the Act on Residence of Foreigners, subject to judicial review by administrative courts.

Detention does not, as such, affect the procedural course of the asylum procedure. The MO does not prioritise or accelerate the examination of applications solely on the basis that the applicant is detained, and the same procedural guarantees formally apply as in cases of applicants who are not deprived of liberty. The main impact of detention therefore relates to reception conditions rather than to the substance or timing of the asylum procedure itself. Detained applicants remain subject to the specific material conditions and practical limitations inherent in detention, including restricted freedom of movement and dependence on the authorities for access to services.

B. Legal framework of detention

1. Grounds for detention

Indicators: Grounds for Detention

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. In practice, are most asylum seekers detained | | | |
| ❖ on the territory: | ☐ Yes | ☒ No | |
| ❖ at the border: | ☐ Yes | ☒ No | |
| 2. Are asylum seekers detained during a regular procedure in practice? | ☐ Frequently | ☒ Rarely | ☐ Never |
| 3. Are asylum seekers detained during a Dublin procedure in practice? | ☐ Frequently | ☒ Rarely | ☐ Never |

According to the law, an applicant for international protection may be detained by the police only where less coercive alternatives cannot be effectively applied and where detention is necessary to achieve one of the exhaustively listed purposes.

Detention may be ordered:

- (a) in order to establish or verify the applicant's identity or nationality;
- (b) in order to determine the elements on which the application for international protection is based, which could not be obtained in the absence of detention, in particular where there is a risk of absconding;
- (c) where the third-country national concerned has already been detained in the context of administrative expulsion proceedings for the purpose of enforcing removal or an expulsion

penalty, has subsequently lodged an application for international protection, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the application was submitted solely in order to delay or frustrate the enforcement of the removal decision;

- (d) where detention is necessary for reasons of national security or public order; or
- (e) in order to secure the preparation or implementation of a transfer pursuant to a separate legal instrument, where there is a significant risk of absconding.

Applicants for international protection may be detained both in the regular asylum procedure and in Dublin procedures. They are detained together with other categories of detained third-country nationals in both police detention facilities for foreigners. When accommodating a detained third-country national, the facility must take into account the person's age, state of health, family and kinship relations, as well as religious, ethnic or national specificities.

Men, women and persons under 18 years of age must be accommodated separately from unrelated adults of the opposite sex and from older persons. An exception may be made in the case of third-country nationals who are related.

Families must, as a rule, be accommodated together within the facility. Where the facility decides to separate family members, it must ensure that the consequences of such separation are proportionate to the reasons justifying it.

An applicant for international protection may be detained only for the period strictly necessary and for as long as the grounds for detention persist.

The total duration of detention of an applicant for international protection must not exceed **six months** where detention is ordered on one of the following grounds:

- in order to establish or verify the applicant's identity or nationality (point (a));
- in order to determine the elements on which the application for international protection is based, which could not be obtained in the absence of detention, in particular where there is a risk of absconding (point (b));
- where the applicant was previously detained in administrative expulsion proceedings, has subsequently lodged an application for international protection, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the application was submitted solely in order to delay or frustrate the enforcement of the removal decision (point (c)); or
- in order to secure the preparation or implementation of a transfer pursuant to a separate legal instrument, where there is a significant risk of absconding (point (e)).

Where detention is ordered on the ground that it is necessary for reasons of national security or public order (point (d)), the total duration of detention of an applicant for international protection must not exceed **18 months**.

The detention grounds do not apply to UAMs. UAMs may therefore not be detained.

The police authority is subject to a number of procedural obligations vis-à-vis detained third-country nationals, including applicants for international protection. In particular, it must:

- provide information to the third-country national immediately after detention, in a language which he or she understands, on:
 - (1) the reasons for detention;
 - (2) the possibility to notify the diplomatic or consular authorities of the country of nationality;
 - (3) the possibility to inform a close relative and a legal representative of the detention; and
 - (4) the possibility to challenge the lawfulness of the detention decision;
- notify without delay the diplomatic or consular authorities of the country of nationality upon request of the detained person. Where the country concerned has no diplomatic representation in Slovakia, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs is informed;

- enable the detained person, upon request, to inform a close relative and his or her legal representative without delay;
- examine throughout the entire period of detention whether the purpose of detention continues to exist;
- inform the third-country national, in a language which he or she understands or may reasonably be presumed to understand, about the possibility to apply for assisted voluntary return, the possibility to contact non-governmental organisations, and - where the person has applied for international protection or expressed the intention to do so - also about the possibility to contact the Office of the UNHCR.

As regards the obligation to review the necessity of detention throughout its duration, there is limited evidence that such ex officio assessments are carried out systematically. According to information available to civil society organisations, releases prior to the expiry of the detention period on the initiative of the police authority appear to be rare. In most cases, detention ends upon expiry of the statutory time limit or following a court decision, rather than as a result of a proactive reassessment by the authorities.

The lodging of an asylum application or a request for assisted voluntary return by a detained third-country national does not, in itself, constitute a legal ground for release from detention.²²² However, if the submission of an asylum application causes the original purpose of detention to cease (e.g. enforcement of administrative expulsion), the authorities often re-detain the applicant under Section 88a(1)(c) of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners on the grounds that the asylum application was allegedly lodged solely to delay or prevent the execution of the administrative expulsion.

2. Alternatives to detention

Indicators: Alternatives to Detention

1. Which alternatives to detention have been laid down in the law? ☒ Reporting duties
☒ Financial guarantee
☐
2. Are alternatives to detention used in practice? ☐ Yes ☐ Rarely ☒ No

As an alternative to detention, the police authority may impose less coercive measures on a third-country national. In particular, the person may be required to report his or her place of residence regularly to the authorities or to provide a financial guarantee (bail). The type and manner of application of these alternatives are decided by the police authority, which must take into account the individual circumstances of the third-country national concerned, including his or her personal situation and the degree of risk that the purpose of detention would be undermined.

Where a reporting obligation is imposed, the third-country national is required to reside at a designated address and to report in person at regular intervals to the police authority within the time limits specified by the authority.

Where a financial guarantee is imposed, the third-country national must deposit the guarantee in the amount and within the time limit determined by the police authority to the account of the Police Force. The person is further required to reside at the address indicated to the authorities and to notify any change of residence. The financial guarantee may also be deposited by a close relative on behalf of the third-country national. The person depositing the guarantee must inform the police authority of the bank account number to which the guarantee should be returned or provide the address where he or she will be available for the purpose of reimbursement.

In practice, the use of alternatives to detention appears to be limited. According to HRL's experience, detention remains the primary measure applied by the authorities, while alternatives such as reporting obligations or financial guarantees are used only rarely. Financial guarantees are particularly difficult to

²²² Article 88(3) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

apply in practice due to the limited financial resources of most applicants for international protection and other third-country nationals concerned, as well as the requirement to provide the full amount within a relatively short time frame.

In the course of detention proceedings, police officers typically assess the financial situation of applicants for international protection; however, it is not always clearly explained that this assessment is carried out for the purpose of considering alternatives to detention. As a result, applicants may not be aware that they could seek financial assistance from family members or acquaintances, for example by arranging a transfer of funds, which may further limit the practical accessibility of financial guarantees as an alternative to detention. Based on HRL and UNHCR experience shared with HRL orally, alternatives to detention are not applied in practice. No official data is available in this matter.

3. Detention of vulnerable applicants

Indicators: Detention of Vulnerable Applicants

1. Are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children detained in practice? ☐ Frequently ☒ Rarely ☐ Never
 - ❖ If frequently or rarely, are they only detained in border/transit zones? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Are asylum seeking children in families detained in practice? ☐ Frequently ☒ Rarely ☐ Never

The law explicitly excludes children without legal guardians from the detention regime. Other vulnerable persons may, however, be detained, although detention should be applied only where strictly necessary and for the shortest possible period in such cases.

In practice, vulnerability does not constitute an absolute safeguard against detention. There is limited information available on systematic identification of vulnerabilities during detention proceedings, and stakeholders report a lack of experience with vulnerability assessments being carried out at that stage. The Ombudsperson has documented at least one case involving a detained person claiming to be a minor, indicating that the legal prohibition may not always operate as a fully effective safeguard in practice.

No official statistics on the number of detained children, including unaccompanied children, were available during the reference period.

4. Duration of detention

Indicators: Duration of Detention

1. What is the maximum detention period set in the law (incl. extensions): 18 months
2. In practice, how long in average are asylum seekers detained? Not available

An applicant for international protection may be detained only for the period strictly necessary and for as long as the grounds for detention persist.

The total duration of detention of an applicant for international protection must not exceed **six months** where detention is ordered on one of the following grounds:

- in order to establish or verify the applicant's identity or nationality (point (a));
- in order to determine the elements on which the application for international protection is based, which could not be obtained in the absence of detention, in particular where there is a risk of absconding (point (b));
- where the applicant was previously detained in administrative expulsion proceedings, has subsequently lodged an application for international protection, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the application was submitted solely in order to delay or frustrate the enforcement of the removal decision (point (c)); or

- in order to secure the preparation or implementation of a transfer pursuant to a separate legal instrument, where there is a significant risk of absconding (point (e)).

Where detention is ordered on the ground that it is necessary for reasons of national security or public order (point (d)), the total duration of detention of an applicant for international protection must not exceed **18 months**.

No information was available during the reference period indicating that the maximum duration of detention, including extensions permitted by law, had been exceeded in any individual case.

C. Detention conditions

1. Place of detention

Indicators: Place of Detention

1. Does the law allow for asylum seekers to be detained in prisons for the purpose of the asylum procedure (i.e. not as a result of criminal charges)? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. If so, are asylum seekers ever detained in practice in prisons for the purpose of the asylum procedure? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Detention capacity and occupancy (2025)		
Detention centre	Capacity	Occupancy at end (2025)
Police Detention Facility for Foreigners Medveďov	200	Not available
Police Detention Facility for Foreigners Sečovce	176	Not available
Total	376	Not available

Source: Reports monitoring visits to the reception facilities of the Public Defender of Rights.

2. Conditions in detention facilities

Indicators: Conditions in Detention Facilities

1. Do detainees have access to health care in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 ❖ If yes, is it limited to emergency health care? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2.1 Overall conditions

The detention centres for third-country nationals in Slovakia are managed by the Police Force of the Slovak Republic, specifically the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force.

Since 1 May 2023, the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsperson) performs the functions of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) in Slovakia pursuant to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture (OPCAT). In this capacity, the Ombudsperson is mandated to carry out regular and ad hoc visits to places where persons are deprived of their liberty, including immigration detention facilities, with the aim of preventing torture and ill-treatment and improving detention conditions. The monitoring has a preventive character and is typically conducted without prior notice. The Ombudsperson is entitled to access premises, documentation (including medical records), and to interview detained persons and staff. Following visits, the Ombudsperson issues findings and recommendations addressed to the competent authorities.

The Office of the Ombudsperson carried out an unannounced monitoring visit to the Police Detention Facility for Foreigners in Sečovce (**ÚPZC Sečovce**) between 5 and 7 June 2023.²²³ At the time of the visit, 65 persons were detained, including women and seven children, out of a total capacity of 176 places.

The Ombudsperson concluded that the situation in the facility required significant reform. Multiple shortcomings were identified across different areas which, when considered cumulatively, were considered capable of amounting to disproportionate interference with the fundamental rights of detained persons. The report emphasised that restrictions on rights must always be lawful, pursue a legitimate aim and be proportionate, conditions which were not consistently met in practice.

In the final assessment, the Ombudsperson warned that the combination of deficiencies - including lack of activities, restrictions on external contact, insufficient information on legal rights, inadequate healthcare, material conditions and the circumstances surrounding a police intervention - could cumulatively amount to a violation of the prohibition of ill-treatment.

Many of the problems were considered systemic in nature, partly linked to insufficient staffing and financial resources but also to entrenched institutional practices.

A particularly significant finding concerned the overall detention regime. Although immigration detention is administrative in nature and should not have a punitive character, the regime applied in the facility was described as restrictive and lacking meaningful activities. Outdoor access, which under national legislation should amount to at least two daily periods of one hour (and three for minors), was reportedly limited in practice to between 5 and 25 minutes depending on staff availability. Children were not allowed to use available playground facilities. The Ombudsperson concluded that this practice constituted a violation of domestic law and reflected systemic organisational deficiencies, including staff shortages.

The absence of meaningful activities represented another major concern. Detained persons reportedly spent most of their time watching television or sleeping, with very limited access to recreational or educational opportunities. The Ombudsperson noted that similar deficiencies had already been identified by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) during its visit in 2009²²⁴ and that the situation had not improved since. Staffing limitations, including the presence of only one social worker for the entire facility, were identified as a contributing factor.

The presence of children in detention was also criticised. Facilities were not adequately adapted to children's needs and the Ombudsperson reiterated international recommendations calling on Slovakia to cease the detention of children based on migration status and to develop effective alternatives.

