



EUROPEAN
STATISTICAL
SYSTEM

IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS SLOVAKIA

**PEER REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS AND
IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS
OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM OF THE
SLOVAK REPUBLIC IN RESPONSE TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Recommendation

The relevant authorities should amend the legislation to make the procedure for the recruitment and appointment of the President of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic more transparent and based on professional criteria. (Compliance-relevant: ES CoP, Indicator 1.8)

Current situation:

According to the 2011 Act on State Statistics, Section 6.2, the President of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic “shall be appointed and dismissed by the Government of the Slovak Republic”.

Pursuant to Section 6 par. 7 of the Act on State Statistics, the President of the Office acts independently of the instructions of state bodies, local self-government bodies, other public authorities and other persons when performing his duties.

Improvement sub-action 1.1: Draft an amendment to the act on state statistics

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will submit to the Government of the Slovak Republic a draft of the new act on state statistics, which will replace the current national legislation of state statistics in the Slovak Republic. The new act will also regulate the selection of candidates and the appointment of the President of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic in accordance with the recommendation. The adoption of the draft act will be significantly affected by the amendment to Regulation (EC) No. 223/2009 on European statistics, which is expected to be approved in 4Q 2024.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 1.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 1.2: Consult relevant stakeholders on the draft amendment to the act on state statistics

The draft of the act will be consulted with business representatives and tested for its application to small and medium-sized enterprises due to new methods of fulfilling reporting obligation, the use of official statistics, and the use of privately held data sources.

Deadline: Q1 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 1.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 1.3: Consult the members of the National Statistical System on the draft amendment to the act on state statistics

The draft amendment to the act will be discussed with other members of the National Statistical System at the Coordination Council for State Statistics.

Deadline: Q2 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 1.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 1.4: Conduct the pre-comment procedure of the government on

<p>the draft amendment to the act on state statistics</p> <p>The draft of the act will be subject to a pre-comment procedure before the Standing Working Group of the Legislative Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the assessment of selected impacts, in which the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic, and the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development, and Informatization of the Slovak Republic are also represented. This is due to both the positive and negative impacts on the public administration budget, employment, and the financing of the draft, as well as the positive and negative impacts on the business environment and positive impacts on the informatization of society (data transformation, development, and changes to public administration information systems). The draft of the act will be subject to inter-ministerial comment procedures.</p>
<p>Deadline0: Q3 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 1.4: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Slovak government</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 1.5: Consult social partners and trade unions on the draft amendment to the act on state statistics</p> <p>The draft of the act will be discussed by social partners — the Government of the Slovak Republic, representatives of employers (businesses and local government), and trade unions — at the Economic and Social Council of the Slovak Republic.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q3 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 1.5: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Slovak government</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 1.6: Submit the draft amendment to the act on state statistics to the Government</p> <p>The draft of the act will be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic for approval in the form of a government bill.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 1.6: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 1.7: Adopt the amendments to the Act on State Statistics</p> <p>The draft of the act will be presented for a discussion at the National Council of the Slovak Republic, and as part of this process, it will be submitted in the second reading to the responsible Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic for Public Administration and Regional Development. The government and the Parliament will adopt the amendments to the act, after running the necessary consultations and procedures.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 1.7: The Slovak government, Parliament</p>

2. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should further develop the work and functioning of the Coordination Council for State Statistics so that it systematically fulfils its mandate and is used as a dynamic tool for coordination in the Slovak statistical system. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1bis.1 and 1bis.3)

Current situation:

The 2021 amendment to the Act on State Statistics established the Coordination Council for State Statistics as a successor to the Statistical Board. According to its Statute, the Coordination Council is the expert body for issues related to the production of official statistics. The Coordination Council coordinates tasks related to the planning and reporting of statistical work, and discusses the development of a methodological framework, quality framework, methodological guidance, quality monitoring and compliance with the principles of state statistics, the transmission and dissemination of statistical data, opinions on the provisions of the Act on State Statistics and related legislation, and other matters of state statistics proposed by the President of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic or members of the Coordination Council. The President of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic convenes meetings of the Coordination Council as necessary, and at least once a year. The inaugural meeting took place in May 2021 and annual meetings were held in December 2021 and December 2022.

