



Brussels, 11.4.2019
SWD(2019) 154 final

PART 9/9

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

CASE STUDY - SLOVAKIA

Accompanying the document

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

**on the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term
unemployed into the labour market**

{COM(2019) 169 final} - {SWD(2019) 155 final}

CASE STUDY - SLOVAKIA¹

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	294
1.1	Context of the implementation of the Recommendation	294
1.1.1	Evolution of labour market situation	294
1.1.2	Institutional framework for providing support to the long-term unemployed	297
2.	IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION	299
2.1	Progress on implementation of the Recommendation	299
2.1.1	Registration of long term unemployed	301
2.1.2	Individualised support	302
2.1.3	Coordination of support	305
2.1.4	Cooperation with employers and businesses	307
2.2	Example of measure	309
2.3	Use of the ESF to implement the Recommendation	310
2.4	Monitoring of implementation	310
3.	CONCLUSIONS	311
3.1	Relevance	311
3.2	Effectiveness	311
3.3	Efficiency	312
3.4	Coherence	312
3.5	EU added value	313
4.	LIST OF INTERVIEWEES	314

APPENDICES

Annex 1

National Programmes Focused on the LTU	316
--	-----

¹Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market, Ramboll Management consortium for the European Commission, 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this report is to assess and explore the actions taken at national and local level in the Slovak Republic (SR) in response to the Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market (2016/C 67/01) (hereafter ‘the Recommendation’). The aim is to establish whether and how the Recommendation has influenced policy, funding, activities, and long-term unemployment² in Slovakia.

1.1 Context of the implementation of the Recommendation

1.1.1 Evolution of labour market situation

Long term unemployment is one of the largest economic and social problems of Slovakia. In 2015, about two thirds of the unemployed were people who had been without a job for more than a year. Following Greece, Slovakia was the country with the second highest proportion of long-term unemployment of the EU28.

Figure 1 shows that the **unemployment rate** has been falling consistently since around 2014 when it fell from 11.8% to a rate of 7.3% in 2017, and 6.4% in early 2018.³ In the period from 2014 to 2017 the **long-term unemployment rate** dropped from 9.5% to 4.6% and the **share of people who are long-term unemployed in total unemployment** decreased.⁴ In early 2018 the long-term unemployment rate in Slovakia was 4.2% which gives an early indication of a continuing downward trend as shown in Figure 1.⁵ The highest proportion of long-term unemployed people has been recorded in the south-east regions of Slovakia (Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice) which traditionally have very few job vacancies and the highest unemployment rates.

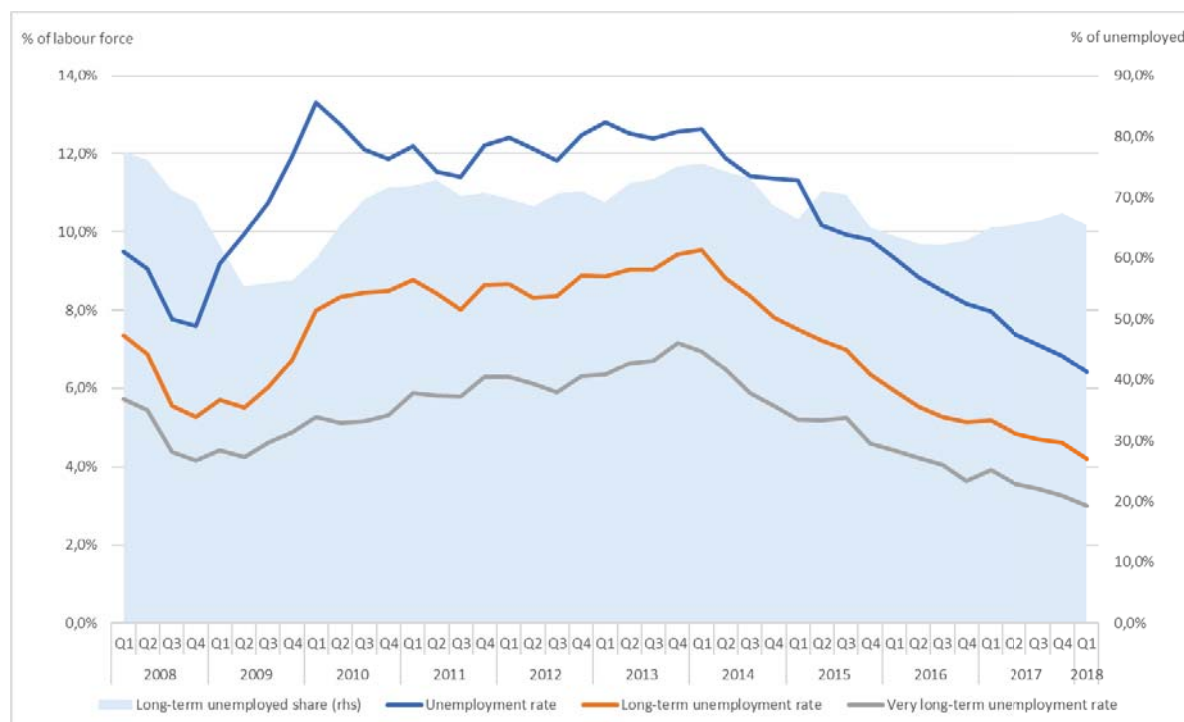
² Long-term unemployment refers to unemployment (ILO/Eurostat definition) lasting for more than one year, with Eurostat data presented here including adults between the ages of 25 and 64 years old.

³ Based on Q1 Eurostat data only.

⁴ The number of registered people who are long-term unemployed in December 2016 was 137 309 (49.73% of all registered), in December 2017 it dropped to 87 850 people who are long-term unemployed (44.92% of all registered job seekers)

⁵ Based on Eurostat data for Q1 2018.

Figure 1: Long-term unemployed share, unemployment rate, long-term unemployment rate, and very long-term unemployment rate in Slovakia, 2008-2018.⁶



Source: Eurostat

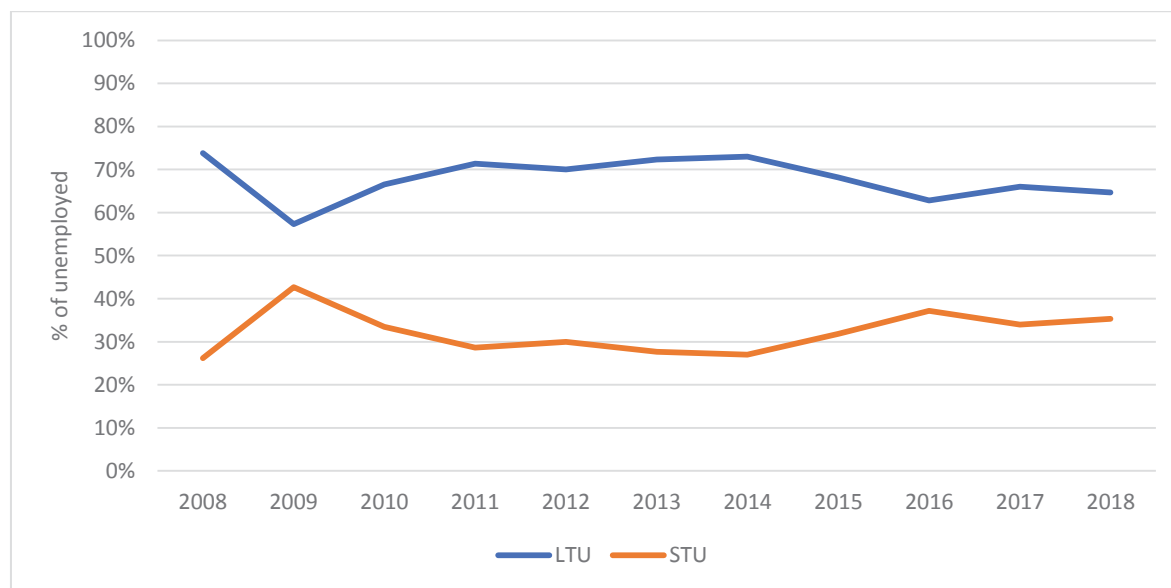
Figure 2 below shows that long-term unemployment has been consistently higher than short term unemployment as a proportion of total unemployment for over a decade in Slovakia. The economic crisis created a brief peak in short term unemployment and a brief dip in long-term unemployment as a proportion of total unemployed as shown around 2009 in Figure 2. After this broadly the same trend that preceded the crisis has continued for both forms of unemployment. Whereas the relationship between long-term and short-term unemployment as a proportion of total unemployment has remained fairly consistent in Slovakia, long-term unemployment as a proportion of total unemployed has been particularly high compared to the rest of Europe, which also saw short-term unemployment overtake long-term unemployment as a proportion of total unemployed in around 2013 before slowly converging in subsequent years.⁷