Significant obstacles to maintaining contact with the outside world were identified. Mobile phones were systematically confiscated upon arrival, which the Ombudsperson considered legally questionable and disproportionate, particularly in the absence of individualised risk assessment. Communication with family members depended largely on the availability of the social worker and was inconsistent in practice. Telephone facilities allowed only incoming calls, which created financial barriers for families abroad. Restrictions on access to writing materials further limited communication opportunities.

The report also examined allegations concerning a police intervention following an escape incident in the facility. Several detainees described the use of force by masked officers, including physical violence. However, the authorities failed to provide sufficient cooperation or evidence, including the absence of video recordings of the intervention. The Ombudsperson stressed that where persons are under state control, the burden lies with the state to provide credible explanations regarding allegations of ill-treatment.

²²³ Public Defender of Rights, *Útvar policajného zaistenia pre cudzincov Sečovce – Správa z monitoringu národného preventívneho mechanizmu*, 7 December 2023, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

²²⁴ CPT, *Council of Europe anti-torture Committee publishes report on the Slovak Republic*, 2010, available [here](#).

Serious concerns were raised regarding the use of isolation (separated detention regime). Decisions placing detainees in isolation were described as formalistic and insufficiently reasoned, with limited procedural safeguards and lack of information on available remedies. In some cases, placement lasted several weeks. The Ombudsperson emphasised that isolation is a highly intrusive measure capable of adversely affecting both physical and mental health and therefore requires strict safeguards, including time limits and individualised justification. The report also highlighted deficiencies in the legislative framework governing isolation in immigration detention, including vague legal provisions and absence of effective remedies.

Shortcomings were also identified in procedural safeguards more broadly, including insufficient access to legal information and legal assistance, limited awareness among detainees of their rights and obligations, and barriers to submitting complaints or requests. Healthcare provision, including access to medical services and psychological support, was considered problematic and formed part of the cumulative risks identified in the report. Material and hygienic conditions were also criticised, although some ongoing renovation efforts were acknowledged.

In its overall assessment, the Ombudsperson concluded that the combination of restrictive conditions, insufficient safeguards, limited access to healthcare, and the circumstances surrounding the police intervention could cumulatively amount to ill-treatment. Many deficiencies were considered systemic in nature, linked to insufficient staffing and financial resources but also to entrenched institutional practices and resistance to change.

A monitoring visit to the Police Detention Facility for Foreigners in Medved'ov (**ÚPZC Medved'ov**) took place on 25–26 January 2024.²²⁵ At the time of the visit, 32 persons were detained, including one minor, out of a total capacity of 200 places.

The Ombudsperson identified a number of serious shortcomings affecting detention conditions, safeguards and access to rights. The deficiencies were considered significant in nature and partly systemic, particularly in light of similar findings previously identified in the Sečovce facility.

A central finding concerned the overall detention regime. The regime in Medved'ov was described as very restrictive and lacking meaningful activities, with conditions in several respects appearing stricter than those applicable in prison detention. The absence of constructive activities, combined with a strict daily routine, contributed to a passive environment for detainees and raised concerns regarding the non-punitive nature of immigration detention. The report also indicated that certain practices were inconsistent with the legal framework governing detention under the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

Communication with the outside world was identified as problematic. The system of telephone access was described as unclear and insufficient, limiting detainees' ability to maintain contact with family members or external actors. Restrictions on communication were further compounded by the lack of accessible information regarding detention procedures and rights. In particular, detainees often lacked information about the possible duration of detention and about how and where to request legal assistance.

Material conditions were also criticised. Accommodation facilities were described as worn and inadequately equipped, with damaged mattresses and insufficient hygiene standards posing potential health risks. The absence of freely available locks for personal storage also raised concerns regarding privacy and security of personal belongings.

The report further identified problematic practices affecting personal autonomy and dignity, including a general prohibition on wearing personal clothing. Such blanket restrictions were considered disproportionate in the context of administrative detention.

²²⁵ Public Defender of Rights, *Útvar policajného zaistenia pre cudzincov Medved'ov – Správa z monitoringu národného preventívneho mechanizmu*, 26 June 2024, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

Healthcare provision represented another area of concern. The Ombudsperson highlighted insufficient access to healthcare services, including for persons with disabilities or specific health needs. The report emphasised that detained persons are fully dependent on the authorities for access to medical care and that deficiencies in healthcare provision may significantly increase the risk of ill-treatment.

Particular attention was devoted to the situation of an UAM detained in the facility. The Ombudsperson concluded that serious violations of the child's rights had occurred, including delays in placement into an appropriate child protection facility despite medical evidence indicating minority. The monitoring team intervened directly with several authorities, including labour offices and prosecution authorities, requesting urgent action.

In its overall assessment, the Ombudsperson concluded that the cumulative effect of restrictive conditions, lack of meaningful activities, limited access to communication, insufficient healthcare, inadequate information on legal status and rights, and certain restrictive institutional practices created a situation that could raise concerns under the prohibition of ill-treatment. Many of the identified deficiencies appeared to be systemic in nature, linked to insufficient staffing and structural shortcomings in the functioning of immigration detention facilities in Slovakia.

In both monitoring reports (Sečovce and Medveďov), the Ombudsperson issued a number of recommendations addressed primarily to the management of the detention facilities, the Police Force and, in some cases, other authorities (such as the Centre for Legal Aid). Overall, the recommendations aimed at improving detention conditions, strengthening procedural safeguards and ensuring compliance with domestic law and international standards.

Across both facilities, the Ombudsperson recommended in particular improving detainees' access to information about their rights, detention procedures and available legal assistance, including by providing written information and forms in languages commonly understood by detained persons and ensuring that such information is provided immediately upon admission. Measures were also recommended to strengthen complaint mechanisms, including the establishment of anonymous complaint boxes and the possibility to submit complaints through third parties. In the area of legal assistance, the Ombudsperson called for more regular visits by legal aid providers and improved cooperation between institutions.

Regarding living conditions and the detention regime, the Ombudsperson recommended increasing access to meaningful activities, improving outdoor exercise opportunities, and ensuring that detention conditions reflect the administrative - rather than punitive - nature of immigration detention. Recommendations also concerned material conditions, including replacement of worn mattresses, provision of adequate hygiene items, access to personal storage with locks, and improvements in accommodation standards.

In both facilities, the Ombudsperson also addressed restrictions affecting personal autonomy and dignity, recommending that blanket measures - such as limitations on clothing or other routine restrictions - be avoided unless justified by individualised risk assessment. In the context of separated regimes (isolation), recommendations focused on improving material conditions, safeguards, reasoning of decisions and oversight mechanisms.

Follow-up monitoring visits to the Police Detention Facilities for Foreigners in Sečovce (July 2024)²²⁶ and Medveďov (13 December 2024)²²⁷ were carried out with the primary aim of assessing the implementation

²²⁶ Public Defender of Rights, *Útvar policajného zaistenia pre cudzincov Sečovce – Správa z následného monitoringu národného preventívneho mechanizmu*, 12 March 2025, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

²²⁷ Public Defender of Rights, *Útvar policajného zaistenia pre cudzincov Medveďov – Správa z následného monitoringu národného preventívneho mechanizmu*, 13 March 2025, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

of recommendations issued after the previous monitoring visits conducted in 2023 (Sečovce)²²⁸ and January 2024 (Medved'ov).²²⁹

In **Sečovce**, the Ombudsperson concluded that the overall situation had significantly improved compared to the previous monitoring cycle. The atmosphere in the facility was described as less restrictive and less prison-like, with a more sensitive approach towards families and children. Several key recommendations had been implemented, particularly in the areas of access to information, complaint mechanisms, legal assistance and contact with the outside world. Detainees were provided with written information in languages they understood, anonymous complaint boxes were introduced, and access to legal aid had improved through regular visits of the Centre for Legal Aid. The use of mobile phones had been partially liberalised, contributing positively to detainees' psychological well-being.

Nevertheless, certain structural concerns persisted. The reasoning of detention decisions concerning minors remained insufficiently individualised, and documentation did not always convincingly demonstrate that alternatives to detention had been duly assessed. Systemic issues relating to healthcare administration and institutional coordination also remained only partially addressed.

In **Medved'ov**, the follow-up monitoring revealed a mixed picture. A considerable number of recommendations had been formally accepted and at least partially implemented. Improvements were observed in detainees' access to mobile phones (three times per week with Wi-Fi access), the introduction of anonymous complaint mechanisms, better written information upon admission, regular visits by legal aid providers and improved documentation of placement into separated detention regimes (isolation).

Material conditions showed signs of gradual improvement, including the planned renovation of accommodation areas, replacement of mattresses and lockers, and investments foreseen under the AMIF-funded DETENT programme (2024–2027). However, structural administrative barriers persisted, particularly regarding the procurement of hygiene items and delays in healthcare-related administrative procedures.

Certain recommendations remained only partially implemented. In particular, while outdoor access formally complied with legal requirements, in practice detainees frequently declined outdoor time, partly due to insufficient winter clothing and footwear. Meaningful activities remained limited, with leisure time still largely consisting of television watching and card games. Although minor work activities were introduced, broader social and educational programming continued to be underdeveloped.

The use of separated detention regimes (isolation) showed procedural improvements, including better documentation and the introduction of a 14-day statutory maximum period, with notification to the prosecutor required for extensions. However, legislative amendments to internal police regulations concerning procedural safeguards in isolation had not yet been fully implemented, limiting detainees' access to clear information on remedies.

Two recommendations were explicitly not accepted in Medved'ov: the general permission to wear personal clothing and the discontinuation of routine police presence during medical examinations. These issues remain areas of concern in terms of proportionality and respect for dignity.

In both facilities, the Ombudsperson acknowledged tangible progress compared to the previous monitoring cycle, particularly regarding access to information, complaint mechanisms, legal assistance and contact with the outside world. At the same time, the follow-up monitoring confirmed the persistence of structural challenges, including staffing constraints, limited availability of meaningful activities, incomplete implementation of safeguards in isolation regimes and administrative barriers affecting healthcare provision.

²²⁸ Public Defender of Rights, *Útvar policajného zaistenia pre cudzincov Sečovce – Správa z monitoringu národného preventívneho mechanizmu*, 7 December 2023, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

²²⁹ Public Defender of Rights, *Útvar policajného zaistenia pre cudzincov Medved'ov – Správa z monitoringu národného preventívneho mechanizmu*, 26 June 2024, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

The Police Force provided a written response to the recommendations issued by the Ombudsperson following the monitoring of the detention facilities in Sečovce and Medveďov. The response indicates a mixed level of acceptance and implementation of the proposed measures. Several recommendations were accepted and are being implemented either immediately or within specified timeframes, while others were rejected or considered already fulfilled by the authorities.

The authorities agreed, for example, to amend internal regulations concerning placement in separated detention regimes (isolation), including the introduction of an obligation to inform detainees about available procedural safeguards in a language they understand. However, the implementation timeline was extended due to the duration of the legislative process. Recommendations aimed at improving access to communication with family members for persons placed in isolation were also accepted, including cooperation with social workers to facilitate telephone contact.

At the same time, several recommendations were explicitly rejected. In particular, the Police Force refused to change the policy of systematic confiscation of mobile phones upon admission, arguing that mobile phones may be used to organise escape attempts or otherwise undermine the purpose of detention. The authorities maintained that communication with relatives is sufficiently ensured through facility-provided telephones and tablets. Similarly, the recommendation to discontinue the routine presence of police officers during medical examinations was rejected on security grounds, with the authorities emphasising the potential risk to medical staff in the absence of police supervision.

Some recommendations were considered by the authorities to have already been implemented in practice. These included measures related to individualised security risk assessment and the role of social workers, where the Police Force maintained that police officers intervene only when necessary for security reasons and do not otherwise interfere with social work activities. Recommendations concerning information provision about available services and activities were also accepted, including plans to improve notice boards and communication with detainees.

The response further indicated partial or ongoing implementation of recommendations related to material conditions, clothing provision, healthcare arrangements and access to goods and services within the facilities. For example, clothing and footwear distribution was described as improved through cooperation with external partners, while measures concerning continuous medical presence were considered only partially feasible due to staffing constraints. Several recommendations concerning internal procedures - including documentation, training of staff, vulnerability identification tools and access to activities - were accepted with extended implementation deadlines or linked to ongoing cooperation with non-governmental partners.

Prosecutorial supervision over immigration detention is regulated both by the Act on Prosecution and by an internal instruction issued by the Prosecutor General. Pursuant to Section 18(1) of the Act on Prosecution, prosecutors supervise places where third-country nationals are detained on the basis of detention decisions in order to ensure that persons are held only on the basis of a lawful decision of a competent state authority and that applicable laws and generally binding legal regulations are respected within such facilities.