However, during the peer review meetings it was noted that the Coordination Council for State Statistics had not yet discussed all the topics listed in its statute, mainly due to the lack of meetings. The need for closer cooperation and more frequent meetings was also noted.

Improvement sub-action 2.1: Establish a regular meeting schedule including all tasks from the Coordination Council mandate

A schedule of Coordination Council meetings will be established in line with the preparation of the Programme of State Statistical Surveys and covering all tasks established by the mandate of the Coordination Council.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 2.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 2.2: Convene one meeting per year on topical issues of coordination of the Slovak statistical system

One meeting of the Coordination Council per year will be devoted to topical issues of coordination of the Slovak statistical system, such as quality frameworks, methodological frameworks, methodological guidance, monitoring the compliance of the statistical system with the ESCoP.

Deadline: Q4 2025 (annually afterwards)

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 2.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

3. Recommendation

The relevant government authorities should ensure that appropriate legal provisions are in place to grant the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic access to privately held data for the development, production and dissemination of official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 2.4)

Current situation:

Access to privately held data is currently granted to Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic based on bilateral agreements with data providers and has proved to be a solid basis for developing statistics from new data sources. The agreements on scanner and toll data are prominent examples. While there are good practices on using privately held data, the long-term, sustainable availability of such data and access to it is not regulated by law.

Improvement sub-action 3.1: Draft an amendment to the act on state statistics

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will submit to the Government of the Slovak Republic a draft of the new act on state statistics, which will replace the current national legislation of state statistics in the Slovak Republic. The legislation for the use of privately held data sources will be included in the new act on state statistics and aims to implement the amendment of Regulation (EC) No. 223/2009 at the national level, which is expected to be approved in 4Q 2024.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 3.2: Consult business representatives for the amendment to the act on state statistics regarding access to privately held data

The use of privately held data sources has already been a subject of national consultations with representatives of businesses during the preparation of the preliminary opinion of the Slovak Republic regarding the proposed amendment to Regulation (EC) No. 223/2009. This issue will be part of the national consultations with business representatives.

Deadline: Q1 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 3.3: Conduct the pre-comment procedure of the government on the draft amendment to the act on state statistics

Within the legislative process (a pre-comment procedure and an inter-ministerial comment procedure), the legislation for the use of privately held data sources for statistical purposes will also be subject to comments by the Ministry of Finance due to its negative impact on the state budget (financing of eligible initial costs for data holders) and the Office for Personal Data Protection of the Slovak Republic due to the protection of the rights of individuals concerned with regard to the processing of personal data from this new data source.

Deadline: Q2 2025

<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 3.4: Submit the draft amendment to the act on state statistics to the government</p> <p>The draft of the act will be submitted to the Government of the Slovak Republic for approval in the form of a government bill.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q3 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 3.4: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 3.5: Adopt the amendments to the Act on State Statistics</p> <p>The draft of the act will be presented for a discussion at the National Council of the Slovak Republic, and as part of this process, it will be submitted in the second reading to the responsible Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic for Public Administration and Regional Development. The government and the Parliament will adopt the amendments to the act, after running the necessary consultations and procedures.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 3.5: The Slovak government, Parliament</p>

<p>4. Recommendation</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should provide equal access to all users. If pre-release practices are continued, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should ensure that pre-release access for external users is limited, well-justified, controlled and publicised on its website. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 6.7)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic provides pre-release access to selected statistical information under an embargo of 30 minutes to Press agencies that request it. At the same time, on the basis of a contractual relationship, it provides pre-release access to a defined range of statistical information to selected institutions. The established practice is published on the website within the principles of publication and provision of statistical information.</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 4.1: Specify conditions for pre-release access and publish them</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will specify in more detail the conditions of pre-release access to statistical information, including the embargo within the principles of publication and provision of statistical information, and will publish it on its website.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 4.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic</p>

Improvement sub-action 4.2: Establish a working group to assess the necessity of pre-release access

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will establish an expert working group to assess the impact and necessity of pre-release provision of statistical information and to control this approach.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 4.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 4.3: Update list of users with pre-release access and publish it

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will revise and update the list of users with pre-release access to provision of statistical information, including the list of relevant domains/subdomains/indicators, periodicity, time and justification. The number of users with pre-release access will be limited, the reasons for their access well explained and the list will be published.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 4.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

5. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should initiate a reflection on the set-up of the Slovak statistical system to define an efficient division of labour between the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics. During this reflection, particular attention should be paid to the ES CoP requirement that the head of the Other National Authority has sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 1.4 and 1bis.1)

Current situation:

The Slovak statistical system consists of 13 Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics. One of the criteria for being considered as an ONA is to send data directly to Eurostat. However, of the total volume of data sent to Eurostat in 2020 (the last year for which complete information is available), 93.5% was sent by the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 3.4% by the Central Bank of Slovakia and only 1.2% by the State Material Reserves Administration, with all the Other National Authorities sending less than 1%. Of the three Other National Authorities reviewed, two have only two employees: the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior and the State Material Reserves Administration. In addition, the heads of the Other National Authorities appointed by the relevant ministries are not always the persons responsible for producing statistics, which may sometimes be a line supervisor, potentially raising an issue as regards taking responsibility for the methodology as required by the ES CoP.

The Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics must comply with the ES CoP, but this can be highly demanding for institutions with very limited human resources, particularly staff with statistical skills and competencies. Therefore, it may be more efficient for these authorities to act as providers of administrative data and for the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic to process these data and produce the corresponding European statistics, following the principles of the ES CoP.

Improvement sub-action 5.1: Hold a dialogue with the ONAs on the division of labour

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will initiate bilateral discussions with Other National Authorities on a possible change in the division of labour and responsibilities between the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and Other National Authorities responsible for the production and dissemination of European statistics.

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 5.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, ONAs

Improvement sub-action 5.2: Present the outcome of the discussions to the Coordination Council

Deadline: Q2 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 5.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 5.3: Prepare a report on the results of the reflections on the set-up of the Slovak statistical system

A final report on the conclusions of the bilateral negotiations and possible reset on the Slovak

statistical system will be prepared.
Deadline: Q4 2027
Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 5.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic
Improvement sub-action 5.4: Training for staff of the ONAs The Statistical Office will continue the systematic training of employees of Other National Authorities to increase their statistical skills and competences.
Deadline: Q4 2027
Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 5.4: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, ONAs

6. Recommendation
The relevant government authorities should continuously ensure that adequate human and financial resources are available to the Slovak statistical system to meet current and new statistical needs, to cope with technology developments and to exploit the potential of new data sources for an improved service to users. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 3.1)
Current situation: Maintaining statistical production while investing in the production of new statistics, exploring the use of new sources of information to reduce reporting burden, improving quality and striving to reach and satisfy increasing user needs all require significant investment and additional resources. The efforts to meet information needs in periods of crisis, e.g., during COVID, showed the Slovak statistical system's reliance on its highly qualified human resources. The Slovak statistical system is highly centralised, with 93.5% of the total volume of European statistics produced by the SOSR. Despite the Other National Authorities' small share in the production of European statistics, they produce European statistics of critical importance in several key domains such as energy, migration, environment and education. In the period 2020 to 2022, the general number of human resources attributed to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic by the state budget decreased by 9.5%, and a similar trend was observed for staff with higher education. The Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European Statistics also rely on very few employees that are dedicated to statistics. In several cases these employees are also involved in other activities within their organisation, creating risks for the sustainable production of European statistics. Furthermore, despite the SOSR's efforts to maintain a sustainable workforce, investing in training, valorising and developing the competencies and skills of its workforce, the salary gap with other public institutions reduces its attractiveness as an employer.
Improvement sub-action 6.1: Discuss with ONAs on their resource needs The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will initiate discussions with Other National Authorities on the current and new needs of the Slovak statistical system with an impact on human and financial resources in order to submit findings to a meeting with the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic.