The relative consistency in long-term unemployment as a high proportion of unemployment overall in Slovakia can be explained by several factors that distinguish it from other Member States. Some 90% of citizens are the owners of their homes/flats, which disincentives mobility. Besides that, Slovakia has the second lowest rate of urbanisation in Europe. Both factors, paired with the importance of historical family ties, demography, regional differences and the discrepancy between the supply of the education system and demand of the labour market, largely contribute to the high proportion of long-term unemployment. Despite positive economic development then, the challenge of long-term unemployment remains.

⁶ There is a break in Eurostat data series in Q1 2011.

⁷ Naturally there are variations to this pattern at individual Member State level, but this gives an overview of the relationship between the trends in Slovakia and in Europe more broadly, based on combined Eurostat data.

Figure 2: Long-term unemployment (LTU) versus short-term unemployment (STU) rate in Slovakia, 2008 - 2018



Source: Eurostat Note: data for 2018 is based on Q1 and Q2 only.

While there are no substantial gender differences in long-term unemployment rates in Slovakia, the age group 25-54 (mainly older than 48) suffers more than other age groups, and long-term unemployment remains a serious issue for low-skilled job seekers (Table 1).

Table 1: Long-term unemployment rates (unemployed for more than 12 months) in Slovakia, 2014-2017

LTU rate (>12 months)							
Year	Education level			Gender		Age	
	Low	Medium	High	Men	Women	25-54	55-64
2014	32	8.3	3.2	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.2
2017	22.4	4.5	1.6	4.9	4.8	5	4.2

Source: EMCO monitoring data 2014-2017

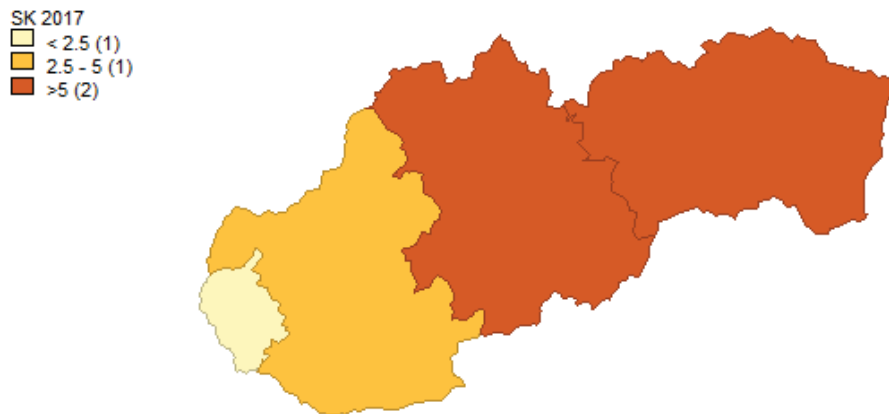
Although more detailed data on the long-term unemployment composition is not available in official statistical data, some analyses show the correlation between the percentage of the Roma population living in a given municipality and the rate of long-term unemployment. For example, municipalities with a Roma population of 10% or less (based on the estimate of the Atlas of Roma Communities in Slovakia) had 13.3% of the long-term unemployed population (registered for more than 4 years). Whereas those with a Roma population of more than 90% had a 49.7% long-term unemployment rate.⁸ As observed during fieldwork, the long-term unemployed are mostly people with low education and/or experiencing other obstacles which complicate their inclusion into the labour market (for example challenges related to addiction, debt, health problems, needing to look after elderly parents or disabled family members, and living in excluded communities etc.).

The regional distribution of long-term unemployment suggests that the main concentration is located in the least developed regions of south-eastern Slovakia (Figure 3). These are mostly

⁸ L. Marcinčinová, Roma at the Labour Market, 2014, Institute for Labor and Family Research, https://www.ceit.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/NSZ/nsz_9.pdf

regions without industry, with a few agriculture businesses and few job opportunities. Rural regions sometimes have a very low number of vacancies cannot provide a sufficient number of jobs. Furthermore, transport options from very small and sparsely populated villages is restricted and limits overall mobility. Young people may leave regions with few employment opportunities, whereas this can be more complicated for older age groups if their family (including spouses or dependents) are located in one place.

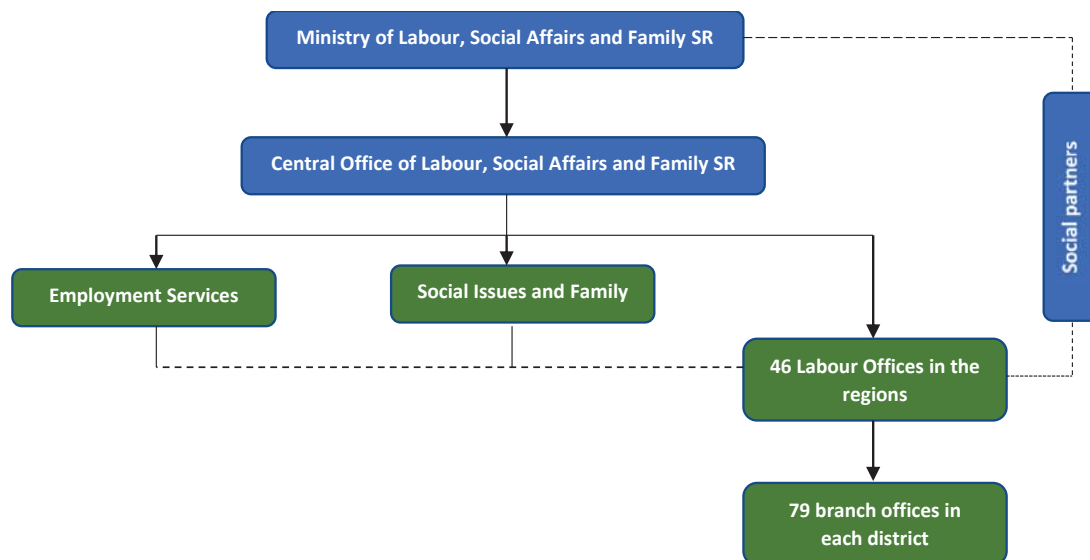
Figure 3 Long term unemployment by region (NUTS2 level)



Source: Eurostat

1.1.2 Institutional framework for providing support to the long-term unemployed

Figure 4: Institutional set-up of stakeholders involved in supporting LTU labour market integration in the Slovak Republic (SR)



The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (hereafter MoLSAF) is the central government body responsible for policy in the area of employment and social issues. It is responsible for the legal and strategic framework covering the labour market situation including the protection of employees and demands of employers as well as conditions and rules for various social contributions, employment benefits and allowances. The Labour Section of the MoLSAF sets up measures aimed at increasing employment, helping job seekers, employees and employers. An important part of its agenda is to protect employees at

the workplace and to deal with illegal employment. The Ministry established and subsequently coordinates several other bodies, among others the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, the Social Insurance Agency and National Labour Inspectorate.

The Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (hereafter CoLSAF) is directly subordinated to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. It manages, controls, coordinates and methodically guides the performance of state administration in the field of social affairs and employment services. Its main role is namely to:

- manage, control and coordinate the activities of employment agencies,
- prepare the employment priorities for the relevant year and to submit it for approval to the Ministry,
- determine the minimum range of employment services,
- develop and implement national projects financed by the European Social Fund,
- provide the methodological guidance for the implementation of projects,

The CoLSAF manages, coordinates and guides 46 Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family Labour Offices all over the country including the branch offices (in all 79 districts, see Figure 4).

Substantial organisational change of the public employment services (PES) took place in January 2015, following the approval of the National Employment Strategy in 2014 which aims to eliminate barriers to employment growth and prompt changes in active labour market policies.⁹ All Labour Offices were grouped under one legal entity – CoLSAF and social and employment services were merged. The legal and economic departments at individual Labour Offices were abolished and these services are centrally provided by the Central Office. The overall staff number did not change but the tasks and responsibilities were modified following the change of working position. One of the most significant visible changes was the creation of Single Point of Contact (SPOC) in January 2015, providing more complex services (employment, social etc.) for the job seekers at one place (see findings section for more details on Single point of contact).

Employment services for people who are long-term unemployed are provided solely by public employment services. In Slovakia the share of public employment services' staff dedicated to servicing job seekers was just under 70% in 2017 which was amongst the largest share of staff amongst European countries.¹⁰ There are also private companies for finding and offering jobs inside and outside the country, as well as private companies (Agencies) for finding temporary or short-term employment. These bodies are not focused on the long-term unemployment as a target group specifically; the people who are long-term unemployed can use these services, but it is not very common. There are also private Agencies for supported employment, which are focused on the provision of employment services for handicapped people.

Following the adoption of the Recommendation in February 2016, MOLSAF organised a seminar with relevant stakeholders from the ministries, NGOs and social partners, which **resulted in the decision to prepare an Action Plan** on Enhancing the Integration of the

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european_semester-national-reform-programme-slovakia-en.pdf

¹⁰ <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/7f2b39a6-0184-11e8-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

Long-Term Unemployed into the Labour Market.¹¹ The Action Plan was drafted by the MoLSAF in close cooperation with CoLSAF and was commented on by all relevant partners. It outlines plans for the implementation of several forms of support including:

- **Profiling** based on an assessment of the job seeker;
- Active support in the form of **individualised counselling activities** with a particular focus on the employability of long-term unemployed job seekers;
- Recruitment of **129 new specialised counsellors** to conduct individualised counselling who will spend up to 45 hours with each person who is long-term unemployed;
- March 2017 - launch of the '*The Road to the Labour Market*' project to help reduce rates of long-term unemployment in the least developed districts with a high registered unemployment rate;
- July 2017 – implementation of the '*Restart – a chance for the long-term unemployed to return to the labour market*' which will support people who are long-term unemployed who have been unemployed for over 24 months to re-establish work habits with employed involved with the programme.

The European Social Fund (ESF) plays a key role, with nearly all ALMP programmes specifically aimed at supporting the long-term unemployed, as well as other employment programmes, funded by the ESF (for more detail on the role of the ESF see Section 1.1).

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Progress on implementation of the Recommendation

This section outlines the progress towards the implementation of measures proposed in the Recommendation. It provides an overview of policy and practice changes in relation to:

- Registration of long term unemployed
- Individualised support
- Coordination of support
- Cooperation with employers

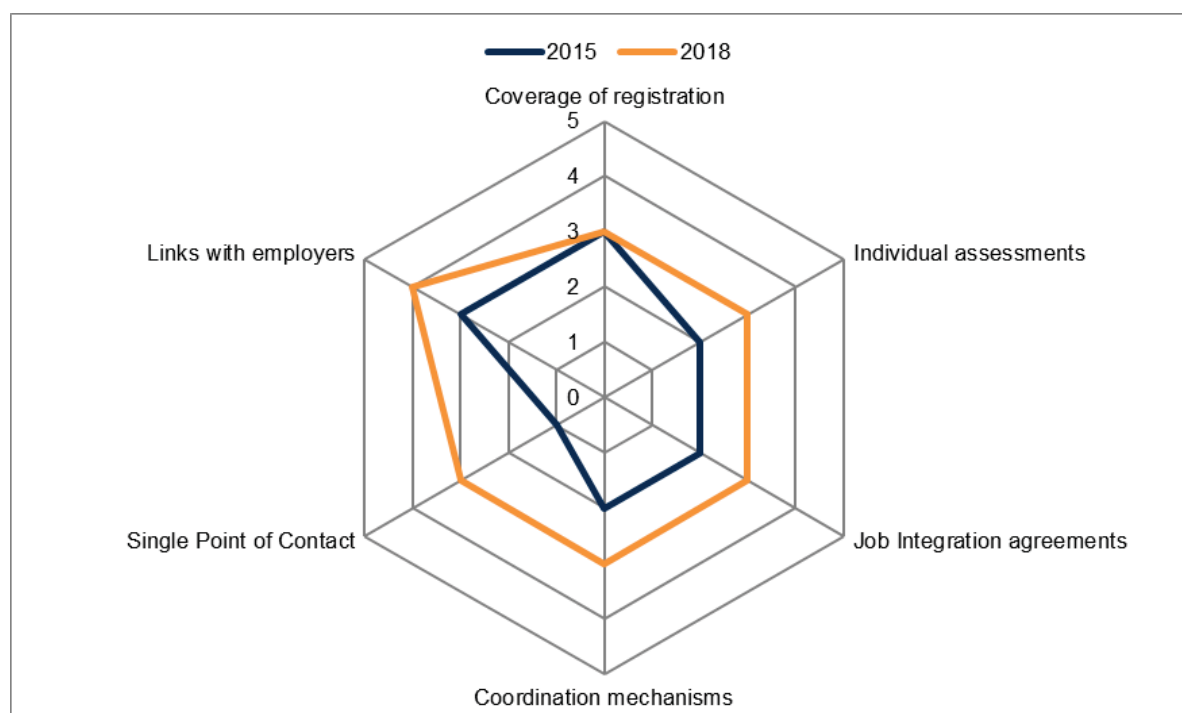
The assessment of progress below takes into account the expected impact from the 2015 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the proposal for a Council Recommendation¹² and is based on the mapping of policy changes, and stakeholder consultations carried out during field work. When available, indicators on outputs and results are included in the analysis.

Figure 5 summarises the progress on the implementation of the Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed in the labour market by comparing the picture prior to the Recommendation (H1 2015) with the situation since.

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european_-semester-national-reform-programme-slovakia-en.pdf

¹² European Union, European Commission, Commission Staff Working Document, Document Accompanying the document Proposal for a Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market (2015) 176

Figure 5: Quality of measures - Slovakia¹³



Source: *Quality rating national expert*

Interviews at the national level took place with a representative of the MoLSAF Department of Employment Policy, which is responsible for the coordination and preparation of the National Employment Strategy and of the Action Plan (see Appendix 1). A CoLSAF representative was also interviewed, as the Office has been involved in the preparation of both documents and its primary function is to manage the operation of the Labour Offices. Besides that, representatives of the ESF Managing Authority and a representative of the Association of Towns and Municipalities were also interviewed.

The interviews and focus groups were carried out at two Labour Offices with a high unemployment rate and high proportion of long-term unemployment. The Labour Office in Prešov was selected as an urban region. Although located in the eastern part of Slovakia the city is large, and the number of vacancies is currently higher than the number of unemployed. Despite that, the long-term unemployed represent half of the registered unemployed, which stands at 7% overall. The long-term unemployed in this area tend to have very limited or no education, very little or no work experience or related skills (including soft skills like communication), and often come from socially excluded settlements (e.g. marginalised Roma communities), or have health or social problems including alcohol, drug, and/or gambling dependencies. Subsequently, and as explained by the Labour Office staff, some face significant barriers to employment. As such, the Labour Office in Prešov was chosen as a particularly relevant setting for fieldwork.