The Prosecutor General issued a specific instruction regulating the procedure of prosecutors when supervising the lawfulness of detention of third-country nationals placed in detention facilities. The instruction, adopted in May 2023 and effective from 1 June 2023, replaced the previous regulation from 2016 and applies to all detention facilities for third-country nationals in Slovakia.

Under the instruction, prosecutors are required to verify whether detention has been carried out in accordance with applicable legislation and whether the legal grounds for continued detention persist. Particular attention must be paid to the protection of the rights of detained persons, including vulnerable persons, as well as to the fulfilment of obligations by police authorities and facility management. The supervision also covers compliance with procedural requirements, including the timely execution of measures leading to the release of detained persons where detention is no longer justified, the legality of placement in separated detention regimes, and the proper handling of complaints submitted by detainees.

Competence for supervision lies primarily with the regional prosecutor in whose territorial jurisdiction the detention facility is located, although the task may be delegated to a district prosecutor. Prosecutors of the Prosecutor General's Office may also exercise supervisory powers where appropriate. Regular inspections must be conducted at least once every six months, while extraordinary inspections may be carried out where necessary, including on the basis of complaints, information from the media or other findings.

During inspections, prosecutors review the legal basis for detention, compliance with statutory time limits, respect for detainees' rights - particularly those of minors and vulnerable persons - compliance with administrative expulsion procedures where applicable, and the legality of facility practices, including placement in isolation regimes. Following inspections, prosecutors are required to prepare a written report describing findings, legal assessments and any measures taken.

Where violations of the law are identified, prosecutors must adopt measures to remedy the situation without delay, including issuing instructions, initiating proceedings or filing prosecutorial protests against unlawful decisions. If indications of criminal conduct arise, prosecutors must inform the competent authority responsible for criminal proceedings. The instruction also explicitly provides for the possibility that findings may lead to prosecutorial intervention before administrative courts in detention matters.

The instruction further establishes obligations to report and notify so-called extraordinary events occurring in detention facilities, including deaths, serious injuries, suicide attempts, escapes, riots, allegations of ill-treatment, or placement in separated detention regimes. Prosecutors must be informed promptly and may take further supervisory action where necessary.

According to information provided by the General Prosecutor's Office in February 2026 in response to a freedom of information request submitted by the HRL, prosecutorial supervision over detention facilities and asylum reception facilities is carried out on a regular basis, typically twice per year in each facility. In the Police Detention Facility for Foreigners in Medveďov, two regular inspections were conducted annually between 2023 and 2025, with additional extraordinary inspections carried out in 2023 and 2024. In the Sečovce facility, one regular and two extraordinary inspections were carried out in 2023, followed by two regular inspections annually in 2024 and 2025.

2.2 Health care and special needs in detention

Persons detained in immigration detention facilities are covered by public health insurance and are therefore entitled to healthcare under the general rules applicable to insured persons. In practice, detention facilities have access to healthcare services, including an on-site nurse. A physician is not present on a daily basis but visits the facility regularly. Where specialised medical examinations or treatment are required, detainees are transferred to external healthcare providers under police escort.

Despite the formal availability of healthcare, practical obstacles have been reported. Interpretation during medical consultations is generally not available, creating significant communication barriers between detainees and healthcare providers. Based on interviews conducted by HRL with some detainees, concerns have also been raised regarding lengthy waiting times for medical appointments and the perceived minimisation of health complaints by medical staff.

Psychological counselling is provided in detention facilities by the SHC as part of its support activities. However, no information is available regarding the effectiveness, frequency or overall impact of these services on the mental health of detainees. Access to specialised psychiatric or psychological treatment depends on referrals to external healthcare providers.

No specific mechanism for the systematic identification of vulnerable persons or persons with special reception needs in detention has been identified. HRL is not aware of any standardised vulnerability screening procedure applied either upon admission to detention or during the detention period.

In practice, vulnerable persons may nevertheless be detained. In 2025, HRL monitored the case of a torture survivor who was placed in immigration detention and whose detention was subsequently prolonged despite his vulnerability. The individual was eventually released following a court decision. This case indicates that the identification of vulnerability does not automatically prevent detention or guarantee release from detention.

Similarly, no specific information is available on dedicated support measures or special treatment systematically provided to vulnerable detainees. While healthcare and psychological support services are formally available, there is no evidence of a comprehensive framework ensuring tailored assistance for persons with special needs, survivors of torture, victims of trafficking, persons with severe illnesses or other particularly vulnerable groups while in detention.

3. Access to detention facilities

Indicators: Access to Detention Facilities

1. Is access to detention centres allowed to:

❖ Lawyers:	☒ Yes	☐ Limited	☐ No
❖ NGOs:	☒ Yes	☐ Limited	☐ No
❖ UNHCR:	☒ Yes	☐ Limited	☐ No
❖ Family members:	☐ Yes	☒ Limited	☐ No

According to law, detained third-country nationals have the right to receive visits from up to two persons once every two weeks for a duration of 30 minutes. In justified cases, the director of the facility may authorise an exception to these limitations.²³⁰

Persons providing legal assistance to the third-country national must be granted access without limitation.

Applicants for international protection enjoy additional safeguards compared to other detained individuals. They have the right to communicate with representatives of the UNHCR, family members and persons providing legal assistance. They also have the right to receive visits from UNHCR representatives, family members and legal advisers under conditions ensuring privacy.

The role of UNHCR in monitoring detention facilities is further specified in Notification No. 219/1994 Coll. of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic on the conclusion of the Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the UNHCR concerning the legal status, immunities, and privileges of the Office of the UNHCR and its personnel in the Slovak Republic. Article III of this Agreement establishes the framework for cooperation in the field of international protection and humanitarian assistance.

Access of family members and persons providing legal assistance may be restricted only on grounds of national security or public order, or by decision of the facility director, provided that such restrictions do not significantly limit or prevent effective access to the applicant for international protection.

In practice, according to information available to the HRL, the first in-person meeting between detained applicants for international protection and their legal representative, prior to the signing of a power of attorney, is often treated by the authorities as a regular visit. As a result, this meeting is counted as part of the detainee's number of allowed personal visits. This may effectively reduce the time available for contact with family members, as the limited visit quota is partially used for the purpose of establishing legal representation.

In both detention facilities, the SHC, a non-governmental organisation, is present on a daily basis. Within the framework of the AMIF-funded project DETENT, the organisation provides a range of support services to detained third-country nationals, including social counselling, crisis intervention, leisure and educational activities and psychological assistance. However, as already noted above, HRL is not in a position to assess the quality, effectiveness or overall impact of these services on detained persons. Due to the

²³⁰ Article 98(1) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

relatively low number of detained third-country nationals in recent years and the limited opportunities for independent evaluation, no comprehensive assessment of the outcomes of these interventions is available.

Detained persons are granted access to their personal mobile phones once per day for approximately one hour. Where detainees do not possess a mobile phone, telephone contact with family members or other persons is typically facilitated through the social worker of the non-governmental organisation present in the facility.

Under the applicable legislation, a detained third-country national may receive a parcel containing personal items once every two weeks, with a maximum weight of five kilograms. This limitation does not apply to parcels containing clothing. Detained applicants may receive financial resources without limitation. The facility is responsible for ensuring the safekeeping of such funds.

D. Procedural safeguards

1. Judicial review of the detention order

Indicators: Judicial Review of Detention

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Is there an automatic review of the lawfulness of detention? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| 2. If yes, at what interval is the detention order reviewed? | n/a | |

In practice, detained persons are informed of both the reasons for their detention and the possibility to challenge the detention decision before an administrative court exclusively through the written detention decision. The decision, including the instruction on available remedies, is interpreted into a language the person understands, which is also the language used during the detention proceedings preceding the issuance of the decision.

However, at that stage, persons are not specifically informed about the possibility of being represented by the Centre for Legal Aid, a private lawyer or a non-governmental organisation. As a result, the right to an effective remedy may remain largely an abstract concept for detainees at the start of their detention period. Information about the Centre for Legal Aid is typically provided only after placement in the detention facility, while information about the availability of legal assistance from non-governmental organisations is generally not provided by the authorities. In practice, detainees often learn about the possibility of NGO representation informally from other detained persons.

Detained applicants for international protection have the right to challenge their detention before an administrative court by lodging an administrative action. There is no automatic review of the lawfulness of detention. Applicants may be represented in detention-related judicial proceedings by an attorney, the Centre for Legal Aid, or a non-governmental organisation providing assistance to third-country nationals.

The applicant may seek the annulment of a decision on detention or extension of detention. Where the applicant has already been released from detention, he or she may seek a declaration that the detention decision was unlawful. An administrative action challenging detention must be lodged within seven days from the notification of the decision on detention or the decision on extension of detention.

Applicants may also request release from detention through judicial proceedings. An administrative action requesting release from detention may be lodged at any time during the period of detention, including repeatedly. Where the administrative court has dismissed a previous action, a new action without invoking new grounds may be submitted only after the expiry of 30 days from the date on which the previous court decision became final.

Jurisdiction in detention cases lies with the Administrative Court in Bratislava and the Administrative Court in Košice, while cassation complaints are decided by the Supreme Administrative Court.

The administrative action is formally submitted to the police authority which issued the contested detention decision. The defendant authority is required to forward the administrative action to the competent administrative court within five working days of its submission, together with its written observations and the administrative case file.

The lodging of an administrative action does not have suspensive effect, meaning that the detention decision remains enforceable pending the outcome of judicial review.

The administrative court must decide on the administrative action at a hearing within seven working days from the date on which the action is submitted to the court. This time limit does not apply where the applicant has already been released from detention.

Where the administrative court finds an administrative action challenging detention decision to be well-founded, it may issue a judgment which, depending on the circumstances of the case:

- (a) annuls the contested decision on detention, extension of detention or extension of the detention period and orders the immediate release of the applicant from detention;
- (b) imposes, following the taking of evidence, a less coercive measure under the applicable legislation which fully replaces the contested detention decision, and orders the immediate release of the applicant (full jurisdiction of the court);
- (c) annuls the contested decision where it contains remediable defects and remits the case to the police authority for further proceedings; or
- (d) declares that the contested detention decision was unlawful.

Where the administrative court finds an administrative action requesting release from detention to be well-founded, it may issue a judgment which, depending on the circumstances of the case:

- (a) orders the defendant authority to release the applicant from detention without delay; or
- (b) following the taking of evidence, orders the defendant authority to release the applicant without delay and imposes a less coercive measure under the applicable legislation.

2. Legal assistance for review of detention

Indicators: Legal Assistance for Review of Detention

1. Does the law provide for access to free legal assistance for the review of detention?
☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Do asylum seekers have effective access to free legal assistance in practice?
☒ Yes ☐ No

Under the Act on the Provision of Legal Aid to Persons in Material Need, third-country nationals and applicants for international protection have the right to free legal aid provided by the Centre for Legal Aid in proceedings concerning detention, provided that certain conditions are met.

Legal aid is granted where the person concerned is a third-country national or an applicant for international protection present on the territory of Slovakia, has submitted a request for legal aid, does not have a privately chosen legal representative, is in a situation of material need, and a police authority has issued a decision on administrative expulsion or detention.

The requirement that the case must not be manifestly without merit does not apply in detention proceedings concerning third-country nationals or applicants for international protection, meaning that legal aid may be granted irrespective of the prospects of success of the case.

In practice, access to legal aid provided by the Centre for Legal Aid is organised through a specific procedure applicable to detention cases. Authorisation for representation by the Centre is granted directly through the application for legal aid, which contains an integrated power of attorney section in accordance with the applicable legislation and implementing regulations. As a result, detained third-country nationals do not sign a separate power of attorney for the Centre; the signed application for legal aid is sufficient to

initiate both the administrative procedure on entitlement to legal aid and the representation before the court.

Once the application is signed, it is typically transmitted to the Centre by email either by police officers or by the social worker present in the detention facility. The Centre registers the application electronically, while the original document is subsequently collected in person from the facility. In some cases, Centre lawyers may also complete the application directly with detainees during on-site visits. The initiation of contact therefore depends on the circumstances of the case and the availability of staff.

To facilitate immediate access to detainees, the Centre maintains a contractual staff member regularly present in the detention facility. This staff member, in cooperation with police officers, proactively informs newly detained persons about the possibility of obtaining legal aid and assists them in completing the application where requested. In some situations, detainees request only an initial consultation without formal representation, which is also provided.

In addition to legal aid provided by the Centre for Legal Aid, legal assistance in detention was also provided by the HRL in 2024 and 2025. HRL provided legal representation both in detention-related proceedings and in asylum procedures concerning detained applicants for international protection.

Communication between detained persons and their legal representatives takes place through in-person consultations, telephone calls or email correspondence. Personal consultations are conducted without the presence of third parties, ensuring confidentiality.

Telephone and email communication usually occurs during the period when detainees are granted access to their personal mobile phones. Where detainees do not have access to a phone at a given moment, communication may also be facilitated with the assistance of social workers present in the detention facility.