Deadline: Q2 2025
Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 6.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, ONAs
<p>Improvement sub-action 6.2: Establish a dialogue to discuss resource needs with the Ministry of Finance</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will submit findings on the needs for resources and budgetary requirements for current and new development needs for the entire national statistical system to the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic and establish a dialogue to discuss the resource needs within the annual planning process. The first meeting will be held in the second quarter of 2025 for resource needs in 2026.</p>
Deadline: Q3 2025 (annually afterwards)
Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 6.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Finance

<p>7. Recommendation</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should continue to develop the competency matrices to improve staff skills, ensuring that skills are aligned with the requirements of new data collection methods, new data sources and new technologies. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.6)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic has a professional training plan for the continuous training of its employees. The training offered is listed in the catalogue of training and other courses. The staff's use of the acquired knowledge and skills in their practical, daily work is continuously and comprehensively assessed by senior managers within the framework of the annual employee assessment. In addition, employees' individual competency training plans take into account the competencies necessary for the performance of their tasks.</p> <p>New methods of data collection, new sources of information and new technologies require specialised personnel. It is therefore necessary to increase the effectiveness of the system of training for statistical positions by using the competency matrices developed from the competency catalogue based on the SOSR's new needs/tasks.</p>
<p>Improvement action 7: Refinement of competency matrices for efficient management</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will continue the development of competency matrices in order to make the use of this managerial management tool more efficient. A new catalogue of competencies will be prepared including specification of methods and forms of training for improving the knowledge/skills of employees.</p>
Deadline: Q4 2026
Responsible institution for improvement action 7: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

8. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should optimise all statistical processes based on detailed process descriptions, guidelines and visual mapping. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 8.3, 10.1 and 4.1)

Current situation:

Processes in the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic are all organised in accordance with the requirements of the ISO 9001 standard. The SOSR has been certified since 2006 and has subsequently been recertified 5 times, most recently in 2021. Generic process descriptions and guidelines are shared and accessible to all employees via the intranet. At a more detailed level, domain-specific units and process owners are responsible for creating process descriptions and other related documents and sharing them on the intranet, but this is not done systematically or regularly. Some of them are quite advanced in ensuring that descriptions are relevant and professional, even using diagrams based on Unified Modelling Language (UML), among other things.

Improvement sub-action 8.1: Build a central repository of business processes

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will provide modelling of business and application processes in a central repository with visualization of modelling requirements and cases of use, domain (data) model, integrations, interfaces and services in terms of the process from different perspectives (structural, behavioral, process, data).

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 8.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 8.2: Optimise statistical processes

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will continue the optimization of statistical processes, which will be based on the Unified Modelling Language (UML) and Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN) tools and will be written in standard notation for modelling. Documenting the processes, instructions and guidelines will be realized in the environment of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic to keep updated documents by introducing a methodology for their documentation and connection to the business layer and the application layer of information systems.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 8.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

9. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should develop more systematic and planned incentives to attract and retain young talent, especially university graduates. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.5 and 3.1)

Current situation:

In 2022, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic employed 817 people, 18% of whom were aged under 39, compared with 62% aged between 40 and 59, and 20% aged 60 and over. This means that one in five staff members will be retiring in the coming years. It is therefore essential for the SOSR to attract young employees to maintain a balanced age pyramid. The peer review team was informed that the SOSR was finding it difficult to attract young professionals due to the differences in salary with other public administrations. It seems that the SOSR does not yet use its good relationships with academia to attract young graduates, for example by regularly offering internships to statistics and economics students. Internship is a good way of discovering the reality and interestingness of work in a statistical office, and in particular the motivating working environment offered by the SOSR and should therefore be actively promoted.

Improvement sub-action 9.1: Develop and implement a package of benefits aimed at young employees

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will develop and implement a package of employee benefits, reflecting trends and the benefits offered by competitors, to become an attractive and sought-after employer in the labour market among young people.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 9.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 9.2: Develop cooperation with universities

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will continue to develop cooperation activities with universities and secondary schools (in particular, teaching activities, student internships, the European Statistics Competition).

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 9.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 9.3: Support young talents

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will include the support of leaders and young talents in the new Development Strategy of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 9.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

10. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should further develop automated ways of collecting data from data providers to reduce the burden on businesses and speed up data collection. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 9.3)

Current situation:

The information needed for statistics is available in the IT systems of enterprises. The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic is ready for using but does not yet use the automatic transfer of data from the information systems of enterprises to the information system of the SOSR. This form of automation will significantly contribute to the reduction of the burden on the business environment, the reduction of errors and the overall efficiency of the production process.

As part of the implementation of the project Unified Information System of Statistical Data, the foundation for an automated data collection of selected statistical surveys from the information systems of the reporting units was prepared.