¹³ Quality ratings ranged from 1– 5 whereby: **1 (low)** = no or basic implementation only, only on an ad hoc basis or not fully integrated into the overall services package; significant room for improvement; **2 (low-medium)** = More than just a basic implementation but falls short of being routinely implemented at national level and integrated into the overall service package; significant room for improvement; **3 (medium)** = Routinely implemented and integrated into the overall service package but recognise that the service/function falls short of guiding elements of the Recommendation guidance; **4 (medium-high)** = Established and well developed service/function that fulfils most guiding elements of the Recommendation but falls short of realising all of them; **5 (high)** = Established and well developed service/function that fulfils all the guiding elements of the Recommendation. This implies that mechanisms to constantly monitor performance and develop the service/function on the basis of what is or is not working well should be in place.

The Labour Office in Rimavská Sobota, representing the rural region in the southern part of the country, is still facing a high unemployment rate at 18% (63% of which are long-term unemployed) and cannot locate a sufficient number of vacancies. Ironically, the Labour Office in Rimavská Sobota is the biggest employer in the city. Some of the municipalities close to the city, with mostly Roma populations, still have a 94% unemployment rate.

Focus groups were conducted in both regions with Labour Office staff including: desk officers from the Labour Offices themselves as well as their branch offices, mediators, counsellors, staff responsible for contact with employers and so-called Social Field Workers. Individual interviews also took place with employers, including private businesses (SMEs), municipalities and NGOs cooperating with the Labour Offices.

2.1.1 Registration of long term unemployed

Baseline and development

In 2013, there was already a high share (88%) of long-term unemployed registered with public employment services. It has since fallen slightly to 82.6% in 2017 although the rate remains relatively high when compared to other member states (EU28 72.8% and 71.8% for these years respectively).¹⁴

According to the mapping of policy changes, measures targeting registration of long term unemployed already existed at the baseline for the evaluation (H1 2015). Since before 2014, all registered job seekers have had their health insurance paid by the state, but if they are not registered as unemployed, they have to pay for it themselves. This is a rather strong incentive for the unemployed to be registered.

Since then minor changes have been implemented to existing measures, the quality rating has however not improved for **coverage of registration**, remaining at 3 in H1 2015 to October 2018.

Case study findings

The registration of job seekers is voluntary and, according to interviews conducted, **no major official changes have been introduced to support this process** as the proposed measure was not found relevant in the local context given the already high rate of registration in Slovakia.

Following the registration process, **job seekers are obliged to visit the Labour Office at least once a month**. After 12 months of uninterrupted registration the job seeker is considered long-term unemployed.

As mentioned by the Labour Offices, **nonregistration is usually connected with difficulties on the part of job seekers in meeting certain requirements** i.e. to visit the Labour Office at least once a month and/or to carry out the tasks required by the Labour Office connected with job seeking (e.g. visiting potential employers, participation in training, etc.).

The existing outreach actions (i.e. marketing and information campaigns) related to strengthening the cooperation with employers; measures to encourage the long-term

¹⁴ See Commission Staff Working Document, Document Accompanying the document Proposal for a Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market (2015) 176, p. 10. Figure 7. Long-term unemployed by Member State, stock and share registered with the public employment services, 2013.

unemployed to remain registered (even if they are no longer entitled to benefits); multi-channel possibilities for initial registration (e.g. online registration, telephone); changes in eligibility for activation measures, as well as ESF ALMP programmes focused on Roma minority, have likely contributed to keeping the registration rate high (see).

When someone who is long-term unemployed becomes temporarily employed and then returns to unemployment for any reason, they are no longer considered to be long-term unemployed, as the registration has to be for at least 12 continuous months. This can be exacerbated by the fact that if the job seeker is excluded from the registration process because of not fulfilling the tasks required of them by the Labour Offices (e.g. not attending training) they can only be registered again after 6 months. Job seekers who had been long-term unemployed and who then return to register with public employment services after a brief spell of employment are identified as “hidden” people who are long-term unemployed in some offices. In these instances, individuals might not be eligible for some ESF ALMP programmes formally targeted at the long-term unemployed as their *most recent* registration is not long enough to officially qualify them.

The mapping of policy changes shows that no specific outreach measures are planned for the Roma population. Long-term unemployment remains a serious issue for Roma people in Slovakia (in 2011, 71% of Roma was unemployed or had been without regular paid work in the past 5 years, compared to 36% of non-Roma living in Slovakia).¹⁵ Although no new *formal* measures for registration have been adopted, a few ESF programmes working with the Roma population have specifically provided assistance with the registration process (see Appendix 1). Such ALMP programmes¹⁶ provide financial support for numerous Social Field Workers operating in municipalities and settlements with Roma populations. The Social Field Workers provide assistance to Roma in all possible life situations, including helping in interactions with public administration bodies for processes related to registration, benefits or document issues; with schools; health services; financial services; police and courts, etc. Among other support functions they have managed to identify non-registered unemployed in Roma communities and have assisted with their registration.

2.1.2 Individualised support

Baseline and development

In the 2015 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the proposal for a Council Recommendation it was considered that the recommendation on individualisation of support would have a strong impact in Slovakia. According to the mapping of policy changes, some measures were already in place in H1 2015 for individual assessments and personalised guidance of long-term unemployed at the latest at 18 months of unemployment.¹⁷ These assessments covered education/work experience, distance from available jobs, health/substance abuse and family situation/obligations. Prior to the Recommendation,

¹⁵ Results from the 2011 Roma survey carried out by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, available at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-results-2011-roma-survey>

¹⁶ E.g. Social Field Work and Field Work in Municipalities with Marginalized Roma Communities I; Community Centres in Cities and Towns with Presence marginalized Roma communities - Phase I. These programmes began in the previous funding period but are ongoing.

¹⁷ Specifically, the new national strategy was adopted in 2014 and contained some relevant measures although these were developed more comprehensively in 2015.

Slovakia had little to no processes for the profiling of job-seekers registering with the public employment services, nor to conduct *in-depth* individual assessments or elaborate individual action plans.

The quality rating for **individual assessments** provided by the national expert improved from 2 in H1 2015, to 3 in October 2018.

According to the mapping of policy changes, some form of written agreement targeting people who are long-term unemployed that have reached 18 months of unemployment already existed in H1 2015.

The quality rating provided by the national expert for **job integration agreements** improved from 2 in H1 2015, to 3 in October 2018.

Case study findings

The **provision of individualised support constitutes the most profound change in the work of Labour Offices during the 2014-2017 period**, with the most relevant improvement in relation to the Recommendation being the **individual assessment**. This has been largely introduced into the system of provision of public employment services and is implemented all over the country. It is *closely related* to the establishment of Single points of contact in (outlined in more detail in section 1.1.1) where the initial screening of the job seekers takes place. Job seekers are assigned to a single point of contact either alphabetically, according to the first letter of the surname or their address. Prior to the baseline individual assessments did not contain mutual obligations or combined service offering, but this has now been implemented. Besides basic information, the family and financial situation is assessed, social support concerning transport or housing is offered and possible limitations are identified. There is also an effort to work with the family of unemployed adults. The mediators (contact person at the Labour Office, i.e. Single point of contact) for the long-term unemployed do not change, but when a long-term unemployed person becomes involved in any of the activation programmes, they may work with another specialised counsellor for the duration of the intervention. Overall, the **Recommendation reportedly inspired the reduction of the period for activation of people who are long-term unemployed from 24 months to 18 months**, as established in the Action Plan to Promote the Integration of the Long-Term Unemployed in the Labour Market.¹⁸

With the introduction of the organisational change of public employment services in 2015, the policy changes at the local level were implemented through internal procedures for staff, with methodical guidelines provided on how to work with individual categories of clients. All staff members were trained in how to provide individualised support to different clients, and an electronic discussion forum was established, in which staff could ask CoLSAF questions directly. Information on all relevant legal changes is also provided to job seekers, who can ask information and questions via email.