E. Differential treatment of specific nationalities in detention

No cases of differential treatment based on nationality have been identified in the area of detention of asylum seekers in Slovakia.

Content of International Protection

The principal strategic document of the Slovak Republic in the field of migration is the *Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic with a View to 2025* (Migration Policy).²³¹ In the area of international protection, the Migration Policy identifies as one of its objectives the continued provision of effective protection to those in need, while preventing abuse of the asylum system, including through the reform of the CEAS.

In the chapter on *Integration*, the Slovak Republic endorses “an integration model based not only on compliance with Slovak legislation but also on respect by foreign nationals for the cultural context, language, and traditions of the Slovak Republic. Integration measures are expected to result in coordinated and interconnected tools and measures enabling foreign nationals to integrate into the labour market, acquire proficiency in the state language, and access education, healthcare, social services, and housing, while also facilitating their participation in civic and political life and, where appropriate, potentially leading to the acquisition of Slovak citizenship.”

One of the stated objectives is to “ensure a systemic framework for the integration of vulnerable groups of foreign nationals, in particular persons granted international protection.”

Building upon the Migration Policy, the *National Strategy of the Slovak Republic for the Management of Asylum and Migration* (National Strategy)²³² reflects the requirements arising from the Pact on Migration and Asylum. The National Strategy represents the current migration policy of the Slovak Republic and constitutes a comprehensive framework for the management of asylum and migration for the following five years.

In the area of integration, the National Strategy proposes 18 measures aimed at ensuring that the integration of foreigners is timely and successful.

In addition, the *Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic* (Integration Policy)²³³ adopted in 2014 represented the only document comprehensively addressing integration issues. It defined eight policy areas, accompanied by corresponding measures and responsible institutions. However, in light of rapidly changing developments both globally and domestically, the document no longer corresponds to Slovakia’s current needs in this area.

The implementation of the Integration Policy was reviewed by the Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic (SAO). In its 2025 report²³⁴, the SAO concluded that the practical implementation of the Integration Policy was fragmented and insufficiently coordinated. While the MoLSAF transformed the policy into two action plans, it discontinued their preparation after 2018 despite the absence of any formal repeal of this obligation. By contrast, the MoI continued adopting action plans after 2018. The SAO further criticised the implementation framework for lacking clearly defined objectives, measurable indicators, concrete deadlines, and effective monitoring mechanisms. Many measures were formulated only in general terms, without specifying expected outcomes or means for evaluating implementation, which significantly limited the ability to assess effectiveness and achieve targeted qualitative change in the field of integration.

Despite the existence of these strategic documents, which partially address the integration of persons granted international protection, Slovakia has not adopted a comprehensive national refugee integration strategy that would define integration priorities, allocate roles and responsibilities among relevant actors, and establish integration measures together with their budgetary framework.

²³¹ Available (in Slovak) [here](#).

²³² Available (in Slovak) [here](#).

²³³ Available (in Slovak) [here](#).

²³⁴ Available (in Slovak) [here](#).

A. Status and residence

1. Residence permit

Indicators: Residence Permit

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. What is the duration of residence permits granted to beneficiaries of protection? | |
| ❖ Refugee status | 10 years |
| ❖ Subsidiary protection | 1 year / 2 years |

Persons granted asylum are considered foreigners with **permanent residence**.²³⁵ In case of refugees granted asylum under the 1951 Convention, constitutional asylum, or asylum on humanitarian grounds, protection is granted for an unlimited period,²³⁶ and a permanent residence permit valid for 10 years is issued to them.²³⁷ In the case of asylum for family reunification, the protection status is initially granted for three years.²³⁸ A beneficiary must apply for renewal no earlier than 90 days before the expiry of the three-year period and no later than on the last day of that period.²³⁹ The application for renewal of asylum for family reunification shall be submitted to the competent foreign police department, depending on the applicant's place of residence. A template of the application for renewal of asylum for family reunification is attached as an **Annex** to the Asylum Act. During the renewal process, asylum status remains valid until a final decision on the application is made.²⁴⁰ If asylum for family reunification is renewed, protection is subsequently granted for an unlimited period.²⁴¹ Beneficiaries of asylum for family reunification are issued a permanent residence permit valid for three years and, following a positive renewal decision, for 10 years.²⁴²

Subsidiary protection and subsidiary protection granted for the purpose of family reunification are initially granted for one year.²⁴³ Persons granted subsidiary protection are considered foreigners with **temporary residence**,²⁴⁴ except for foreigners who already have permanent residence. Subsidiary protection may be repeatedly extended for two years, provided that the beneficiary continues to meet the relevant conditions.²⁴⁵ An application for extension of subsidiary protection shall be submitted to the competent foreign police department, depending on the applicant's place of residence, no earlier than 90 days before the expiry of the subsidiary protection period and no later than on the last day of that period.²⁴⁶ The same template as for the application for renewal of asylum for family reunification may be used. Upon applying for the issuance of a residence permit, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are issued a temporary residence permit valid for one year or, where subsidiary protection has already been extended, for two years.²⁴⁷

In 2025, the BBFP PFP issued 50 permanent residence permits for persons granted asylum and 34 temporary residence permits for subsidiary protection holders.²⁴⁸

Beneficiaries of international protection face significant challenges when applying for the issuance of residence permits. In 2021, the BBFP PFP launched an online reservation system for making an appointment at the foreign police departments. The use of the system is mandatory, and in the majority of life situations, foreigners will not be processed if they have not booked an appointment online. Due to the persistent shortage of BBFP PFP's staff capacity and reported technical issues, there are only very

²³⁵ Article 24(1) of the Asylum Act.

²³⁶ Article 20(2) of the Asylum Act.

²³⁷ Article 73(12) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²³⁸ Article 20(2) of the Asylum Act.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Article 73(12) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁴³ Article 20(3) of the Asylum Act.

²⁴⁴ Article 27a(1) of the Asylum Act

²⁴⁵ Article 20(3) of the Asylum Act.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Article 73(12) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁴⁸ BBFP PFP, *Štatistický prehľad legálnej a nelegálnej migrácie cudzincov v Slovenskej republike za rok 2025, 2026*, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

few slots available for booking. In practice, it usually takes several weeks for beneficiaries of international protection to make an appointment to submit the application for issuing the residence permit and another up to 30 days²⁴⁹ for receiving the residence permit. The delays significantly complicate their everyday life and their integration, for which the first days after receiving protection are crucial. Without a residence permit, beneficiaries of international protection are unable access employment, open bank accounts our majority of private landlords are unwilling to rent them apartments. In addition, the online reservation system does not provide any option to book an appointment for submitting an application for the extension of subsidiary protection. SHC has been assisting beneficiaries of international protection in making an appointment at the foreign police departments and accompanying them to the police.

2. Civil registration

The conclusion of marriage by foreigners in the territory of the Slovak Republic is governed by Act No. 154/1994 Coll. on Registries. This procedure also applies to asylum applicants and beneficiaries of international protection.

Prior to entering marriage in Slovakia, a foreign national is required to submit the following documents to the registry office at least 14 days before the marriage ceremony:

- a birth certificate,
- proof of marital status not older than six months,
- proof of permanent residence,
- proof of citizenship,
- proof of citizenship – valid passport
- death certificate of a deceased spouse – if the foreigner is widowed,
- divorce decree – if the foreigner is divorced; and
- an ID/passport.²⁵⁰

Where obtaining these documents is associated with obstacles that are difficult to overcome, the fiancé(e) may apply for a waiver of the obligation to submit them. In particular, beneficiaries of international protection often do not possess all the required documents from their country of origin. The application must be submitted in writing, personally filed and signed by the fiancé(e), and must contain detailed reasoning. The registry office is required to forward the application, together with its detailed opinion, to the District Office within five days of receipt. The district office must decide on the request within five days of its receipt, and the registry office is bound by that decision.²⁵¹

Furthermore, pursuant to Article 7 of the Family Act, where the life of one of the fiancés is directly endangered, the submission of the legally required documents is not necessary. In such cases, the fiancés must jointly declare that they are unaware of any circumstances preventing the conclusion of marriage.

HRL identified a problem in cases where an asylum applicant wished to marry in Slovakia. The competent registry office refused to perform the marriage ceremony because the asylum applicant was unable to present their passport, which had been retained upon lodging the asylum application. The competent authorities did not allow the applicant to temporarily access the passport for the purpose of marriage, while the registry office was unwilling to proceed with the waiver procedure under Article 6(6) of the Family Act.

3. Long-term residence

Indicators: Long-Term Residence

1. Number of long-term residence permits issued to beneficiaries in 2025: n/a

²⁴⁹ Article 73(1)(c) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁵⁰ Article 28 of the Act No. 154/1994 Coll. on Registries.

²⁵¹ Article 6(6) of the Family Act.

Beneficiaries of international protection may be granted long-term residence if they meet the conditions set out in the Act on Residence of Foreigners, which transposed the EU Long Term Residence Directive (Directive 2003/109/EC). The main condition is a continuous residence in Slovakia for 5 years immediately prior to submitting the application for long-term residence.²⁵² The time from submitting the asylum application to issuance of a decision on granting asylum or subsidiary protection is counted towards the 5-year period necessary for long-term residence.²⁵³ The application for long-term residence shall be submitted in person to the competent foreign police department or online.²⁵⁴ The possibility of submitting the application for long-term residence online was enshrined in the Act on Residence of Foreigners in December 2024, and it is operational.

Applicants for long-term residence must present a valid travel document and provide proof of sufficient financial means and proof of health insurance.²⁵⁵ Additionally, applicants for long-term residence older than 18 years of age must pay an administrative fee of €250.²⁵⁶ As of 15 July 2025, applicants are also required to pass a Slovak language exam at the A2 level, with an exemption of:

- (1) applicants under the age of 14 years old
- (2) holders of a temporary residence permit as a Slovak living abroad
- (3) applicants who completed lower secondary education at a school with Slovak as the language of instruction
- (4) applicants who studied for at least two school years at a secondary school with Slovak as the language of instruction or completed a study program in Slovak at a university, provided that no more than five years have passed since completing the studies.²⁵⁷

The police department must examine the application for long-term residence within 90 days.²⁵⁸ Long-term residence is granted for an unlimited period.²⁵⁹

Holders of subsidiary protection who have been issued a foreigner's passport (see [Movement and Mobility: Travel Document](#)) face challenges in obtaining long-term residence. According to Article 125(3)(b) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners, a foreign passport is accepted for the purpose of applying for long-term residence only if the foreign national can credibly prove their identity using another document. However, some holders of subsidiary protection do not possess, for objective reasons, any documents from their country of origin to verify their identity. Their identity was established during the asylum procedure solely based on their statements. In such cases, they have no realistic possibility of obtaining long-term residence or even applying for Slovak citizenship (see below, [Naturalisation](#)).

The relevant statistics on the number of beneficiaries of international protection granted long-term residence are not publicly available. Moreover, the Mol did not provide the data following an individual request for information.

4. Naturalisation

Indicators: Naturalisation

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. What is the minimum residence period for obtaining citizenship? | |
| ❖ Refugee status | 4 years |
| ❖ Subsidiary protection | 8 years |
| 2. Number of citizenship grants to beneficiaries in 2025: | n/a |

The naturalisation process is regulated by the Act No. 40/1993 Coll. on citizenship of the Slovak Republic (Citizenship Act). The main condition for acquiring Slovak citizenship is a continuous permanent residence

²⁵² Article 52(1)(a) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁵³ Article 52(4)(c) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁵⁴ Article 53(1) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁵⁵ Article 53(3) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁵⁶ Item 24 of the Schedule of Administrative Fees of the Act No. 145/1995 Coll. on Administrative Fees.

²⁵⁷ Article 52(6) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁵⁸ Article 53(6) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁵⁹ Article 51 of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

in Slovakia for at least eight years immediately preceding the submission of the citizenship application. Article 7(2) of the Citizenship Act provides for several exemptions to the length of residence requirement. In the case of asylum holders, they may, after meeting the other applicable conditions, apply for Slovak citizenship four years after being granted asylum status. No simplified naturalisation procedure exists for subsidiary protection holders. Stateless persons may, after meeting other conditions, apply for Slovak citizenship after three years of continuous residence in Slovakia immediately preceding the submission of the citizenship application.

Apart from the residence requirement, the applicants for the granting of Slovak citizenship also must:

- prove their integrity (Art. 7(1)(b) of the Citizenship Act),
- demonstrate knowledge of the Slovak language and general knowledge of the Slovak Republic (Art. 8(5-8) of the Citizenship Act),
- meet other specific conditions (Art. 7(1)(c-g) of the Citizenship Act),
- submit all necessary documents (Art. 8(3) of the Citizenship Act).

There is no legal entitlement to the granting of Slovak citizenship, even if the applicant meets all the conditions foreseen by law.

