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Subject: COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION amending the Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Slovakia

COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of ...

**amending the Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021
on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Slovakia**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility¹, and in particular Article 20(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

¹ OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p. 17, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/241/oj>.

Whereas:

- (1) Following the submission of the national recovery and resilience plan ('RRP') by Slovakia on 29 April 2021, the Commission proposed its positive assessment to the Council. On 13 July 2021, the Council approved the positive assessment by means of an implementing decision² ('the Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021'). The Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 was amended by the Council Implementing Decisions of 14 July 2023³ and 13 May 2025⁴.
- (2) On 2 October 2025, Slovakia made a reasoned request to the Commission to make a proposal to amend the Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 in accordance with Article 21(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 on the grounds that the RRP is partially no longer achievable because of objective circumstances. On that basis, Slovakia has submitted an amended RRP.

Amendments based on Article 21 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241

- (3) The amendments to the RRP submitted by Slovakia because of objective circumstances concern 93 measures.

² See documents ST 10156/21, ST 10156/21 ADD 1 and ST 10156/21 ADD 1 COR 1 at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu>.

³ See documents ST 11205/23 INIT, ST 11205/23 ADD 1 and ST 11205/23 ADD 1 COR 1 at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu>.

⁴ See documents ST 8054/25 and ST 8054/25 ADD 1 at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu>.

- (4) Slovakia has explained that one measure is no longer achievable, because of unexpected technical difficulties delaying the implementation of the measure. This concerns investment 1 (Project management and project preparation of investments). On this basis, Slovakia has requested that this measure be deleted. The Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 should be amended accordingly.
- (5) Slovakia has explained that 11 measures are partially no longer achievable, because of procurement issues, project delays and pro-rata co-financing from other EU funds. This concerns investment 2 (Modernising the existing renewable energy sources (repowering)), investment 2 (Renovation of historical and listed public buildings), investment 1 (Development of low-carbon transport infrastructure), investment 2 (Building forests resilient to climate change), investment 1 (Buildings for the reorganised court system), investment 1 (Modernisation and digitalisation of the transmission system and regional distribution systems - modernisation of distribution systems), investment 6 (Strengthening preventing measures, increasing the speed of incident detection and resolution (ITVS - Information technologies for public administration)), investment 7 (Improving the digital skills of seniors and the distribution of senior tablets), and reform 3 (Creation of a database and data exchange system on the energy performance of buildings), investment 3 (Engaging in multi-country European projects related to the digital economy), and investment 4 (Support for projects aiming at the development and application of top digital technologies). On this basis, Slovakia has requested that those measures be amended. The Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 should be amended accordingly.

- (6) Slovakia has explained that two measures have been amended to implement better alternatives in order to achieve their original ambition. This concerns investment 2 (Optimisation of the hospital network) and reform 2 (Reforming nature conservation and water management in the countryside). On this basis, Slovakia has requested that those measures be amended. The Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 should be amended accordingly.
- (7) Slovakia has explained that 69 measures have been amended to implement a better alternatives that allow the administrative burden to be reduced and simplify the Council Implementing Decision, while still achieving the objectives of those measures. This concerns investment 1 (Construction of the new renewable electricity sources, investment 3 (Increasing flexibility of electricity systems for greater renewables integration), investment 1 (Improving the energy efficiency of family houses), reform 2 (Public passenger transport reform), investment 3 (Development of intermodal freight transport), investment 4 (Supporting the development of infrastructure for alternative fuel vehicles), investment 1 (The operation of the industry decarbonisation scheme), investment 2 (Supporting the functioning of the Slovak Environmental Inspectorate linked to decarbonisation), investment 4 (Supporting the functioning of the Slovak Environment Inspectorate linked to decarbonisation), investment 1 (Adapting regions to climate change, focusing on nature conservation and biodiversity development), investment 2 (Building forests resilient to climate change, reform 1 (Providing conditions for the implementation of compulsory pre-primary education for children from the age of 5 and introducing a legal entitlement to a place in kindergarten or other pre-primary education providers from the age of 3),