According to the ongoing ESF funded initiatives, the Labour Office staff identify the most suitable job seekers (in line with the eligibility criteria set for individual ESF projects) to take part (see Annex 1 for a list of projects). Each of the ALMP programmes (some are specifically

¹⁸ https://www.mpsvr.sk/files/slovensky/apdn_06122016_sk_final.pdf

for the people who are long-term unemployed) has a unified schedule. **Registered job seekers can be involved in various ALMP programmes** and must get involved in long-term unemployment specific activities after 18 months. Job seekers can only be enrolled on one programme at a time, with the types of activities and duration of involvement dependent on the specific programme and on the requirements of the job seekers.

ALMP programmes themselves can comprise 20-45 hours of consultancy as well as activities divided into individual and group sessions, training, or development of skills. Programme activities consist of basic communication skills, CV preparation, a legal minimum on contributions, introduction to the active labour market policy tools, guide on how to work with the web platform www.istp.sk – internet guide through the labour market, etc. The job seeker may also have a workplace mentor for 9-12 months if they find employment (see section 1.1.1 for detail on cooperation with employers).

Further provision of **individual counselling** and other measures is subject to the specific ALMP programmes funded through ESF. The Labour Offices follow the monitoring indicators and did not report any difficulties to fulfil planned targets. As the programmes are ongoing, their success is not fully reported yet. However, all programmes, including those for people who are long-term unemployed, are limited by their eligibility criteria. Sometimes, there is an interesting opportunity but if the job seeker does not comply with the criteria and scope of the specific project (e.g. age, time in unemployment) s/he cannot take part. In general, about 80% of registered job seekers are activated. The Roma population is, however, a very specific group much less involved in the activities. The Institute of Financial Policy reported that only 8% of unemployed Roma took part in the Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) such as training and up/ or reskilling. In contrast activation measures had a 40% participation of unemployed Roma. It should be noted that activation measures generally do not provide necessary skills and do not increase chances of employment.

Staff networking meetings are organised to assess the capabilities of the individual person who is long-term unemployed, to judge their overall skills and find the best option to assist with the job search. If some health, financial or other problems are identified, the Labour Offices closely cooperate with external bodies (e.g. health centres, legal assistance centres etc.) and send the job seekers to the relevant specialists (e.g. medical doctors, psychologists etc.) (see section 1.1.1 for more on the coordination of support). Sharing of information among staff was found to be beneficial. The networking meetings of various staff members within the office proved to be very useful and enabled them to get the overall picture of the client and provide tailor-made assistance. The staff members are specialised and detailed information on the individual programmes needs to be shared to ensure better coordination of assistance.

The Job Integration Agreement (JIA) has been introduced in 2017 and is currently being tested in the *Increased Activity to Employment* programme. It covers job search assistance, in-work assistance, education and training, health and other social services, support for increased mobility and debt counselling, and defines a set of tasks or steps (e.g. to travel to the nearest city) to be completed by the people who are long-term unemployed. Tasks outlined for the people who are long-term unemployed are monitored at least on a monthly basis; in some of the ALMP programmes a final report is prepared together with the people who are long-term

unemployed at the end of the activities. It is expected that practically all people who are long-term unemployed will gradually take part in the *Increased Activity to Employment* programme and in doing so sign a Job Integration Agreement. As of 30 June 2018, the number of long-term unemployed programme participants was 56.535 and CoLSAF reported 20.3% of those integrated to the labour market.

In 2017, just under a quarter (24.0%) of people who are long-term unemployed in Slovakia had a Job Integration Agreement, and as the programme has been rolled out the proportion has more than doubled compared to 2016 (up from 8.6%) but remains well below the EU28 average of 82.6%.¹⁹ The breakdown by duration of unemployment shows that people who have been long-term unemployed for a shorter duration are less likely to have been provided with a Job Integration Agreement (15.1% for people who are long-term unemployed registered for less than 18 months, compared to 25.2% for people who are long-term unemployed registered for at least 18 months). In Slovakia, nearly a quarter (24.9%) of all Job Integration Agreement holders in 2017 transitioned to employment, which is slightly above the EU28 average of 23.0%.²⁰

Around half (50.1%) of the long-term unemployed that received an Individual Action Plan (similar to Job Integration Agreement) in 2016 remained unemployed 12 months later, some way above the EU28 average of 44.4% for people receiving a Job Integration Agreement in the year. On the other hand, follow-up data on Job Integration Agreement users who took up employment in 2016 show that nearly seven in ten (67.4%) were in employment 12 months later, significantly above the EU average of 60.7%.²¹

Despite the fact that Labour Office staff consider the individual approach to be the most substantial change to service provision since the Recommendation (and also the most effective, though rather expensive), people interviewed who were actually long-term unemployed had not experienced a substantial change in the approach. These different perceptions can be explained by a human factor on both sides of these relations: staff are dealing with many different clients daily and the working conditions are not easy. At the same time some people who are long-term unemployed may face much broader challenges such as low education levels, illiteracy, alcohol or drug dependencies, mental health issues or a combination of these.

Overall, the **change of approach and focus towards individualised support for people who are long-term unemployed is considered by the public employment services to have been successful** as there was a significant decrease (-50,000) in the total number of people who are long-term unemployed from 2016 to 2017, and the proportion of people who are long-term unemployed of overall unemployment dropped to below 5%. According to the national expert however, this result is also influenced by a number of external factors and cannot be fully attributed to the measures introduced.

¹⁹ EC (2018): Data collection for monitoring the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market 2017. Country Fiche: Slovakia.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

2.1.3 Coordination of support

Baseline and development

In the 2015 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the proposal for a Council Recommendation it was considered that the recommendation on coordination²² and transition to employment would have a strong impact in Slovakia. According to the mapping of policy changes, no coordination mechanisms²³ between organisations dealing with people who are long-term unemployed were in place in H1 2015.

The quality rating provided by the national expert for **interinstitutional coordination** improved from 2 in H1 2015, to 3 in October 2018.

The quality rating for **single points of contact** provided by the national expert improved from 1 in H1 2015, to 3 in October 2018.

Case study findings

Most changes to enhance the provision of individualised support were introduced through the amendments of legal acts; in May 2017 there was an important amendment to the **Act on Restructuring (relating to personal bankruptcy), which also initiated cooperative links** between Labour Offices and Centres for Legal Assistance at the local level. At the time, many people were indebted, which meant that all their earned income would be taken. As a result, people did not want to be officially employed so as to not lose their income to debt repayments. The new legislation provides a resolution to this problem.

The **most substantial change regarding coordination of support was the establishment of Units of Services for Citizens** (Single point of contact) at the Labour Offices in 2015. This Unit provides information on all types of employment and social services as well as application forms for all benefits and compensation and/or contact information for specialised services (e.g. the Centre of Legal Assistance dealing with the issues related to personal bankruptcy).

From the point of view of the client, this change saves a lot of time and effort. The Single point of contact provides all the necessary information and collects necessary documents for all departments of the **Public employment services and social services**, which reduces the necessity to deliver several copies of the same document within these offices. The sharing of documents and availability of information about job seekers is highly appreciated by staff as well. All application forms concerning social benefits and compensation are filled out at the Single point of contact and then processed by social services.

Coordination mechanisms comprising the introduction of IT tools between the public employment services and social services have been partly developed but this process needs more time and additional financial resources. No formal agreements have been signed on data sharing since the establishment of Single point of contact, but coordination within the Central Office between employment and social services has been developed through mutually

²² Coordination refers to coordination of support between support services of relevant to the long-term unemployed, including employment, social, physical and mental health, housing support services for example.

²³ European Commission (2015) specifies two mechanisms: a systematic referral system to the support needed and data sharing mechanisms across organisations.

accessible databases. **Although information is mutually accessible, there is a lack of formalised database sharing as the IT systems are not linked**, which subsequently hinders the overall effectiveness of information exchange. At the same time, Single point of contact staff have to be familiar with a wide scope of legal provisions, which is often rather complex and frequently changing. As indicated during the interviews with practitioners, this may lead, in some cases, to the provision of incorrect information due to frequently changing legislation.