Persons granted asylum are exempt from administrative fees connected to the granting of citizenship. This exemption does not apply to subsidiary protection holders. They must pay a regular fee of €1000 in case the applicant is over 18 years of age.²⁶⁰ In case of minor applicants, the administrative fee is €140 for children up to 15 years of age and €210 for children of 15 to 18 years of age.

An application for granting Slovak citizenship must be submitted in person at the district office in the seat of the region according to the place of permanent residence in Slovakia. The authority competent to examine applications for granting citizenship is the Department of State Citizenship under the MoI SR. The application shall be decided within 24 months from its submission.²⁶¹

Citizenship is acquired upon receiving the citizenship certificate after taking the oath of a Slovak citizen of the Slovak Republic.²⁶² If the citizenship application is rejected, the applicant may submit a new application at the earliest two years after the date on which the rejecting decision becomes final.²⁶³

Between 1993 and 2021, Slovak citizenship was granted to 298 beneficiaries of international protection.²⁶⁴ The statistics on the number of beneficiaries of international protection granted Slovak citizenship for 2025 are not publicly available. Moreover, the MoI did not provide the data following an individual request for information.

5. Cessation and review of protection status

Indicators: Cessation

1. Is a personal interview of the beneficiary in most cases conducted in practice in the cessation procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the law provide for an appeal against the first instance decision in the cessation procedure? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Do beneficiaries have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

The Asylum Act does not distinguish between the cessation and withdrawal of international protection. Grounds for cessation of asylum (Article 11 of the Recast Qualification Directive) and subsidiary protection

²⁶⁰ Item 20 of the Schedule of Administrative Fees of the Act No. 145/1995 Coll. on Administrative Fees.

²⁶¹ Article 8a(7) of the Citizenship Act.

²⁶² Article 8a(10) of the Citizenship Act.

²⁶³ Article 8a(13) of the Citizenship Act.

²⁶⁴ MoI SR, *Štatistická správa – rok 2021*, 2022 available (in Slovak) [here](#).

(Article 16 of the Recast Qualification Directive) and grounds for withdrawal of asylum (Article 14 of the Recast Qualification Directive) and subsidiary protection (Article 19 of the Recast Qualification Directive) were transposed to the Asylum Act by two provisions:

- Article 15 of the Asylum Act titled **Withdrawal of Asylum** (*Odňatie azylu*), and
- Article 15b of the Asylum Act titled **Revocation of Subsidiary Protection** (*Zrušenie doplnkovej ochrany*).

This, inter alia, means that proceedings on withdrawal of asylum/revocation of subsidiary protection on the grounds of cessation of protection status are equivalent to proceedings on withdrawal of asylum/revocation of subsidiary protection on the grounds of withdrawal of protection status.

Grounds for cessation of asylum are established in Article 15(2)(a-f) of the Asylum Act, which provides that the MO shall withdraw asylum if:

- (a) an asylum holder voluntarily re-availed himself or herself of the protection of the country of nationality,
- (b) having lost his or her nationality, an asylum holder has voluntarily re-acquired,
- (c) an asylum holder has acquired a new nationality, and enjoys the protection of the country of his or her new nationality,
- (d) an asylum holder rejects without any grounds to avail himself or herself of the protection granted by the country of his or her nationality despite the fact that circumstances, for which he or she was granted asylum ceased to exist; this shall not apply when the asylum holder proves his or her serious reasons based on previous persecution on grounds of which he or she refuses the protection of the country of his or her nationality,
- (e) an asylum holder is capable of returning to the country of his or her residence because the circumstances under which asylum was granted ceased to exist; this shall not apply when the asylum holder proves reasons of previous persecution on grounds of which he or she refuses to return to the country of his or her residence,
- (f) an asylum holder is again voluntarily staying in the country he or she left for fear of persecution.

Grounds for cessation of subsidiary protection are established in the Article 15b(2)(a) of the Asylum Act, which provides that the MO shall revoke subsidiary protection if the circumstances, based on which the subsidiary protection was granted, ceased to exist or changed to such an extent that its further provision is not necessary; this shall not apply when the subsidiary protection holder proves his or her serious reasons based on previous serious harm for refusing the protection of the country of his or her origin.

The procedure of cessation of asylum or subsidiary protection (*konanie o odňatí azylu* and *konanie o zrušení doplnkovej ochrany*) shall commence at the instance of the MO.²⁶⁵ Asylum or subsidiary protection lasts until the cessation procedure is completed and the decision is issued.²⁶⁶ The MO must conduct an interview with a beneficiary of international protection before it makes a decision. The interview is conducted under the same conditions and procedural safeguards as in Regular Procedure²⁶⁷ (See [Regular Procedure: Personal Interview](#)). The decision in the cessation procedure must be issued within the same time limits as those applicable to the regular procedure²⁶⁸ (See [Regular Procedure: General \(scope, time limits\)](#)). A decision on cessation of international protection may be appealed by filing an administrative appeal to the administrative courts. The administrative appeal must be filed within **30 days** of the notification of such a decision.²⁶⁹ Filing the administrative appeal against the decision on cessation of international protection has an automatic suspensive effect.²⁷⁰ Otherwise, the appeal system, including the time limits for issuing the decision, oral hearing and onward appeal, is the same as in the [Regular Procedure: Appeal](#). Free legal assistance for beneficiaries of international protection who were issued a cessation decision is provided under the same conditions and in the same context as described in [Regular](#)

²⁶⁵ Article 15(1) and Article 15b(1) of the Asylum Act.

²⁶⁶ Article 15(6) and Article 15b(5) of the Asylum Act.

²⁶⁷ Article 19b in connection with Article 6 of the Asylum Act.

²⁶⁸ Article 19b in connection with the Article 20(1) of the Asylum Act.

²⁶⁹ Article 211(1) of the AJC.

²⁷⁰ Article 213(1) of the AJC.

Procedure: Legal assistance. The free legal assistance is guaranteed only in an appeal procedure by the Centre for Legal Aid. Legal assistance in the first instance and appeal procedure is predominantly provided by NGOs (mainly HRL and SHC), which are funded through projects.

There is no evidence that would indicate a systematic review of protection statuses.

6. Withdrawal of protection status

Indicators: Withdrawal

1. Is a personal interview of the beneficiary in most cases conducted in practice in the withdrawal procedure? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the law provide for an appeal against the withdrawal decision? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Do beneficiaries have access to free legal assistance at first instance in practice? ☒ Yes ☐ With difficulty ☐ No

The Asylum Act does not distinguish between the cessation of and withdrawal of international protection. Grounds for cessation of asylum (Article 11 of the Recast Qualification Directive) and subsidiary protection (Article 16 of the Recast Qualification Directive) and grounds for withdrawal of asylum (Article 14 of the Recast Qualification Directive) and subsidiary protection (Article 19 of the Recast Qualification Directive) were transposed to the Asylum Act by two provisions:

- Article 15 of the Asylum Act titled **Withdrawal of Asylum** (*Odňatie azylu*), and
- Article 15b of the Asylum Act titled **Revocation of Subsidiary Protection** (*Zrušenie doplnkovej ochrany*).

This, inter alia, means that proceedings on withdrawal of asylum/revocation of subsidiary protection on the grounds of cessation of protection status are equivalent to proceedings on withdrawal of asylum/revocation of subsidiary protection on the grounds of withdrawal of protection status.

Grounds for withdrawal of asylum are established in Article 15(2)(g) and (h) of the Asylum Act, which provides that the MO shall withdraw asylum if:

- (g) there is a well-founded suspicion that an asylum holder committed one of the following acts:
- crime against peace, a war crime or a crime against humanity, as defined in the international instruments,
 - a serious non-political crime outside the territory of Slovakia prior to applying for asylum or subsidiary protection,
 - has been guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

or an asylum holder:

- can avail himself or herself of protection or assistance from organs or agencies of the United Nations other than the UNHCR; this shall not apply if such protection or assistance has ceased for any reason without the status of the applicant having been definitively settled in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations,
- is recognised by the competent authorities of the country of residence as having the rights and obligations they grant to their own nationals, or rights and obligations comparable thereto.

(h) the asylum was granted only based on false data or forged documents, or for the reason that the person granted asylum concealed facts significant for a reliable establishment of the facts of the case.

Grounds for withdrawal of subsidiary protection are established in Article 15b(2)(b) and (c) of the Asylum Act, which provides that the determining authority shall revoke subsidiary protection if:

(b) if there is a well-founded suspicion that the subsidiary protection holder:

- has committed a crime against peace, a war crime or a crime against humanity, as defined in the international instruments,
- has committed a particularly serious crime,
- has been guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations,
- is reasonably suspected of having committed, before entering the territory of the Slovak Republic, another act which, under the Slovak Penal Code, constitutes a criminal offence punishable by a term of imprisonment of at least five years, and where he or she left the country of origin solely to avoid criminal prosecution,
- constitutes a danger to the safety of the Slovak Republic,
- constitutes a danger to society.

(c) if the foreigner was granted subsidiary protection only based on false data or forged documents, or because the foreigner, who was granted subsidiary protection, concealed facts that were significant for a reliable establishment of the facts of the case.

The procedure of withdrawal of asylum or subsidiary protection (*konanie o odňatí azylu* and *konanie o zrušení doplnkovej ochrany*) shall commence at the instance of the MO.²⁷¹ The withdrawal procedure is almost equivalent to the cessation procedure, including the determining authority's obligation to conduct an interview with the beneficiary of international protection, the applicable time limits, the appeal procedure, and access to legal assistance (See [Cessation and review of protection status](#)). The only difference regards an automatic suspensive effect. The administrative appeal against the withdrawal decision issued on the grounds that a subsidiary protection holder **constitutes a danger to the safety of the Slovak Republic** or **constitutes a danger to society** does not have an automatic suspensive effect.²⁷² The claimant may request the granting of the suspensive effect of the administrative appeal. Such a request must be filed together with the administrative appeal, and the administrative court must decide on it within 15 days of its submission.²⁷³ In case of withdrawal decisions issued based on all other grounds, an administrative appeal has an automatic suspensive effect.

In 2025, the determining authority issued only one decision on the withdrawal of protection status, namely a decision withdrawing subsidiary protection from a Ukrainian national pursuant to Article 15b of the Asylum Act.²⁷⁴

B. Family reunification

1. Criteria and conditions

Indicators: Family Reunification

1. Is there a waiting period before a beneficiary can apply for family reunification?
☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If yes, what is the waiting period?
2. Does the law set a maximum time limit for submitting a family reunification application?
☐ Yes ☒ No
❖ If yes, what is the time limit?
3. Does the law set a minimum income requirement?
☐ Yes ☒ No

²⁷¹ Article 15(1) and Article 15b(1) of the Asylum Act.

²⁷² Article 21(1) of the Asylum Act.

²⁷³ Article 213(2) of the AJC.

²⁷⁴ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

National Visa for Purpose of Family Reunification

Family members of beneficiaries of international protection are eligible for a national visa (type D). Article 15(2) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners provides that family members of asylum holders or subsidiary protection holders are granted a national visa if they do not constitute a threat to the state security or public order. The provision of the Act on Residence of Foreigners does not directly define who a family member is; instead, it refers to the Asylum Act. The national visa for family reunification with the beneficiary of international protection may be granted to:

- (1) the spouse of a beneficiary of international protection, if their marriage continues, and continued also at the time when the beneficiary of international protection left the country of origin, and if the beneficiary of international protection gives a prior written consent to the reunification,
- (2) unmarried children of a beneficiary of international protection or unmarried children of a spouse of a beneficiary of international protection, or
- (3) parents or a person entrusted with the personal guardianship of an unmarried beneficiary of international protection younger than 18 years of age, if the beneficiary of international protection gives a prior written consent to the reunification.²⁷⁵

Family members may submit the application for a national visa immediately after the sponsor has been granted asylum or subsidiary protection in Slovakia. No deadline is imposed after which the application would no longer be accepted. The application for a national visa shall be submitted at the competent Slovak embassy or through an external service provider designated by the MoFEA SR.²⁷⁶ Family members must appear in person and present a valid travel document, proof of their family relationship to the sponsor (e.g. a marriage or birth certificate), and, where applicable, proof of dependency.²⁷⁷ The embassy shall examine the visa application within 30 days.²⁷⁸

In 2025, Slovakia granted no national visa for the purpose of family reunification with a beneficiary of international protection within the meaning of Article 15(2) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.²⁷⁹

After arriving to Slovakia, family members of beneficiaries of international protection may decide to either apply for asylum or apply for a regular residence permit.

Family Reunification under the Asylum Act.

If a family member of a beneficiary of international protection applies for asylum, the application is examined under the regular procedure. The MO first assesses whether the applicant qualifies for asylum status (either under the 1951 Convention or constitutional asylum) or for subsidiary protection on the grounds of serious harm. Only if these conditions are not met does the MO proceed to examine whether the applicant fulfils the requirements for asylum for family reunification or subsidiary protection for family reunification (See [Procedures: National forms of protection](#)). The definition of family members eligible for asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification corresponds to that of family members who may be granted a national visa for the purpose of family reunification.