reform 2 (The definition of the concept of special educational needs of children and pupils and the development of a model for eligible support measures in education, including their funding system), reform 4 (Implementation of tools to prevent early school leaving and adapt F-type study programme), reform 5 (Promoting school desegregation), investment 1 (Removing barriers in school buildings), reform 1 (Reform of the content and form of education), investment 1 (Digital infrastructure in schools), investment 2 (Completion of the school infrastructure), reform 5 (Concentration of excellent educational and research capacities), investment 1 (Investment support for the strategic development of universities), investment 1 (Promoting international cooperation and participation in Horizon Europe and EIT projects), investment 2 (Supporting cooperation between companies, academia and R & D organisations), investment 3 (Excellent science), investment 4 (Research and innovation to decarbonise the economy), investment 5 (Research and innovation for the digitalisation of the economy), investment 6 (Financial instruments to support innovation), investment 1 (Support tools and assistance for returnees, highly qualified third-country workers and their family members and foreign higher education students studying in Slovakia), investment 2 (Strengthening relations with the diaspora, supporting citizens' initiatives), investment 3 (Scholarships for domestic and foreign talented students), investment 4 (Promoting internationalisation in the academic environment), reform 1 (Optimisation of the hospital network), reform 3 (Centralisation of the management of the largest hospitals), investment 1 (Support the opening of new primary care practices in underserved areas), investment 2 (Optimisation of the hospital network), investment 3 (Digitalisation in health), investment 4 (Construction and rehabilitation of ambulance stations),

reform 1 (Coordinated inter-ministerial cooperation and regulation), reform 2 (Development of acutely underestimated capacity areas in mental health care), investment 2 (Creation of detention facilities), investment 3 (Building psycho-social centres), investment 4 (Completing the psychiatric stationary network), investment 5 (Establishment of specialised centres for autism spectrum disorders), investment 8 (Training in mental health for staff), reform 1 (Integration and financing of long-term social and health care), investment 1 (Enhancing community-based social care capacities), investment 2 (Extension and renewal of after-care and nursing capacities), investment 3 (Enhancing and restoring palliative care capacities), reform 1 (Reducing regulatory burden for businesses), investment 1 (Capacities for reforms to reduce regulatory burden), investment 2 (Digitalisation of insolvency processes), investment 2 (Digitalisation and analytical capacities), reform 4 (Audit and control), investment 3 (Modernisation of the fire and rescue system), investment 1 (Better services for citizens and businesses), investment 2 (Digital transformation of public service delivery), investment 5 (Fast grants – hackathons), reform 5 (Improving cybersecurity training and skills (ITVS - Information technologies for public administration)), reform 3 (Streamlining public investment), reform 1 (Promoting sustainable energy), reform 2 (Supporting the green transition in renewables), reform 6 (Skills for green transition), investment 7 (schools' equipment and training), reform 2 (Supporting the green transition in renewables), investment 5 (Development of low-carbon transport infrastructure), investment 6 (Promoting environmentally friendly passenger transport), reform 4 (Management of central government buildings), investment 4 (Supporting the renovation of households at risk of energy poverty), and investment 8 (Communication for REPowerEU chapter implementation). On this basis, Slovakia has requested that those measures be amended. The Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 should be amended accordingly.

- (8) Following the removal and the decrease in the level of implementation of measures in accordance with Article 21 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, Slovakia has requested to use the resources freed up by the removal of measures and the decrease in the level of their implementation to increase the level of implementation of ten measures. This concerns investment 3 (Increasing flexibility of electricity systems for greater renewables integration), investment 1 (Development of low-carbon transport infrastructure), investment 2 (Promoting clean passenger transport), investment 7 (Humanisation of institutional psychiatric care), investment 2 (Equipping and digitalising the police force), investment 4 (Streamlining, optimising and strengthening administrative capacity at different levels of government), investment 4 (Support for projects aiming at the development and application of top digital technologies), investment 1 (Modernisation and digitalisation of the transmission system and regional distribution systems - modernisation of distribution systems), investment 2 (Improving the energy efficiency of public buildings), and investment 3 (Renovation of public historical and listed buildings). On this basis, Slovakia has requested that the level of implementation of ten measures be increased.

Distribution of milestones and targets

- (9) The distribution of milestones and targets in instalments should be amended to take into account the amendments to the RRP and the indicative timeline presented by Slovakia.

Commission's assessment

- (10) The Commission has assessed the amended RRP against the assessment criteria laid down in Article 19(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241.