The **improved coordination also relates to external experts**. Many of those cooperate on the delivery of ALMP programme activities (e.g. lectures on legislation) or provide specialised services for job seekers, such as the Centre of Legal Assistance (for debt resolution) or NGOs. Informal cooperation takes place with other bodies, e.g. Ministry of Interior (which includes the official Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities – OPGRC with which there is cooperation on finding ways to alleviate employment issues experienced in the Roma community)²⁴ and the Ministry of Labour (MA for many ESF ALMP programmes managed by other ministries of institutions).

The mapping indicated difficulties in sharing legal data, the mindset of relevant actors, and non-governmental organisations who are not always ready to provide services as the main barriers to coordination among institutions. Furthermore, the personal approach of different staff members may vary significantly and the quality of service provision can be influenced by many other factors (e.g. high number of clients, social challenges experienced by the people who are long-term unemployed, unsuitable working spaces, etc.). Expenses related to the reorganisation of the Labour Offices have been provided from the state budget sources, although the total amount has not been calculated.

2.1.4 Cooperation with employers and businesses

Baseline and development

Among the interventions included in the Recommendation, two mechanisms were considered to enhance employment support: enhancing services to employers and focusing all labour market policies (ALMPs) on the competitive labour market, reducing public works to a minimum. In the 2015 Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the proposal for a Council Recommendation it was considered that the recommendation on stronger employer support would have a moderate impact in Slovakia.

According to the mapping of policy changes, measures were already in place in H1 2015 to establish closer links with employers related to the placement of people who are long-term unemployed. These measures covered screening of suitable candidates, placement support, and post-placement support.

The quality rating provided by the national expert for **measures to establish closer links with employers** improved from 3 in H1 2015 to 4 in October 2018. This largely relates to more minor changes relating to potential and planned changes based on recent developments outlined below.

²⁴ The major State authority working on the integration of Roma is the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities (OPGRC), which was established by the Slovak Government in 1999 as an advisory body. See for further details: http://www.errc.org/uploads/upload_en/file/slovakia-country-profile-2011-2012.pdf

Case study findings

In relation to the employers and businesses, no *major* changes can be reported. Employers do not have any obligation to report vacancies, and cooperation has been running on an informal basis for a long time. A number of mechanisms were already in place prior to the Recommendation to foster cooperation with regards to the recruitment of people who are long-term unemployed by two main groups of employers: private businesses/SMEs, and municipal offices/NGOs. Since before the baseline, employers have had up to 95% of the salaries of people who are long-term unemployed reimbursed for the period of 9-12 months, which is financially advantageous. Within some of the ALMP programmes, mentors are assigned to each long-term unemployed person and receive a small financial payment for this. The employers have thus sufficient time to judge the skills and capabilities of the people who are long-term unemployed and are subsequently able to make an informed decision on recruiting people as regular employees. It is common for people who are long-term unemployed to remain employed after the programme has come to an end. This is less often the case for municipalities and NGOs, mainly because of a lack of financial resources. People who are long-term unemployed working for municipalities and NGOs are mostly involved in public maintenance works, where the end of the programme usually marks the end of employment, and people return to Labour Offices.

NGOs have also offered employment to people who are long-term unemployed and thus are more often in the position of employers of people who are long-term unemployed rather than institutions providing special services for them. Nevertheless, their services to the clients are also focused on inclusion to the labour market through gaining basic workplace skills. There are numerous NGOs that are specifically focused on different target groups, e.g. people who are homeless, the marginalised Roma minority, people with alcohol, gambling or drug-dependencies etc., whom are often people who are long-term unemployed as well. As with the situation outlined in the paragraph above, this situation predates the introduction of the Recommendation.

More recent measures have however been introduced after the baseline to support cooperation between employers and businesses: the **2004 Act on Employment Services was amended in 2018 and introduced some hiring incentives** (e.g. increased proportion of non-taxed income for the employed people who are long-term unemployed– initially 25% of the income was not taxed, but since May 2017 it is 50%). Furthermore, in May 2018, the **Act on Social Economy and Social Businesses came into force**, enabling the establishment of social enterprises. The new possibility to start so-called social businesses may *potentially* improve the situation of the long-term unemployed but the full implementation of this remains to be seen. Similarly, a few regional projects in the least developed regions are under preparation with the intention to employ people who are long-term unemployed on the reconstruction of historical monuments, and will be implemented as an activation measure.

As stated by interviewed representatives of employers, the **information provided to them is sufficient**, and in some offices, there is a proactive attitude to informing employers about new ALMP programmes, personal meetings, organisation of events for employers or information about the requalified job seekers. So far however, no satisfaction survey has been carried out

to confirm the general perception of the employers. Less attention was paid to the formal introduction of coordination mechanisms between the public employment services and employers as those are already considered functional. The same applies in relation to other relevant ministries and institutions where either informal relations work well or where the coordination mechanisms are those implemented within the management structure of the Operational Programme Human Resources or other ESF interventions.

As observed during the interviews, some private businesses employ people who are long-term unemployed with an aim to help them to formally become employees. Since the baseline, workplace mentoring and training has also been introduced, with jobseekers having access to a workplace mentor for 9-12 months if they find employment via an activation programme. A few enterprises seem to make use of the programmes as they get a cheap work force for a certain period of time; once the programme is finished however, they wait for another opportunity. A few employers considered the duration of supported employment for 9 months insufficient, notably for NGOs that employ the people who are long-term unemployed and teach them handicraft production skills, which takes time. Despite the fact that programmes enabling the employment of people who are long-term unemployed are found useful and are successful, the Labour Offices as well as municipalities and NGOs found the **administrative burden excessive**. In contrast, private enterprises usually have sufficient internal resources to manage this.

Due to the measures already in place, few new measures have been introduced in this respect. The ALMP share in public works is likely to have remained stable, since no major shifts have been identified.

2.2 Example of measure

The following measure is highlighted here given its thematic link to the measures proposed in the Recommendation. Whilst it is not possible to make a definitive connection between the Recommendation and the introduction of Increased Activity to Employment ALMP programme, it is highlighted here given its key alignment with one of the four main measures outlined in the Recommendation, mainly to provide individualised support to the people who are long-term unemployed. As such it is presented here as an interesting example of *relevance* to the Recommendation but cannot be definitively attributed to the Recommendation itself:

The adoption of the individual approach (also called 360-degree view on the job seeker) has been a positive development in Slovakia; the Labour Office found it very inspiring to introduce “live libraries” i.e. former people who are long-term unemployed who are employed or run their own businesses who come to tell their stories. These examples are very encouraging and proved to be a good motivating factor according to interviews with counsellors and job seekers.

The Increased Activity to Employment ALMP programme is a good example of a measure that provides individualised support to the long-term unemployed. Introduced in 2017 the initiative has seen participants receive a Job Integration Agreement for the first time. This covers a range of components including job search assistance, education and training requirements, health and other social services, mobility requirements and debt counselling. The programme also provides individual meetings to find out why the person who is long-term unemployed cannot find a job, identifies obstacles and finds solutions to help eliminate

them. Information is also available via counselling sessions and group consultations on ways to find jobs as well as ways to get ready for re-entering the world of work (e.g. improving communication skills). An individualised approach is also taken with regards to the type of support available to the people who are long-term unemployed, with an assessment made of how near or far they are from the labour market and subsequently what kind of counselling support they should have access to. For example, guidance on finding and applying for employment opportunities for those closer to the labour market, and more specialised counselling and help to engage in volunteering for those not yet ready to resume work (see Annex 1 for further details).

2.3 Use of the ESF to implement the Recommendation

With the exception of the ALMP programme implementing the Job Integration Agreement (*Increased Activity to Employment*) all programmes specifically targeting the people who are long-term unemployed as well as other programmes in the area of employment – including the National Employment Strategy - are funded from ESF sources (see Annex 1).