Asylum for family reunification is initially granted for a period of three years. After this period, the family member may apply for a renewal and, provided that the conditions laid down in the Asylum Act are met, asylum for family reunification is subsequently granted for an unlimited period.²⁸⁰ Subsidiary protection for family reunification is initially granted for one year, and may be repeatedly extended for periods of two years.²⁸¹ Asylum or subsidiary protection granted for family reunification is dependent on the protection status of the sponsor. Asylum for family reunification ceases *ex lege* if the sponsor's asylum is withdrawn or if the sponsor waives asylum in writing.²⁸² Similarly, subsidiary protection for family reunification ceases

²⁷⁵ Article 10(1) and Article 13b(1) of the Asylum Act.

²⁷⁶ Article 17(1) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁷⁷ Article 17(3) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁷⁸ Article 17(4) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁷⁹ Official response of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (No. INF/000021/2026-LEG2-2) from 17 February 2026 to a request for information submitted on 6 February 2026.

²⁸⁰ Article 20(2) of the Asylum Act.

²⁸¹ Article 20(3) of the Asylum Act.

²⁸² Article 14(2) of the Asylum Act.

ex lege if the sponsor's subsidiary protection is withdrawn, not extended, or if the sponsor waives subsidiary protection in writing.²⁸³

In 2025, asylum for the purpose of family reunification was granted to 6 persons (5 from Afghanistan and 1 from Russia), while subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification was granted to 4 persons (1 from Afghanistan and 3 from India).²⁸⁴

Family Reunification under Act on Residence of Foreigners

Family members of beneficiaries of international protection may also be reunited through a regular residence permit. Due to the fact that asylum holders are considered as foreigners granted permanent residence²⁸⁵ and subsidiary protection holders are considered as foreigners granted temporary residence,²⁸⁶ their family members may be granted temporary residence for family reunification under the Act on Residence of Foreigners. The definition of a family member eligible for a temporary residence under Article 27 of the Act on Residence of Foreigners is broader than provided in the Asylum Act. Article 27(2) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners defines a family member eligible for temporary residence for the purpose of family reunification as:

- (1) a spouse, if the spouse reached 18 years of age,
- (2) an unmarried child under 18 years of age of the person granted temporary or permanent residence and/or of his or her spouse,
- (3) a dependent unmarried child older than 18 years of age of a person with granted temporary or permanent residence and/or of his or her spouse, unable to take care of themselves due to a long-term unfavourable health condition,
- (4) a parent of a person with granted temporary or permanent residence or of his or her spouse who is dependent on his or her care and lacks appropriate family support in the country of origin.

Additionally, the temporary residence for family reunification may also be granted to all direct ascendants of an asylum holder under 18 years of age.²⁸⁷

The application for temporary residence for the purpose of family reunification shall be submitted at a Slovak embassy abroad. A person who is legally residing in Slovakia and meets the conditions laid down by law²⁸⁸ (e.g. has been granted a national visa) may submit the application for temporary residence within the territory of Slovakia at the competent foreign police department.

If the family member of an asylum holder submits the residence application within three months of the asylum being granted to the sponsor, he or she must provide only a valid travel document and proof of the family relationship to the sponsor.²⁸⁹ In all other instances, the applicant must also provide a criminal record statement and proof of accommodation.²⁹⁰ Applicants for temporary residence for family reunification whose sponsor was granted asylum or subsidiary protection are exempt from administrative fees. The residence application shall be examined within 90 days.²⁹¹

Since October 2024, HRL has been assisting a Palestinian family (wife and 4 minor children) from the Gaza Strip, trying to reunite with their husband/father, who was granted asylum in Slovakia. As there is no Slovak Embassy in the Gaza Strip and the family is unable to travel to Tel Aviv where the Slovak Embassy is authorised to receive visa/residence applications of Palestinian citizens, HRL applied the MoFEA for a territorial and personal exemption allowing the family to submit their visa applications at other embassies and without the obligation to submit the applications in person. The MoFEA granted the territorial and personal exemption allowing the family to submit their visa application also at the Slovak

²⁸³ Article 15a(2) of the Asylum Act.

²⁸⁴ The Response of the MO to a request for information submitted on 11 March 2026.

²⁸⁵ Article 24(1) of the Asylum Act.

²⁸⁶ Article 27a(1) of the Asylum Act.

²⁸⁷ Article 27(1)(b) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁸⁸ Article 31(3) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁸⁹ Article 32(13) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

²⁹⁰ Details are provided in Article 32 of the Act on Residence in Foreigners.

²⁹¹ Article 33(8)(a) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

Embassy in Cairo and in Beirut. On 1 April 2026, the family members were granted a Slovak national visa valid for one year, issued by the Slovak Embassy in Cairo. At the time of publication of this report, they remain awaiting evacuation.

2. Status and rights of family members

Beneficiaries of asylum/subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification are entitled to the same rights and benefits as their sponsors.

The status of family members of beneficiaries of international protection who have been granted temporary residence for family reunification (family members granted TR) differs from that of their sponsors, and they are entitled to fewer rights and benefits. The main differences are:

- Family members granted TR are not entitled to one-off and integration allowances regulated by the Asylum Act,
- Family members granted TR cannot be issued a Travel Document for a Foreigner or a Foreigner's Passport,
- Family members granted TR cannot be accommodated in the asylum facilities,
- Family members granted TR are neither covered by the public health insurance nor entitled to reimbursement of health care costs by the State – during their residence in Slovakia, they are obliged to pay for commercial health insurance for foreigners,
- Family members granted TR obtain free access to the labour market only after 9 months from the date the temporary residence is granted. Prior to the expiry of this nine-month period, they may be employed only if the OLSAF issues them a work permit.

C. Movement and mobility

1. Freedom of movement

Beneficiaries of international protection have freedom of movement within Slovakia, and there is no legal provision requiring them to remain in a specific region, municipality or facility. There is no dispersal scheme in place.

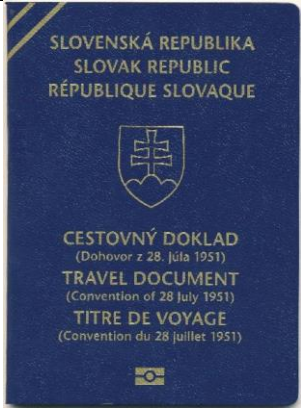
The freedom of movement for everyone, regardless of their citizenship, is guaranteed by the Article 23(1) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic.

The provision of selected social assistance is linked to the beneficiary's registered place of residence for administrative purposes. Under the system of social assistance (*sociálna pomoc*) and state social benefits (*štátna sociálna podpora*), benefits are administered by the locally competent OLSAF according to the applicant's place of residence. Applicants must declare and prove their address when applying for social assistance, and entitlement is assessed by the competent OLSAF. (For additional details, see [Social Welfare](#))

2. Travel documents

Beneficiaries of international protection have the right to obtain a travel document issued by the Slovak authorities. According to Article 13(1)(a) of the Act No. 647/2007 Coll. on Travel Documents and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (the Act on Travel Documents) asylum holders may obtain a Travel Document of a Foreigner (*cestovný doklad cudzinca*) based on the 1951 Convention with a validity of two years. A subsidiary protection holder may, in accordance with Article 74(1)(a) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners obtain a Foreigner's Passport (*cudzinecký pas*) for travelling to and from Slovakia in case he or she does not have their own valid travel document. Validity of Foreigner's Passport is limited to one year with possible extension.²⁹²

²⁹² Article 74(5) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

Examples of travel documents issued for beneficiaries of international protection	
Travel Document for a Foreigner	Foreigner's Passport
	

Both travel documents are issued upon application at the competent Foreign Police Department. The amendment of the Act on Residence of Foreigners, effective as of 15 December 2024, also allows for online submission of the application for the issuance of the Foreigner's Passport.

A Foreigner's Passport must be issued within 30 days of the submission of the application.²⁹³ The Act on Travel Documents does not establish a specific time limit for issuing a Travel Document for a Foreigner. Therefore, the general time limits for issuing a decision under the Administrative Procedure Code apply. Pursuant to Article 49 of the Administrative Procedure Code, the administrative authority shall issue a decision without undue delay, and no later than within 30 days of the commencement of the proceedings; in particularly complex cases, it shall issue a decision within 60 days.²⁹⁴

In 2025, beneficiaries of international protection encountered difficulties in obtaining travel documents. A foreigner wishing to submit an application for a travel document in person at the foreign police department must book an appointment through the same online reservation system used for submitting applications for issuing residence cards. Due to the persistent shortage of staff at the BBFP and reported technical issues with the reservation system, only a limited number of appointment slots are available. In practice, beneficiaries of international protection often must wait several weeks to secure an appointment. (More details in [Status and residence: Residence permit](#))

There are no specific or systematic obstacles reported in Slovakia regarding the recognition of travel documents issued to beneficiaries of international protection by another State. In principle, such documents are assessed under general rules, in the same manner as other recognised international travel documents. A valid travel document is any passport or other public document, provided that it is recognised as a travel document by the Slovak Republic, is valid for the relevant period, enables the clear identification of its holder, has not been tampered with, and is not damaged to such extent that the entries contained therein are illegible.²⁹⁵

D. Housing

Indicators: Housing

1. For how long are beneficiaries entitled to stay in reception centres? *(Not specified by the law)*
2. Number of beneficiaries staying in reception centres as of 31 December 2025: n/a

²⁹³ Article 74(4) of the Act of Residence of Foreigners.

²⁹⁴ Article 33(1) in connection with Article 49 APC.

²⁹⁵ Article 2(1)(n) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners.

Generally, beneficiaries of international protection are expected to secure housing independently, most commonly through private rental accommodation or other forms of commercial housing (e.g. hostels or rented apartments).

After asylum seekers are granted asylum or subsidiary protection, they may, upon written request, remain accommodated in the reception centres in Rohovce or Opatovská Nová Ves for a necessary period.²⁹⁶ This is intended to bridge the period until they secure their own accommodation. The law does not specify a maximum length of stay in the centre. Based on our practical experience, the period during which beneficiaries of international protection may remain in reception centres is determined on an individual basis, depending on the person's life situation and their ability to move to alternative accommodation. During this time, beneficiaries of international protection are required to cover the costs related to their stay on a proportional basis.

Beneficiaries of international protection may also request accommodation in the Integration Centre in the city of Zvolen.²⁹⁷ The facility comprises twelve apartments with a total capacity of 25 persons, with the possibility of expansion up to 35 persons.²⁹⁸ Similarly, beneficiaries are required to contribute proportionally to the costs related to accommodation in the Integration Centre. Beneficiaries may reside in the centre for up to six months, with a possible extension of an additional six months. In practice, beneficiaries of international protection are rarely accommodated in the Integration Centre, mainly because it is located in a relatively small city in a region with one of the highest unemployment rates in Slovakia.

Support in finding sustainable accommodation is also provided by the SHC within the project Rifugio II funded through AMIF. This support includes communication with landlords as well as the review of rental agreements. SHC maintains its own regularly updated database of rental housing and accommodation. In addition, SHC owns apartments in Bratislava and Košice that can be rented for a fixed term at below-market rent. Given the current capacity, these apartments are offered primarily to vulnerable persons.²⁹⁹

In practice, one of the main difficulties beneficiaries face is the high cost of private rental housing, particularly for those wishing to live independently. Access to accommodation may also be affected by the attitudes of some private landlords, who may be reluctant to rent apartments to third-country nationals. In addition, social or municipal housing is available only to a limited extent. There is no housing allowance designed specifically for beneficiaries of international protection. However, beneficiaries may apply for a housing allowance within the general system of assistance in material need, provided they meet the statutory eligibility criteria (see [Content of International Protection: Social Welfare](#)).

E. Employment and education

1. Access to the labour market

According to Article 23a(1)(i) and (j) of the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (the Employment Services Act), beneficiaries of international protection have free access to the labour market. They may be employed without having to obtain any special work authorisation (work permit, confirmation of the possibility to fill in a vacancy, or confirmation of the possibility to fill in a vacancy which corresponds to highly qualified employment). This means, inter alia, that the employers are not required to report a job vacancy to the OLSAF prior to hiring a beneficiary of international protection, and that the OLSAF does not assess the labour market situation in such cases.

²⁹⁶ Article 24(3) and Article 27a(3) of the Asylum Act.

²⁹⁷ Article 28(6) of the Asylum Act.

²⁹⁸ MO, *The Migration Office of The Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic: 25 years (1993-2018)* 2018, available [here](#).

²⁹⁹ More details about the SHC's AMIF project Rifugio II can be found (in Slovak) [here](#).