Improvement sub-action 10.1: Generate Metadata

As part of the preparation of statistical surveys for the following year, the metadata necessary for the automatic data transfer will be generated by the system-system method.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 10.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 10.2: Provide a test environment for automatic data collection

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will provide Enterprise resource planning (ERP) system suppliers with a test environment and web services for sending data from ERP systems to the electronic questionnaires of the SOSR.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 10.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 10.3: Provide support to developers and reporting units

SOSR will provide both methodological and technical support for both developers and reporting units.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 10.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 10.4: Promote the possibilities of automatic data collection to developers and reporting units

SOSR will provide communication activities to both ERP system suppliers and reporting units on the possibilities of automated data collection.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 10.4: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

11. Recommendation

The Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic should centralise the production of European statistics in the areas under its responsibility. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 10.4)

Current situation:

Under the governance of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, European statistics are currently produced by the following three units: the Organisational and Legal Department of the Migration Office (2 positions out of 10), the Dublin Centre of the Migration Office (1 position out of 6), and the Risk Analysis and Coordination Department of the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Presidium of the Police Force. Representatives from the Migration Office were among the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics that were met during the peer review. Their main tasks include the production of statistics on European migration and international protection, based on its administrative data (the information system MIGRA). The same system is also used by the Bureau of Border and Alien Police, and both units are the administrators of the system and work closely together. Additionally, a Chief Statistician (head of the department of operational management of the fire department) has been appointed to coordinate the production of statistics in the Ministry of Interior. This person also participates in the Coordination Council for State Statistics. All these counterparts cooperate on matters such as quality, including the timeliness of statistical data, and internal cooperation is good. However, contacts and cooperation between the units take place randomly or based on emerging needs, rather than systematically and regularly.

The lack of such support and central coordination and cooperation is a missed opportunity in a situation where the units producing European statistics at the Migration Office, and in the Ministry in general, have long been understaffed, and this situation is not expected to change soon. Currently, the lack of human resources does not even allow the units to meet identified demands in relation to relevance, accessibility and clarity, e.g. the demand for information including metadata on the website by users of statistics. The Ministry of Interior should reflect on the setup to produce European statistics in its area of governance and decide how to create and implement more systematic, regular approaches, and consider a greater centralisation of activities and jobs related to the production of statistics.

Improvement sub-action 11.1: Discuss with the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will initiate negotiations with the newly appointed Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, the newly appointed Director of the Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic and the Director of the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Force on the peer review recommendation to centralise its production.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 11.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 11.2: Promote the centralisation of statistical functions in the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic

The SOSR will establish a regular dialogue with the Ministry of Interior on the creation of a centralised statistical function in the Ministry and on the benefits of such a centralisation for compliance with the ESCoP. The topic of statistical functions in Ministries and their status as ONAs will also be put on the agenda of the Coordination Council meeting.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 11.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

12. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, in cooperation with the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics, should establish a Methodology Committee involving external experts with the objective of advising on the methodology of new European statistics produced in the Slovak statistical system and on major revisions of existing statistical operations. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 7.1, 7.2, 12.3 and 4.2)

Current situation:

Within the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 50 people work in the Directorate of General Methodology, Registers and Coordination of National Statistical System. They provide methodology support to the SOSR's subject matter units and to the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics upon request, on topics such as sampling, imputation and data protection. In the case of specific surveys, the methodology is discussed in working groups, e. g. the labour statistics working group. Another example is the methodology support that was made available to the Ministry of Social Affairs, which prepared a survey on gender-based violence and asked for the SOSR's support in designing the survey. According to Section 11.2 of the Act on State Statistics, Other National Authorities should consult the SOSR on the methodology for state statistical surveys and should use national statistical classifications, but this kind of consultation is not systematic.

Moreover, members of the scientific community advise the SOSR on some methodological issues, but here too, there is no systematic mechanism to review and validate the methodology of statistical operations.