The national budget covering the expenses linked with the reorganisation of the public employment services, started in January 2015 and provided resources to arrange basic IT tools and pay the staff of the Labour Offices. All the measures connected with the Recommendation and other initiatives have been implemented in the form of different interventions (i.e. national programmes, demand-oriented projects) within the Operational Programmes (formerly Employment and Social Inclusion, and currently Human Resources) which are financed by the ESF. Specifically, the ESF has been instrumental in the development of the Action Plan on Enhancing the Integration of the Long-Term Unemployed which was developed in 2016 as a direct response to the Recommendation. The Action Plan outlines several forms of support that are in line with the Recommendation (see section 1.1.2) and has been funded in large part by the ESF.²⁵

There are several other ALMP programmes implemented through ESF sources where the original aim is not actively linked with the employment of the long-term unemployed, yet it has been one of the outcomes (see Annex 1). This is for example the case of a programme implemented in Roma settlements with the purpose of establishing so-called ‘Roma patrols’ through which a substantial number of Roma people who are long-term unemployed have found employment. A similar effect was observed in the Healthy Communities programme where several hundred Roma Health Assistants were employed. However, these interventions and their employment of persons are only temporary, lasting for the duration of the programme.

2.4 Monitoring of implementation

The arrangements for monitoring are ensured due to the regular reporting of the Labour Offices. The number of job seekers and their placement following completion of different ALMP programmes is monitored a minimum of twice a year. The individual programmes have a set of indicators, which are also regularly monitored and reported, in line with the ESF regulation’s requirements on common indicators. The Action Plan is monitored annually by the Monitoring Committee of the Operation Programme Human Resources.

²⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european_-semester-national-reform-programme-slovakia-en.pdf

According to the mapping of policy changes however there were no monitoring systems in place for key aspects of the Recommendation itself at the baseline (H1 2015) however monitoring measures are reportedly *planned* in relation to the monitoring of coverage of registration. There are no other reported plans or changes with regards to the monitoring of other specific aspects of the Recommendation (i.e. individual assessments; Job Integration Agreements; interinstitutional coordination; Single point of contact; measures to establish closer links with employers).

The evaluation of ALMP programmes takes place at the national level and is carried out by the Managing Authority of the Operation Programme Human Resources. The main focus of the evaluation has not been decided yet, as many of the programmes were launched only recently. However, the tender for the first evaluation assignment is under preparation.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The Recommendation was in line with many of the aims and priorities already established in the Slovak National Employment Strategy which was introduced in 2014. It is important to note that although many of the measures outlined in the Recommendation were already in place to some degree or were in the process of being developed, the Recommendation was an important driver in their execution. Most significantly the Recommendation ultimately acted as a catalyst for the development of the Action Plan to Promote the Integration of the Long-Term Unemployed in the Labour Market whose aims are closely aligned to those of the Recommendation (see section 1.1.2).

The period following the baseline saw the development of more comprehensive individual assessments, the introduction of Job Integration Agreements and the implementation Single points of contact all of which are in line with the measures proposed in the Recommendation. More concretely, whereas the proposed registration period for people who are long-term unemployed before the creation of a Job Integration Agreement had been 24 months, it was reduced to 18 months as a result of the Recommendation. In a nutshell, the Recommendation was significant in Slovakia in terms of consolidating the design and introduction of measures that had been envisioned at national level, importantly sparking the development of an Action Plan which is closely aligned to the Recommendation.

3.1 Relevance

In Slovakia there is still a large number of people who are long-term unemployed (87,850 as of 31st December 2017) who represent nearly 45% of all registered job seekers. The severity of this situation is exacerbated by regional inequalities, and a lack of vacancies to meet labour supply in some cases, particularly in rural areas. The Roma population in particular continue to face significant challenges with regards to long-term unemployment, with regions with a larger Roma population with a typically higher level of long-term unemployment. As such, the Council Recommendation on the labour market integration of people who are long-term unemployed is still highly relevant in Slovakia.

Specifically, with the exception of registration and cooperation with employers, which were considered sufficient by case study participants and corresponding with the recommended measures, all other proposed measures have been relevant according interviewed public employment services and employers' representatives.

3.2 Effectiveness

Overall there is some evidence for the effectiveness of the Recommendation given the introduction of measures adopted in line with it in Slovakia. Although more commonly this has been in the form of affirmation of new or planned measures. For example, the establishment of Units of Services for Citizens as Single points of contact to provide information on employment and coordination with social services, constitute an example of action having been taken *in line* with measures outlined in the Recommendation. The establishment of Single points of contact was already in motion from January 2015 but the Recommendation helped to reaffirm the direction of development. Furthermore, the Recommendation was also said to have confirmed the focus of the National Employment Strategy which had been introduced in 2014. More concretely and as mentioned above, the Recommendation inspired reduction of the period for activation of people who are long-term unemployed from 24 months to 18 months, as outlined in the 2016 Action Plan to Promote the Integration of the Long-Term Unemployed in the Labour Market.²⁶

No measures have been taken regarding **registration of people who are long-term unemployed** however, as the existing process is considered sufficient. Despite that, ESF interventions covering social field work running in Roma settlements and assisting in many different areas deal also with the registration of unemployed people at the Labour Office. The lines of communication established between the Labour Offices and employers were also already considered to be satisfactory and fully compliant with the Recommendation. Therefore, no further changes were necessary to support this cooperation.

3.3 Efficiency

A cost-benefit analysis of public employment services was carried out by the Institute of Financial Policy.²⁷ The study covers the period before 2016 and it is not known whether further analysis is planned, but the findings give a useful overview of the situation immediately preceding the Recommendation. Findings indicated that the average cost of labour market policies is 1 500€ per unemployed person per year. The study also showed that the regular support to an unemployed individual increased with the length of unemployment, amounting to 2 300€ for a 2.6-year period compared to 7 600€ for a 5.2-year period (for people with the longest unemployment duration). The analysis also found that national policies tend to privilege subsidies for job creation over policies aimed at education and training adjusted to personal needs, and recommended the allocation of more resources for counselling and personal evaluation, as well as improvements to data collection, analysis, and legal measures to support the marginalised Roma population.

According to MoLSAF, the current estimated cost of individual assessments is 5.33€ per hour. Additional data for 2016 onwards regarding additional costs associated with the implementation of other aspects of the Recommendation are however limited. As such definitive conclusions on the efficiency of its overall implementation from 2016 onwards cannot be made at this stage.

²⁶ https://www.mpsvr.sk/files/slovensky/apdn_06122016_sk_final.pdf

²⁷ Institute of Financial Policy (2016). Veľa práce na úradoch práce: Efektivita a účinnosť služieb zamestnanosti, <https://www.finance.gov.sk/sk/financie/institut-financnej-politiky/publikacie-ifp/ekonomicke-analyzy/40-vela-prace-uradov-prace-efektivita-ucinnost-sluzieb-zamestnanosti-oktober-2016.html>

3.4 Coherence

The **Recommendation is fully coherent with the measures adopted** for the inclusion of the people who are long-term unemployed to the labour market in Slovakia. The additional measures mentioned in the Action Plan include an amendment of legislation or new legal acts, which provided the necessary framework for the implementation of future activities (personal bankruptcy, social enterprises). Adopted in 2016, the **proposed measures were in line with the Recommendation and reaffirmed the focus of the pre-existing National Employment Strategy** which aims to eliminate barriers to employment growth and prompt changes in active labour market policies.²⁸

Other ESF funded ALMP programmes focused on socially excluded Roma communities that provide a wide scope of activities aiming at social and labour market inclusion complement the Recommendation. Looking more broadly, no duplications have been identified in relation to measures implemented in response to the Youth Guarantee or the European Semester at national level. If these instruments were running in parallel, a clear demarcation was determined to avoid any duplication. It is important to underline the existence of complementarity between the Recommendation and Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) issued as part of the European Semester process. Since 2016 CSRs issued for Slovakia recommend that activation measures for the long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged groups be improved, including via individualised services and targeted training. As such the European Semester process can thus be seen as complementary in acting as a tool to implement the Recommendation.