Beneficiaries of international protection may work within an employment relationship (employment contract), or on the basis of agreements on work performed outside an employment relationship (agreement for work performance, agreement on work activity or student temporary job agreement). No distinction is made between asylum holders and holders of subsidiary protection.

Employers hiring beneficiaries of international protection are required to notify the OLSAF within 7 working days from the commencement of employment and within 7 working days from the termination of the employment relationship. Such notification is submitted electronically.³⁰⁰ This obligation applies to the employment of all third-country nationals and is not specific to the employment of refugees.

In general, beneficiaries of international protection are excluded from employment in civil service. According to Article 2 of the Act No. 55/2017 Coll. on Civil Service and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts, only citizens of the Slovak Republic, citizens of the EU member states, citizens of the EEA Member States and citizens of the Swiss Confederation are entitled to apply for admission to the civil service.

The Employment Services Act classifies persons granted asylum and subsidiary protection as disadvantaged jobseekers³⁰¹ and, in this context, provides them with specific forms of support throughout the Act in order to facilitate their integration and retention in the labour market.

Within the AMIF-funded project Rifugio II, SHC provides beneficiaries of international protection with job counselling, including skills and qualifications assessment, identification of employment or internship opportunities, and preventive measures against exploitation or the non-payment of fair wages. Apart from individual counselling, asylum and subsidiary protection holders may attend group workshops focused on different topics related to refugees' labour market integration.³⁰²

In cooperation with IKEA, the HRL has been implementing the *Skills for Employment* project aimed at supporting the labour market integration of refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection in Slovakia. The project focuses on improving participants' employability through skills and qualifications assessment, career counselling, job-search assistance, CV and interview preparation, and orientation in the Slovak labour market. It also provides information on employment rights and obligations, including employment contracts, working conditions, and protection against labour exploitation.

In practice, beneficiaries of international protection face several obstacles in accessing the labour market. According to the 2021 research study *Refugee Integration into the Labour Market in Slovakia (Integrácia utečencov na trh práce na Slovensku)*,³⁰³ which examined challenges related to labour market access and working conditions through interviews with asylum seekers, asylum holders, and subsidiary protection holders, HRL identified the following challenges and areas for improvement:

- violations of rights and exploitative working conditions affecting refugees, including: excessive amount of overtime (sometimes under a threat of being laid off), minimum wage laid down in the employment contract (the rest of the salary paid in cash), employment without a contract, non-payment or irregular payment of wages, lower wages on the grounds that the worker was a refugee, lack of respect and humiliation in the workplace, non-payment of taxes and levies, obligation to perform work not specified in the employment contract, insufficient understanding of employment contracts due to language barriers; denial of annual leave or failure to provide leave in the statutory extent, and failure to compensate public holidays and leave entitlements.
- insufficient language training and preparation of beneficiaries of international protection for the labour market
- inadequate mechanisms for recognition of education and professional qualifications, including non-formal learning, skills and qualifications of refugees

³⁰⁰ Art. 23b(5) of the Employment Services Act.

³⁰¹ Art. 8(1)(f) of the Employment Services Act.

³⁰² More details about the SHC's AMIF project Rifugio II can be found (in Slovak) [here](#).

³⁰³ HRL, *Integrácia utečencov na trh práce na Slovensku*, 2021, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

As of 31 December 2025, there were 88 asylum holders (68 males, 19 females and 1 person of unknown sex) and 79 subsidiary protection holders (74 males, 4 females and 1 person of unknown sex) employed in the Slovak Republic.³⁰⁴ Additionally, 1 beneficiary of international protection was registered as a job seeker.³⁰⁵

Educational qualifications obtained abroad are not automatically recognised in Slovakia as equivalent to Slovak qualifications. A distinction is made between **professional recognition** of educational qualifications for the purpose of pursuing regulated professions and **academic recognition** of educational qualifications for the purpose of continuing to a higher level of education. The recognition of educational qualifications or professional qualifications is carried out by the Centre for Recognition of Education Documents (*Stredisko na uznávanie dokladov o vzdelaní*).³⁰⁶ The process of recognition of professional qualifications is regulated primarily by the Act No. 422/2015 Coll. On the Recognition of Educational Qualifications and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (The Act No. 422/2015 Coll.).

The Act No. 422/2015 Coll. regulates a two-stage model of recognition of foreign education for the exercise of a regulated profession. The first stage is the recognition of the evidence of formal education, and the second stage is the recognition of the evidence of professional qualifications. The decision on the recognition of the evidence of formal qualifications alone does not necessarily entitle the applicant to exercise the regulated profession.

Where both the recognition of formal educational qualifications and the recognition of professional qualifications fall within the competence of the same authority, a combined procedure may be conducted. In such cases, a single decision is issued encompassing both the recognition of the educational qualification and the recognition of the professional qualification. The MoERDY applies this procedure in relation to qualifications required for the exercise of professions in the fields of education, sport, and healthcare.

In the case of other regulated professions, the MoERDY acts as the competent authority for the recognition of educational qualifications. Where additional qualification requirements apply beyond formal education - such as professional experience, lifelong learning certificates, or professional examinations - these are assessed by the competent authority responsible for the recognition of professional qualifications. Information on the competent authorities for individual professions is available in the Regulated Professions Database. The database of regulated professions is available online.³⁰⁷ Professions that are not listed in the database are considered unregulated.

The official processing times for recognition of formal qualifications and professional qualifications depend on the profession and the country where the qualification was obtained, and it may take up to 3 months from the submission of a complete application. The administrative fee for submitting an online application for recognition of qualifications is €90 for professions in the fields of education, healthcare, and sports and €35 for other regulated professions. In case of submission of an application in paper form, the administrative fee is €140 for professions in the fields of education, healthcare, and sports and €70 for other regulated professions.³⁰⁸

Article 57 of Act No. 422/2015 Coll. establishes a specific procedure for beneficiaries of international protection who are unable to present documentary proof of their previous education due to the circumstances connected with their displacement. Under this provision, a person granted asylum, subsidiary protection or temporary protection may request an assessment and verification of their attained education by MoERDY SR. Where the application is accepted, the Ministry designates a secondary school or higher education institution to verify the applicant's level of education through an examination

³⁰⁴ Official response of the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (No. UPS/US1/OPS/INF/2026/12) from 19 January 2026 to a request for information submitted on 7 January 2026.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ The website of the Centre for Recognition of Education Documents is available [here](#).

³⁰⁷ The database of regulated professions is available [here](#).

³⁰⁸ More details [here](#).

conducted in the Slovak language. The examination may include written, oral, and practical components and aims to determine the extent to which the applicant's previous education corresponds to comparable education in Slovakia. Although this mechanism may facilitate access to further education, the resulting protocol **does not authorise access to regulated professions**, which substantially limits its practical value for labour market participation.

Field research conducted by HRL in 2021 showed that beneficiaries of international protection continue to face difficulties in obtaining recognition of their education and skills acquired through employment in their countries of origin. Many are forced to perform low-skilled work or remain unemployed, resulting in a waste of their potential, commonly referred to as "brain waste." The research further demonstrated that refugee women face the greatest difficulties in accessing the Slovak labour market, particularly where they have children. At the same time, highly educated refugee women perceive their inability to find adequate employment as especially frustrating and discouraging.³⁰⁹

2. Access to education

According to Article 42(1) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, everyone has the right to education. School attendance is compulsory. Its length up to the age limit shall be fixed by law.

Access of beneficiaries of international protection to education is regulated primarily by the Act No. 245/2008 Coll. On Education and Schooling (The School Act). Beneficiaries of international protection are entitled to access education, school accommodation and meals under the same conditions as Slovak citizens.³¹⁰ Children granted asylum or subsidiary protection shall be placed in the appropriate grade by the school principal after assessing the level of their previous education and their proficiency in the Slovak language, no later than three months from the commencement of the asylum procedure. Due to insufficient proficiency in the Slovak language, a child may be conditionally placed in the grade corresponding to their age. Placement in a lower grade requires the informed consent of the child's legal guardian or the representative of the relevant institution.³¹¹

Beneficiaries of international protection have the right to attend an introductory Slovak language course.³¹² Such a course is provided by the SHC within an AMIF-funded project Rifugio II. The Slovak language courses are delivered in person in Bratislava and Košice, as well as online for refugees residing outside these cities. The courses consist of two-hour sessions held three times per week, primarily during the first six months following arrival. They are mainly focused on the development of communication skills at A1 and A2 levels.³¹³ Despite the fact that Slovak language courses are occasionally provided for free by other NGOs and international organisations, the availability of systematic Slovak language instruction for foreigners, including courses at more advanced levels, remains generally insufficient and continues to limit, to a certain extent, the integration process of refugees in Slovakia. Language barriers are regarded by beneficiaries of international protection as one of the most significant obstacles to integration.³¹⁴

Based on the agreement between UNHCR and Coursera, beneficiaries of international protection may get free access to all the study programs on the Coursera online training platform, offering courses from universities and educational institutions worldwide.³¹⁵

Beneficiaries of international protection are entitled to access higher education in Slovakia under the same conditions as Slovak citizens. The basic condition for admission to bachelor's studies is the completion of full secondary education or full secondary vocational education.³¹⁶ Article 56(2) of the Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (the Higher

³⁰⁹ HRL, *Integrácia utečencov na trh práce na Slovensku*, 2021, available (in Slovak) [here](#).

³¹⁰ Article 146(2) of the School Act.

³¹¹ Article 146(4) of the School Act.

³¹² Article 28(3) of the Asylum Act.

³¹³ More details about the SHC's AMIF project Rifugio II can be found (in Slovak) [here](#).

³¹⁴ Based on HRL's experience.

³¹⁵ More details can be found [here](#).

³¹⁶ Article 56(1) of the Higher Education Act.

Education Act) provides that persons granted asylum or subsidiary protection may prove the completion of secondary education by submitting an affidavit and by taking a general study prerequisites test,³¹⁷ which addresses situations where standard educational documentation cannot be produced.

At public higher education institutions, the rules governing the payment of tuition fees apply equally to Slovak nationals and foreign nationals. Full-time study programmes conducted in the Slovak language are free of charge for both Slovak citizens and foreigners, except in cases where the law establishes an obligation to pay tuition fees (e.g. exceeding the standard duration of studies). Where a study programme is conducted exclusively in a language other than the Slovak language, students enrolled in the full-time form of study are required to pay annual tuition fees for each academic year. This obligation applies equally to Slovak nationals and foreign nationals. However, under Article 92(11) of the Higher Education Act, students who have been granted asylum, subsidiary protection, or temporary protection are exempt from the obligation to pay tuition fees. This exemption applies irrespective of the legal ground on which tuition fees would otherwise arise and therefore also covers, for example, tuition fees for exceeding the standard duration of studies, concurrent enrolment in multiple study programmes, and tuition fees charged for study programmes conducted in a language other than Slovak. At private higher education institutions, tuition fees and other charges related to studies are determined by the institution in its internal regulations.

A need-based scholarship is provided to students who have permanent residence in the Slovak Republic or to students who have been granted asylum, provided with subsidiary protection, or given temporary protection, based on meeting the defined conditions.³¹⁸ A student with specific needs may be awarded a need-based scholarship even after exceeding the standard length of study if this extension is due to their disability. Need-based grants were most commonly awarded with the amount of €2,404.³¹⁹

F. Social welfare

Beneficiaries of international protection have the right to access specialised social welfare. According to Article 28 of the Asylum Act, asylum holders and subsidiary protection holders are entitled to two distinct types of financial support – a one-off allowance and an integration allowance, under the same conditions

The one-off allowance is granted upon written application and amounts to 1.5 times the subsistence minimum for one adult person.³²⁰ This allowance may be granted only once to the same beneficiary. The integration allowance is provided, also upon written application, in the amount of 1.75 times the subsistence minimum for a period of six consecutive months from the submission of the application to the MO. The integration allowance must be applied for within 60 days from the granting of asylum status or subsidiary protection; applications submitted after this deadline are rejected.³²¹ The allowance is provided directly by the MO, unless it is delivered through an NGO, and may likewise be granted only once, following the first grant of asylum status or subsidiary protection.

In 2025, the one-off allowance amounted to €410.99 until 30 June 2025 and €426.20 from 1 July 2025, reflecting the adjustment of the subsistence minimum. The monthly integration allowance amounted to €479.48 in the first half of 2025 and €497.23 from 1 July 2025.

Neither the one-off allowance nor the integration allowance is granted if the foreign national previously had or currently has temporary or permanent residence in the Slovak Republic, or if temporary protection had been provided to them in the past.

³¹⁷ Article 56(2) of the Higher Education Act.

³¹⁸ Article 96(1) of the Higher Education Act.

³¹⁹ Source available [here](#).

³²⁰ Article 28(2) of the Asylum Act.

³²¹ Article 28(4) of the Asylum Act.

In addition to benefits specifically designated for persons with international protection, asylum and subsidiary protection holders are entitled to social assistance and state social support, which is provided under the same conditions as Slovak citizens.