Addressing all or a significant subset of challenges identified in country-specific recommendations

- (11) In accordance with Article 19(3), point (b), of, and criterion 2.2 of Annex V to, Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the amended RRP is expected to contribute to effectively addressing all or a significant subset of challenges (rating A) identified in the relevant country-specific recommendations addressed to Slovakia, including fiscal aspects thereof, and recommendations made pursuant to Article 6 of Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011, or challenges identified in other relevant documents officially adopted by the Commission in the context of the European Semester.
- (12) Having assessed progress in the implementation of all relevant country-specific recommendations as part of the 2023, 2024 and 2025 European Semester, the Commission finds that the country-specific recommendations ('CSR') on the submission of the medium-term fiscal-structural plan in a timely manner (2024), and on limiting the growth in net expenditure in 2025 to a rate consistent with inter alia, reducing the general government deficit towards the 3 % of GDP Treaty reference value and keeping the general government debt at a prudent level over the medium term (2024) were fully implemented.

- (13) The amended RRP includes an extensive set of mutually reinforcing reforms and investments that contribute to effectively addressing all or a significant subset of the economic and social challenges outlined in the country-specific recommendations addressed to Slovakia by the Council in the context of the European Semester, in particular the amendment of the RRP added a reference to the CSR 3 of 2024 on the need to strengthen the conservation of natural resources and increase water resilience by mainstreaming nature-based solutions and finalising the zonation of nature-protected areas.
- (14) By addressing the aforementioned challenges, the amended RRP is also expected to contribute to correcting the imbalances, as identified in recommendations made pursuant to Article 6 of Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011 in 2023, 2024 and 2025, that Slovakia is experiencing, in particular with regard to cost competitiveness, external balance, housing market and household indebtedness.

Contribution to the green transition, including biodiversity

- (15) In accordance with Article 19(3), point (e), of, and criterion 2.5 of Annex V to, Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the amended RRP contains measures that contribute to a large extent (rating A) to the green transition, including biodiversity, or to addressing the challenges resulting therefrom. The measures supporting climate objectives account for an amount which represents 40,19 % of the amended RRP's total allocation and 80,40 % of the estimated total cost of measures in the REPowerEU chapter calculated in accordance with the methodology set out in Annex VI to Regulation (EU) 2021/241. In accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the amended RRP is consistent with the information included in the National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030.

- (16) The amendment of the RRP does not materially impact its ambition towards the green transition despite a decrease of 0,89 percentage points in the share of the total allocation to measures supporting climate objectives. This decrease mainly results from the omission of elements of investment 1 (Modernisation and digitalisation of the transmission system and regional distribution systems - modernisation of distribution systems) and reform 1 (Providing conditions for the implementation of compulsory pre-primary education for children from the age of 5 and introducing a legal entitlement to a place in kindergarten or other pre-primary education providers from the age of 3). The amended RRP still significantly supports green transition objectives, the enhancement of biodiversity, and environmental protection. In particular, the REPowerEU chapter continues to support the green transition, as its reforms and investments contribute to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels, reduce energy demand and increase energy efficiency.

Contribution to the digital transition

- (17) In accordance with Article 19(3), point (f), of, and criterion 2.6 of Annex V to, Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the amended RRP contains measures that contribute to a large extent (rating A) to the digital transition or to addressing the challenges resulting from it. The measures supporting digital objectives account for an amount which represents 21,77 % of the amended RRP's total allocation calculated in accordance with the methodology set out in Annex VII to Regulation (EU) 2021/241.

- (18) The amendment of the RRP reinforces its ambition towards the digital transition by increasing the share of the Recovery and Resilience Facility ('RRF') grant allocated to measures supporting digital objectives by 0,75 percentage points. This increase mainly results from the introduction of new elements under investment 3 (Increasing the flexibility of electricity systems for greater integration of renewables) and investment 4 (Strengthening administrative capacity at different levels of government).

Costing

- (19) In accordance with Article 19(3), point (i), of, and criterion 2.9 of Annex V to, Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the justification provided in the amended RRP on the amount of the estimated total cost of the RRP is to a medium extent (rating B) reasonable and plausible, is in line with the principle of cost efficiency and is commensurate with the expected national economic and social impact.
- (20) The outcome of the costing assessment in the Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 therefore remains unchanged. Slovakia's justification on the amount of the estimates of total costs of the RRP were reasonable and plausible to a medium extent, in line with the principle of cost efficiency, and was commensurate with the expected national and economic impact. For a limited number of measures, cost benchmarks were less clear, based on little comparable information. Demarcation with other financing sources for projects was also not always clearly indicated, but safeguards were put in place to prevent double funding.