3.5 EU added value

As already touched upon above, the Recommendation outlines measures in line with the already established National Employment Strategy in Slovakia, but ultimately helped to affirm and consolidate efforts to develop these further. The **Recommendation was significant in pushing forward the development of an Action Plan** to Promote the Integration of the Long-Term Unemployed in the Labour Market, which has provided a stronger focus on the measures outlined in the Recommendation (e.g. with regards to profiling and the provision of individualised support for the people who are long-term unemployed). The Action Plan has also contributed to the prioritisation of available ESF funds to support people who are long-term unemployed measures in line with the Recommendation. In sum, the Recommendation has had a positive impact in terms of **helping to further steer and focus developments already in motion** in Slovakia, and providing potential opportunities for knowledge sharing (e.g. via the NCP network and EU-level monitoring activities).

²⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european_-semester-national-reform-programme-slovakia-en.pdf

4. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Level	Role / Position	Type of stakeholder
National/EU	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Dpt. of Employment Policy	
	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	MA ESF
	Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	PES
	Association of Towns and Municipalities	Other
Local	Head of Activation Centre	PES
	Social Field Worker	PES
	Job Agent	PES
	SPOC Sabinov	PES
	SPOC Prešov	PES
	Advisor	PES
	Unemployed	LTU
	Employed	LTU
	Unemployed	LTU
	Unemployed	LTU
	Unemployed	LTU
	Unemployed	LTU
	Director, Charity	NGO/Employer
	Project Manager, Charity	NGO/Employer
	Manager, Library	Employer
	Director, Private Catering Company	Employer
	Social Field Worker, Petrovany	Employer
	Head of SPOC Rimavská Sobota	PES
	Dpt. of Employers' Services	PES
	SPOC Rimavská Sobota	PES
	SPOC Rimavská Sobota	PES
	SPOC Rimavská Sobota	PES
	SPOC Rimavská Sobota	PES
	Head of branch office Hnúšť'a	PES
	Director	Employer
	Director	NGO/Employer
	Mayor	Employer
	Director	NGO/Employer
	Deputy Director	NGO/Employer
	Unemployed	LTU (long-term unemployed)
Unemployed	LTU	

Unemployed	LTU
Unemployed	LTU
Unemployed	LTU
Unemployed	LTU
HR Director	Employer

Annex 1

National Programmes Focused on the long-term unemployed

Programme title	Duration (from-to)	Allocation (mil. Eur)	Remark
Increased Activity to Employment	1/2/2017 -	National budget	<p>The activities are implemented by public employment services staff. Besides job offers, the programme provides individual meetings to find out why the people who are long-term unemployed cannot find a job, identifies obstacles and finds solutions to help eliminate them. The person who is long-term unemployed is provided with individual and group information and counselling services in the area of job selection, changing job, employee adaptation (to a new job), employment opportunities in the Slovak Republic and abroad, possibilities and conditions for participation in active labour market policy (ALMP) measures. The people who are long-term unemployed are trained to use an online web portal to automatically send job applications and create a Europass CV. In addition, group training sessions aimed at preparing for entry into the labour market, are organised. The activities of the project are divided across 4 months, in which individual work is done with the people who are long-term unemployed. There are also group activities aimed at improving communication skills, navigation of the labour market, etc. people who are long-term unemployed can then practice what they have learned in group meetings. In the event that during the 4-month period of participation in the project it is not possible to place the people who are long-term unemployed on the labour market, the person who is long-term unemployed is "assigned" to a professional counsellor who will place the person into one of the groups in the framework of the counselling interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people who are long-term unemployed entering the labour market after counselling intervention (i.e. those who need guidance on their employment options or who, for objective reasons, need to change their occupation; people who are long-term unemployed who need counselling support in the form of a balance of competencies - through external suppliers); • people who are long-term unemployed experiencing more difficulties entering the

			<p>labour market (i.e. those with significant problems and need intensive individualized professional counselling assistance - provided by the internal counsellors;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people who are long-term unemployed currently not ready for the labour market (i.e. with serious family, financial, psychological, psychosomatic or health problems or different kinds of addictions and who need a specialised approach), these are provided with inclusion in re-socialisation programmes, programmes aimed at enhancing financial literacy, volunteering, NGO engagement, promoted inclusion (social enterprises), etc.
Support of individualised counselling for people who are long-term unemployed	1/9/2017 – 31/8/2021	32.8	<p>Individual and group sessions to analyse and assess the job seeker's potential, 45 hours/15 meetings. The plan is to include 50 000 job seekers, specifically for the people who are long-term unemployed registered for longer than 48 months.</p> <p>Intensive professional counselling is provided by internal capacities and by increased programme staff capacities (i.e. via professional counsellors and psychologists) and the possibility to provide balanced support in the development of different competencies will be outsourced.</p> <p>The programme has 2 activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support of individualized counselling for people who are long-term unemployed - Competence balance for people who are long-term unemployed
Way from the unemployment circle	18/12/2015 – 31/10/2018	50.0	<p>National Programme aimed at supporting the creation of jobs for people who are long-term unemployed through skills development and provision of mentors at the working places. The main purpose is to provide financial contributions to promote job creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial contribution to cover a part of the total cost of the work of the recruited employee on a supported job; - Financial contribution to work mentors.
Placement of people who are long-term unemployed to the Labour Market via	1/1/2017 – 30/6/2019	1.0 originally 10.0	<p>In 2017 a total of 11 applications for contributions were submitted to the Labour Offices, within which Agencies of temporary employment (ADZ) applied for a job allowance for 97 people who are long-term unemployed. As of December 31 2017,</p>

non-state employment services			43 people who were long-term unemployed were placed on the labour market. In view of the relatively low interest of ADZ in the employment of people who are long-term unemployed, the total budget of the programme was reduced from 10 mil. to 1 mil Eur. In addition to improving cooperation with non-governmental employment services, those that are registered on web platform www.istp.sk are able to use the so-called "Cross-networking", which aims to provide data on suitable job seekers including people who are long-term unemployed. These people can be contacted directly or via the Labour Offices.
Restart – opportunity for people who are long-term unemployed to return to the Labour Market	1/6/2017 – 31/12/2019	15.6	<p>National Programme focused on the renewal of the working habits and skills in the workplace itself.</p> <p>Within the framework of the main activity, two measures targeting registered people who are long-term unemployed (registered for more than 24 months) are implemented in order to increase their integration into the labour market, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contributions to wages for active people who are long-term unemployed who have found employment; - Encouraging employers to work with people who are long-term unemployed and renew skills needed for work.
Other related or planned programmes			
We want to be active at the labour market	18/12/2015 – 11/2018	30	National Programme aimed at supporting the creation of jobs for job seekers who are 50+ with an emphasis on long-term unemployed. The NP is implemented through the provision of financial contributions to support job creation. Financial contribution for the payment of part of mandatory public health insurance, social insurance and pension contributions.
Development of partnerships to support and individualize services for people who are long-term unemployed provided by non-state employment services and non-profit		5	<i>Under preparation</i>

organizations			
Social enterprises		30	<i>Under preparation</i>
Social counselling			<i>Under preparation</i>
Social counselling for the people who are long-term unemployed	Ongoing – several projects	ca 95	<p>Social counselling for people who are long-term unemployed is also carried out through the projects: Social Field Work in Municipalities I, Support of Selected Social Services of Crisis Intervention at Community Level, Social Field Work and Field Work in Municipalities with Marginalised Roma Communities I. and Community Centres in Cities and Towns with Presence marginalised Roma communities - Phase I.</p> <p>These are focused on removing obstacles to employment, on the integration of marginalised groups including Roma and individuals or groups threatened by discrimination, social exclusion, and seeking solutions for debts, housing, transport, etc.</p>