Improvement action 12: Establish a Methodology Board and define its mandate

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will establish a Methodological Board, to which external experts will also be invited according to the issue under discussion, and whose tasks will be to advise on the methodology of new statistics produced in the Slovak statistical system, to review major revisions of existing statistical operations, to evaluate statistical methods and to propose new methodological solutions.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement action 12: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

13. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should further develop the system of performance indicators and quality reviews, by using a process-oriented approach. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 4.2 and 4.3)

Current situation:

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic has defined key performance indicators (KPI) for all processes identified in the organization (managerial, support, value-added). KPIs are part of the detailed description of each process. Processes are structured into sub-processes to which one or more KPIs are linked. The main value-added process of statistical production has defined KPIs linked to the individual phases of the GSBPM model as follows: Specification of needs - 2 KPIs, Data collection - 8 KPIs, Processing - 3 KPIs, Analysis - 1 KPI, Publication and provision of outputs - 8 KPIs, Evaluation - 1 KPIs. KPIs are currently defined to a sufficient extent for monitoring the quality of statistical outputs. In the future, they will be subject to review in connection with the new Unified Information System of statistical data. In addition to KPIs defined for system monitoring, the quality of statistical outputs is also monitored through Standard Quality Indicators (SQI).

Methodological audits are included in the annual audit programme and are always focused on all phases of the GSBPM and are relevant for the statistical survey or statistical product. A self-assessment process precedes the methodological audit.

As part of the Development Strategy 2022 (extended until 2023), the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic established performance indicators, through which it monitored the implementation of strategic objectives/quality objectives fulfilled by the action programmes.

Improvement sub-action 13.1: Revise key performance indicators

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will revise the key performance indicators in relation to the GSBPM, which will enable effective monitoring of the performance of its individual phases, including quality monitoring.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 13.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 13.2: Establish key performance indicators for the Development strategy

The Statistical Office of the Sloval Republic will establish key performance indicators for each strategic objective within the Development strategy of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2028.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 13.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 13.3: Establish a system of quality reviews

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will establish a system of quality reviews, closely linked with methodological audits and standard quality indicators.

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 13.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

14. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should implement systematic and regular quality reviews of the production of European statistics in the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 1bis.2)

Current situation:

According to the Act on State Statistics, Section 8(1)k), the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic shall monitor the quality of state statistics and compliance with the basic principles of state statistics. That is also mentioned as one of the tasks of the Coordination Council for State Statistics in its statute. Quality monitoring is regularly carried out within the SOSR through approaches based on ISO 9001 standard requirements, such as the systematic use of key performance indicators, internal audits and reviews by process managers and management, and also by external auditors. Part of the SOSR quality management system is also the conduct of internal methodological audits.

Regarding the Slovak statistical system, the performance and quality of the statistics produced by the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics is reviewed through methodological audits. Two methodological audits have been planned for 2023. At the time of the Peer Review, one had been carried out and the second was carried out in the third quarter of 2023. The audit plan for a given year is available on the communication platform Confluence. The aim of these audits is to systematically and regularly verify the state of internal documentation and compliance with common guidelines, as well as compliance of the implemented practice with the existing prescribed work procedures, formal standards and obligations associated with membership in the Slovak statistical system. Based on the findings from the audit of a member of the Slovak statistical system, suggestions for improvement or recommendations for taking corrective/preventive measures are formulated.

However, during the peer review meetings, it became clear that although the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic has created an audit plan for the evaluation of European statistics produced by the Other National Authorities, and those participating were aware of the dates and audits concerning them, the respective audits have not yet been organised systematically and regularly.

Improvement action 14: Implement the plan of methodological audits in ONAs

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will continue to perform systematically methodological audits in Other National Authorities and will implement at least one methodological audit per year.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institutions for improvement action 14: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, ONAs

15. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should extend the coverage of the Unified Information System of State Statistics to all phases of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model in order to standardise and improve the efficiency of statistical processes. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 7.2)

Current situation:

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic currently covers all phases of the statistical production process with its information system. Phases 1, 2, and 7, 8 of the GSBPM are covered by a new information system, while phases 3, 4, 5, and 6 are supported by an older information system. These two systems cooperate with each other.

Improvement sub-action 15.1: Identify funding sources for the extension of the Unified Information System of Statistical Data

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will try to obtain financial resources for the modernization/extending of the Unified Information System of Statistical Data so that it covers all phases of the GSBPM.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 15.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 15.2: Implement the extension of the Unified Information System of Statistical Data

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will modernize the information system covering phases 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the GSBPM model.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 15.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

16. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should strengthen and institutionalise its user engagement by developing a strategy to identify and reach new user groups to engage wider sections of society. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 11.1)

Current situation:

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic regularly consults users about their satisfaction in using its products and services. In addition, the Dissemination and Communication Directorate collects requests from users that have not been satisfied by the current products and services. This information, together with specific requests, particularly from state administrations, is used to prepare the Programme of State Statistical Surveys. When the preliminary decree of this Programme is sent out, users have another opportunity to express their needs – through the official legal procedure.