- (21) The assessment of the cost estimates for the amended measures shows that most of the costs are reasonable and plausible, according to the information provided. For some amended measures, information on the reasonability and plausibility of cost estimates is limited or missing. This precludes an A rating under the given assessment criterion. Changes in the cost estimates for amended measures were justified and proportional where possible and as such the reasonability and plausibility of these cost estimates were not altered compared to the original RRP. Details on the methodology and the assumptions used to make the cost estimates were justified and proportional throughout most of the amended RRP. Finally, the amount of the estimated total cost of the RRP is in line with the principle of cost efficiency and commensurate with the expected national economic and social impact.

Any other assessment criteria

- (22) The Commission considers that the amendments put forward by Slovakia do not affect the positive assessment of the RRP set out in the Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 regarding the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of the RRP against the assessment criteria laid down in Article 19(3), points (a), (c), (d), (da), (db), (g), (h), (j) and (k), of Regulation (EU) 2021/241.

Measures supporting investment operations contributing to the objectives of the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP)

- (23) In accordance with Article 4(4) of Regulation (EU) 2024/795 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁵, Slovakia considered as priority projects those projects that have been awarded a Sovereignty Seal pursuant to Article 4(1) of that Regulation. However, Slovakia considered that no such projects were to be included in the amended RRP because of insufficient time to complete such projects before the end date of the RRF.

Positive assessment

- (24) Following the positive assessment by the Commission of the amended RRP, with the finding that the RRP satisfactorily complies with the criteria for assessment set out in Regulation (EU) 2021/241, in accordance with Article 20(2) of and Annex V to that Regulation, the reforms and investment projects necessary for the implementation of the amended RRP, the relevant milestones, targets and indicators, and the amount made available from the Union for the implementation of the amended RRP should be set out.

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2024/795 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 February 2024 establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP), and amending Directive 2003/87/EC and Regulations (EU) 2021/1058, (EU) 2021/1056, (EU) 2021/1057, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) 2021/1060, (EU) 2021/523, (EU) 2021/695, (EU) 2021/697 and (EU) 2021/241 (OJ L, 2024/795, 29.2.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/795/oj>).

Financial contribution

- (25) The estimated total cost of Slovakia's amended RRP is EUR 6 408 465 020. As the amount of the estimated total cost of the amended RRP is higher than the updated maximum financial contribution available for Slovakia, the financial contribution determined in accordance with Article 4a of Regulation (EU) 2021/1755 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁶, and with Article 20(4) and Article 21a(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 that is allocated for Slovakia's amended RRP should be equal to EUR 6 407 240 019.
- (26) The amount of the financial contribution for Slovakia should be determined in accordance with Article 20 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241. However, pursuant to the Commission Implementing Decision of 8 May on the reduction of the amount of the fifth instalment of the non-repayable support for Slovakia, adopted in accordance with Article 24(8) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, the financial contribution has been reduced by EUR 1 225 000 and Slovakia cannot request its disbursement from the Commission.

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2021/1755 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 October 2021 establishing the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (OJ L 357, 8.10.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1755/oj>).

- (27) The Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 should therefore be amended accordingly. For the sake of clarity, the Annex to the Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 should be replaced entirely.
- (28) This Decision should be without prejudice to procedures relating to distortions of the operation of the internal market that may be undertaken, in particular under Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty. It does not override the requirement for Member States to implement the measures in accordance with Union and national law and, in particular, to notify instances of potential State aid to the Commission under Article 108 of the Treaty,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1
Approval of the assessment of the RRP

The assessment of the amended RRP of Slovakia on the basis of the criteria provided for in Article 19(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 is approved.

Article 2
Amendments

The Annex to the Council Implementing Decision of 13 July 2021 on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Slovakia is replaced by the text appearing in the Annex to this Decision.

Article 3
Addressee

This Decision is addressed to the Slovak Republic.

Done at ..., ...

For the Council
The President