Social assistance constitutes a system of support provided to the most vulnerable persons or to persons facing a particular social or crisis life situation. It is provided in the form of cash or in-kind benefits (social services), financed either from the state budget through the OLSAF or from the budgets of local self-government authorities.

Overview of Types of Social Assistance	
Type of social assistance	Legal Regulation
Material Need Assistance	Act No. 417/2013 Coll. on Assistance in Material Need
Compensation for Severe Disability	Act No. 447/2008 Coll. on Cash Contributions for Compensation of Severe Disability
Social Services	Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services and on Amendments and Supplements to Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (Trade Licensing Act)

State social support represents a system of support under which the State provides one-off or recurring financial benefits upon the occurrence of a specific life event or situation. State social support is financed from the state budget. Benefits supporting families with children and funeral allowance are paid by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic through the OLSAF, while the payment of the tax bonus is administered by the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic through the tax authorities.

Overview of Benefits within the State Social Support System	
Name of the allowance	Legal Regulation
Childbirth allowance; allowance for multiple children born simultaneously	Act No. 383/2013 Coll. on the Childbirth Allowance and the Allowance for Multiple Children Born Simultaneously and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts
Child benefit; child benefit supplement	Act No. 600/2003 Coll. on Child Benefit and on Amendments and Supplements to Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance
Parental allowance	Act No. 571/2009 Coll. on Parental Allowance and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts
Childcare allowance	Act No. 561/2008 Coll. on on Childcare Allowance and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts
Substitute maintenance payment	Act No. 201/2008 Coll. on Substitute Maintenance Payment and on Amendments and Supplements to Act No. 36/2005 Coll. on the Family and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts, as amended by Judgment No. 615/2006 Coll. of the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic
Tax bonus	Act No. 595/2003 Coll. on Income Tax
Funeral allowance	Act No. 238/1998 Coll. on Funeral Allowance

In practice, beneficiaries of international protection may face several obstacles in accessing social assistance. These include legal and administrative restrictions, as well as a lack of accessible and clear information about available benefits and eligibility conditions. Limited knowledge of the social welfare system and complex application procedures can further hinder effective access to assistance. Language barriers also represent a significant challenge, often requiring beneficiaries to rely on external support, such as NGOs, to navigate the system.

Based on HRL's experience, a significant obstacle concerns beneficiaries of international protection who are not entitled to the one-off or integration allowance because they previously held temporary or permanent residence in Slovakia. This situation is relatively frequent in practice. In such cases, beneficiaries may only apply for assistance in material need. After the integration allowance ceases (after six months), beneficiaries are likewise entitled only to assistance in material need, the level of which is extremely low and insufficient to cover basic living costs. Many beneficiaries are unable to secure employment within the initial six-month period during which the integration allowance is provided, which further exacerbates their financial vulnerability.

G. Health care

Access to health care for beneficiaries of international protection is guaranteed in national legislation and is not limited to urgent medical health care. Legal provision regulating the health care for beneficiaries of international protection is set mainly in the:

- Act No. 580/2004 Coll. on Health Insurance and on Amendments and Supplements to Act No. 95/2002 Coll. on Insurance and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (Health Insurance Act),
- the Act No. 577/2004 Coll. on the Scope of Healthcare Covered by Public Health Insurance and on the Reimbursement of Healthcare-related Services (Act No. 577/2004 Coll.), and
- Act No. 576/2004 Coll. on Healthcare, Services Related to the Provision of Healthcare, and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts (Act No. 576/2006 Coll.).

Asylum holders are subject to mandatory **public health insurance** in Slovakia.³²² They are required to register with a public health insurance company within eight days of granting of asylum. The application must be accompanied by the decision granting asylum.³²³ Asylum holders may choose any of the three public health insurance companies operating in Slovakia (*Union, Dôvera, or Všeobecná zdravotná poisťovňa*). An asylum holder is issued a health insurance card and is required to present his or her insurance card when receiving healthcare services. The scope of healthcare services covered by public health insurance for an asylum holder is equal to that of a national. During the first six calendar months following the granting of asylum, the State pays the health insurance contributions on their behalf.³²⁴ After this initial six-month period, asylum holders are required to pay health insurance contributions themselves, unless they fall within another category of persons whose contributions are covered by the State. In 2025, the minimum monthly advance payment for public health insurance amounted to €107.25.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not subject to mandatory public health insurance and are therefore not insured persons within the public health insurance system. However, they are entitled to reimbursement of health care costs by the State.³²⁵ Health care is provided within the same scope as care covered under public health insurance, and the costs are reimbursed by the State through the public health insurance company with the largest number of insured persons (currently *Všeobecná zdravotná poisťovňa*). A subsidiary protection holder is issued a so-called entitlement certificate (*nárokový preukaz*) and is required to present his or her entitlement certificate when receiving healthcare services.

³²² Article 3(3)(c) of the Health Insurance Act.

³²³ Article 8(5) of the Health Insurance Act.

³²⁴ Article 11(7)(q) of the Health Insurance Act.

³²⁵ Article 9h(1)(a) of the Health Insurance Act.

A specimen of an entitlement certificate for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection

 VŠEOBECNÁ ZDRAVOTNÁ POISŤOVŇA		ZÁZNAMY POISŤOVNE: OSOBA S DOPLNKOVOU OCHRANOU  Podpis a odtlačok pečiatky
PREUKAZ POISTENCA VEREJNEHO ZDRAVOTNEHO POISTENIA		
Kód zdravotnej poisťovne:	NÁROKOVÝ PREUKAZ	
Titul, meno, priezvisko poistenca:		
Rodné číslo alebo inej identifikačnej číslo poistenca:	Dátum narodenia:	
Preukaz platný od:		

Following the major COVID-19 vaccine crisis, PCR tests are available for purchase in pharmacies. Vaccination against COVID-19 is covered not only for persons with public health insurance³²⁶ (including asylum holders), but also for certain categories of uninsured individuals.³²⁷ This includes, inter alia, holders of subsidiary protection. The MoH may also designate additional categories of foreigners eligible for coverage. The costs of vaccination for these persons are reimbursed by the health insurance company with the largest number of insured persons in Slovakia.

The main challenges faced by the beneficiaries of international protection when accessing the health care are a language barrier, a lack of medical stuff, especially specialists in psychiatry and child psychiatry, long waiting times for examinations, poor awareness of health care providers about the ways in which medical procedures administered to holders of subsidiary protection are reimbursed and on the level of coverage for the administered procedures and the related lower level of willingness to treat them. Additionally, access to specialised health care is subject to the standard referral system, which requires a prior examination by a general practitioner and subsequent appointment with a specialist.

³²⁶ Article 29ba(1) of the Health Insurance Act.

³²⁷ Article 29ba(1) of the Health Insurance Act.

ANNEX I – Transposition of the CEAS in national legislation

Directives and other CEAS measures transposed into national legislation

Directive	Deadline for transposition	Date of transposition	Official title of corresponding act	Web Link
Directive 2011/95/EU Recast Qualification Directive	21 December 2013	1 January 2014	Zákon č. 480/2002 Z. z. o azyle	https://www.slovlex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2002/480/20250301 (SK)
Directive 2013/32/EU Recast Asylum Procedures Directive	20 July 2015	20 July 2015	Zákon č. 480/2002 Z. z. o azyle	https://www.slovlex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2002/480/20250301 (SK)
Directive 2013/33/EU Recast Reception Conditions Directive	20 July 2015	20 July 2015	Zákon č. 480/2002 Z. z. o azyle	https://www.slovlex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2002/480/20250301 (SK)
Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 Dublin III Regulation	Directly applicable 20 July 2013			

The following section contains an overview of incompatibilities in transposition of the CEAS in national legislation:

Directive	Provision	Domestic law provision	Non-transposition or incorrect transposition
Directive 2011/95/EU Recast Qualification Directive	Article 15 (a)	Article 2 (f) Act on Asylum	Under the Asylum Act, serious harm includes the imposition or execution of the death penalty. In this regard, it should be noted that the Directive explicitly refers to “death penalty or execution”, which indicates that the concept covers not only the imposition of capital punishment within criminal proceedings but also the risk of extrajudicial execution.

Annex II – EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

On 18 December 2024, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the **National Implementation Plan of the Slovak Republic for the Reform of Asylum and Migration Policy**.³²⁸ The Plan is based on the Common Implementation Plan prepared by the European Commission with the aim of ensuring uniform implementation across all Member States. From Slovakia's perspective, the Plan identifies several key challenges:

- The introduction of a **border procedure**, which had not previously existed in Slovakia. This requires the development of the necessary infrastructure, material and technical capacities, information systems, and staffing. In this regard, the construction of a new hybrid administrative and accommodation facility near Slovakia's external border with Ukraine is envisaged. The facility is intended to enable the effective screening of persons arriving in Slovakia, their subsequent referral to asylum or return procedures, and the handling of appeals before the competent administrative courts.
- The need to streamline existing procedures through greater use of **digitalisation and new technologies**, including the strengthening, upgrading, and interconnection of existing information systems and databases used in the field of migration and asylum.
- the importance of reinforcing safeguards, particularly for minors and vulnerable persons arriving in Slovakia. This includes ensuring **access to information on rights and obligations during different stages of proceedings, access to free legal counselling, the appointment of a sufficient number of guardians and legal representatives for minors, and the establishment of an effective independent monitoring mechanism for fundamental rights during procedures**.

On 12 June 2025, the Government of the Slovak Republic approved the **National Strategy of the Slovak Republic for the Management of Asylum and Migration**³²⁹, reflecting the requirements arising from the Pact on Migration and Asylum. The first two chapters of the Strategy follow the template established by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/503 of 18 March 2025, which aims to ensure comparability of national asylum and migration management strategies across Member States.

Building upon the Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic with a View to 2025, the National Strategy represents the current migration policy of Slovakia and establishes a comprehensive framework for asylum and migration management for the following five years. It addresses key migration-related areas while referring to strategies and policy concepts already developed in specific sectors.

In April 2026, the Parliament of the Slovak Republic (*Národná rada Slovenskej Republiky*) adopted a new International Protection Act (IPA), which entered into force on 12 June 2026, replacing the former Asylum Act and amending several related legal instruments. Its main objective is the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum. The most significant changes include:

³²⁸ Available [here](#).

³²⁹ Available [here](#).

- **Introduction of a asylum border procedure:** applications examined under the border procedure must be decided within 12 weeks and, in exceptional cases, within 16 weeks, including the appeal procedure. Following a decision by the police authority that an application will be examined under the asylum border procedure, the applicant will be subject to a regime of deprivation or restriction of liberty of movement. Such decisions are subject to judicial review. During the procedure, applicants will be accommodated in a specialised facility.
- **Introduction of new terminology:** the term “asylum applicant” (*žiadateľ o azyl*) is replaced by “applicant for international protection” (*žiadateľ o medzinárodnú ochranu*), while the term “person provided with subsidiary protection” (*osoba s poskytnutou doplnkovou ochranou*) is replaced by “foreigner granted subsidiary protection” (*cudziniec s udelenou doplnkovou ochranou*).
- **Expansion of detention grounds and stricter safeguards against removal:** the grounds for detention are broadened, while the conditions under which a person may not be expelled or extradited for criminal prosecution are tightened.
- **Introduction of free legal counselling during the first-instance procedure:** the Act introduces free legal counselling for applicants already at first instance. It also allows such counselling to be provided in groups or through audio-visual communication technologies.
- **Mandatory audio recording of interviews:** interviews must be audio-recorded. The recording is stored on a data carrier attached to the asylum file, or a note is made in the asylum file indicating where the recording is stored.
- **Scope of health care for minor applicants for international protection:** Minor applicants for international protection will be provided with health care to the same extent as that provided under public health insurance.
- **Changes to subsidiary protection status:** subsidiary protection is now granted for an indefinite period, and foreigner granted subsidiary protection acquire permanent residence in Slovakia. Previously, subsidiary protection was granted initially for one year, with the possibility of repeated extensions of two years, while beneficiaries were granted temporary residence. Holders of subsidiary protection are now covered by public health insurance.
- **Establishment of an independent monitoring mechanism:** the independent monitoring mechanism will be carried out by the Public Defender of Rights.
- **Travel Documents:** Travel Documents for Foreigners under the Act on the Travel Documents will now be issued only to refugees granted 1951 Geneva Convention Asylum and Constitutional Asylum. Beneficiaries of asylum for family reunification and asylum on humanitarian grounds will now be issued only a foreigners’ passport with validity of two years.

At the level of political statements, Slovakia continues to reject participation in mandatory solidarity mechanisms, whether in the form of relocations or financial contributions.³³⁰

³³⁰ See the press release of the Ministry of the Interior of 8 December 2025, available (in Slovak) [here](#), and the press release of 5 March 2026, available (in Slovak) [here](#).