Improvement sub-action 16.1: Develop a strategy to identify and reach new user groups

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will develop a strategy to identify and reach new user groups, including an analysis of existing target groups, and ways to identify groups of new users.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 16.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 16.2: Develop an action plan targeted at new users

Based on the analysis contained in the strategy, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will develop an action plan aimed at selected groups of new users to meet their needs.

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 16.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

17. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should further develop a vision for its role in the emerging national data ecosystem and could consider the role of data stewardship. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 8.7)

Current situation:

In the absence of a list of administrative data sources within the Slovak Republic, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic tries to identify potential data sources, by scrutinising new legal provisions, for example. When preparing the 2021 Population and Housing Census, the SOSR sent a questionnaire to administrations and municipalities, listing the variables it intended to collect and asking them whether this information was available. However, there is no systematic mechanism for the SOSR to be informed of projects likely to generate new sources of administrative data. As an integral part of the national data ecosystem and dependent on its further developments, especially those related to new data sources, the SOSR should play a more active role in monitoring digitalisation efforts within the public administration, with the aim of understanding and benefiting from the development of the national data ecosystem. The role of national data steward, playing a leading role in the development of public information in the state administrations, could also be considered, if deemed appropriate.

Improvement sub-action 17.1: Develop a vision on the role of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic in the national data ecosystem

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 17.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Slovak government

Improvement sub-action 17.2: Elaborate the Development Strategy of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, including elements of a data stewardship role

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will define the scope of its role as a data steward in the emerging data ecosystem in the new Development Strategy of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic for the years 2025 to 2028.

Deadline: Q2 2025

Responsible institutions for improvement sub-action 17.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Slovak government

Improvement sub-action 17.3: Contribute to the national discussion on the implementation of the European data regulation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and MIRRI SR will share information and expert opinions regarding digitalization, data transformation, and data governance. The Statistical Office will contribute by submitting its proposals and comments on the development of significant strategic and conceptual documents such as the Institutional and Coordination Framework for the Digital Transformation of Slovakia, the Digital Decade of Slovakia, and the Legislative Intent for the Law on Electronic Exercise of Public Authority, which partially relate to the field of data transformation.

An important part of the vision is to acquire experts in the field of data governance and data transformation for the needs of the Slovak statistical system and to develop information technologies in the management of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, allowing the use of confidential statistical data in accordance with the provisions established in the Data Governance Act.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 17.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

18. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should further explore the use of new data sources to develop experimental statistics and extend the scope of the production of official statistics. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 10.3 and 2.4)

Current situation:

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic has already successfully invested in the use of new data sources for producing statistics from scanner data, the motorway toll system and mobile network data. It has also gained experience in drafting cooperation agreements with private data holders to experiment with their data to produce official statistics. In addition, the SOSR's good cooperation with the scientific community could enhance its capacity to develop new methods of producing experimental statistics from new sources, as a first step, and to enrich their statistical production with new information in the longer term.

<p>Improvement sub-action 18.1: Analyse the use of new data sources</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will continue the analysis of new data sources to develop experimental statistics.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2025</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 18.2: Improve price statistics based on new data sources</p> <p>Based on new data sources, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will develop the field of price statistics with a positive impact on its official production in terms of quality and efficiency.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic</p>
<p>Improvement sub-action 18.3: Incorporate exchanged microdata into compilation of statistics on intra-EU trade in goods</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will analyse on how to incorporate microdata received from other Member States into the monthly compilation of intra-EU imports of goods.</p>
<p>Deadline: Q4 2027</p>
<p>Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 18.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic</p>

<p>19. Recommendation</p> <p>The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should further improve the service provided to academia by providing researchers with a secure environment for remote access to microdata. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicator 15.4)</p>
<p>Current situation:</p> <p>The provision of microdata (statistical data which does not allow direct identification of the statistical unit) for scientific and research purposes is provided for in the Act on State Statistics.</p> <p>Based on this provision, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic provides access to statistical microdata for scientific purposes to legal entities - research institutions, universities, analytical units - and students through the Research Data Centre. The Research Data Centre allows secure, controlled access to information but limits the use of statistical software to that provided by the SOSR. The number of people who can access the data is also limited because the service is only available at the SOSR headquarters in Bratislava.</p> <p>Although the procedures for accessing microdata work well and are controlled by the SOSR</p>

staff members to prevent any breach of confidentiality, they make access difficult for researchers who wish to log in from outside the SOSR and use their own software.

Improvement sub-action 19.1: Evaluate the possibility to provide remote access to microdata

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will conduct a feasibility study for a potential solution for remote access to microdata. The study will also include a cost benefit analysis (CBA) of remote data access.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 19.2: Request financial resources for establishing remote access to microdata for researchers

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will ask for resources to finance the establishment and operation of a new information technology for "remote access," which will ensure remote access and work with confidential statistical data.

Deadline: Q4 2026

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 19.3: Build a new information system for remote access to microdata

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will develop a new information system under the management of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, allowing remote access to microdata for researchers, requiring the development of an individual infrastructure separated from the existing infrastructure of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic for security reasons. Furthermore, it is necessary to create a new information system for storing and processing data, generating new outputs, and managing access to this data comprehensively, while ensuring the protection of this data against copying or exporting. This also includes purchasing licenses for software products related to data analysis and data management to facilitate work with the available data.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 19.3: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

20. Recommendation

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic should make access to information more user-friendly and useful by redesigning the current dissemination platforms (such as website and DATAcube.), taking into account users' opinions. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.2 and 11.1)

Current situation:

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic disseminates statistical products through various dissemination and communication channels targeting different user groups, including the web portal www.statistics.sk, the DATAcube database, social networks such as Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook, video content through YouTube and open data through the National Open Data Portal. However, some users have difficulties in accessing data. In the latest user satisfaction survey (2022), users suggested that data should be presented in a clearer and more user-friendly way, and the DATAcube database ranked last in satisfaction with the products and services provided by the SOSR.

Improvement sub-action 20.1: Create a new web portal

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will create a new web portal of the office www.statistics.sk to prepare a useful and more user-friendly environment for users of statistical information.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 20.1: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 20.2: Create a new database system

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will create a new database system of the office to prepare a useful and more user-friendly environment for working with the database of statistical information.

Deadline: Q4 2025

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 20.2: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

21. Recommendation

The Other National Authorities reviewed (Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute, Migration Office, Administration of State Material Reserves) should enhance the visibility of the European statistics they produce, foster their dissemination on their website and display a release calendar. (Improvement-related: ES CoP, Indicators 15.1, 15.2 and 6.5)

Current situation:

Access to all outputs produced within the Slovak statistical system, with an indication of the date of their release, not only allows users to better plan their work, but also increases the transparency and credibility of the Slovak statistical system. Although the SOSR publishes a release calendar on its website for the statistics it produces, all European statistics, including those produced by the Other National Authorities developing, producing and disseminating European statistics, a prominent, clearly visible and easily accessible release calendar fostering the dissemination of their statistical data on the Other National Authorities' websites does not exist.

Improvement sub-action 21.1: Publish a release calendar for migration and asylum statistics

As part of the newly prepared website of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, the joint area asylum and migration will be published, including the first release calendar for statistics on asylum and migration.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 21.1: Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 21.2: Update the release calendar for air quality statistics

The Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute will update the first release calendar on its website in both Slovak and English.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 21.2: Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute

Improvement sub-action 21.3: Improve visibility of statistics on energy statistics

The Administration of State Material Reserves of the Slovak Republic will improve the visibility and dissemination of the produced statistics on its website (links to Datacube, Eurostat, JODI World database), which also includes displaying the first release calendar.

Deadline: Q4 2024

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 21.3: The Administration of State Material Reserves of the Slovak Republic

Improvement sub-action 21.4: Publish a product catalogue of official statistics

The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic will contribute to the visibility of the products and related quality reports of the Other National Authorities through the Unified Information System of Statistical Data in a product catalogue that will be published on its website.

Deadline: Q4 2027

Responsible institution for improvement sub-action 21.4: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic