OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews

SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2019

The Development Assistance Committee: Enabling effective development

OECD

OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Slovak Republic 2019

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

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Conducting the peer review

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) conducts periodic reviews of the individual development co-operation efforts of DAC members. The policies and programmes of each member are critically examined approximately once every five years, with six members examined annually. The OECD Development Co-operation Directorate provides analytical support, and develops and maintains, in close consultation with the Committee, the methodology and analytical framework – known as the Reference Guide – within which the peer reviews are undertaken.

The objectives of DAC peer reviews are to improve the quality and effectiveness of development co-operation policies and systems, and to promote good development partnerships for better impact on poverty reduction and sustainable development in developing countries. DAC peer reviews assess the performance of a given member, not just that of its development co-operation agency, and examine both policy and implementation. They take an integrated, system-wide perspective on the development co-operation and humanitarian assistance activities of the member under review.

The peer review is prepared by a team, consisting of representatives of the Secretariat working with officials from two DAC members who are designated as "examiners". The country under review provides a memorandum setting out the main developments in its policies and programmes. Then the Secretariat and the examiners visit the capital to interview officials, parliamentarians, as well as civil society and non-governmental organisations' representatives in the donor country to obtain a first-hand insight into current issues surrounding the development co-operation efforts of the member concerned. Field visits assess how members are implementing the major DAC policies, principles and concerns, and review operations in recipient countries, particularly with regard to poverty reduction, sustainability, gender equality and other aspects of participatory development, and local aid co-ordination. During the field visit, the team meets with representatives of the partner country's administration, parliamentarians, civil society and other development partners.

The Secretariat then prepares a draft report on the member's development co-operation which is the basis for the DAC review meeting at the OECD. At this meeting, senior officials from the member under review respond to questions formulated by the Committee in association with the examiners.

This review – containing both the main findings and recommendations of the Development Assistance Committee and the analytical report of the Secretariat – was prepared with examiners from Finland and Iceland for the peer review of the Slovak Republic on 26 September 2018.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

CETIR	Centre for Experience Transfer in Integration and Reforms
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPA	Country programmable aid
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCHAD	Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid Department
EDF	European Development Fund
EFSD	European Fund for Sustainable Development
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GNI	Gross national income
GOVNET	OECD-DAC governance network
IDA	International Development Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LDCs	Least developed countries
MFEA	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
MoEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MŠVVŠ	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports
MVRO	Non-governmental Development Organisations Platform
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-government organisation
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OOF	Other official flows (non-ODA official development finance)
SAIDC	Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Signs used

EUR	Euro
USD	United States Dollars
( )	Secretariat estimate in whole or part
-	(Nil)
0.0	Negligible
..	Not available
…	Not available separately, but included in total
n.a.	Not applicable
p	Provisional

Slight discrepancies in totals are due to rounding.

Annual Exchange rate: 1 USD = EUR

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
0.7550	0.7192	0.7780	0.7532	0.7537	0.9015	0.9043

The Slovak Republic's aid at a glance

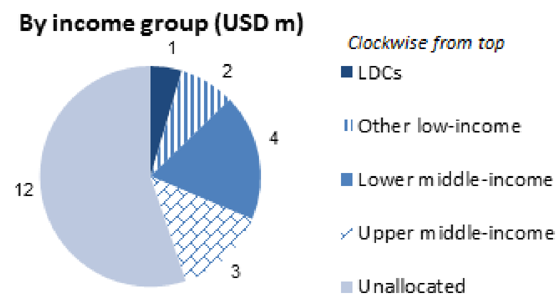
Figure 0.1. Slovak Republic's aid at a glance

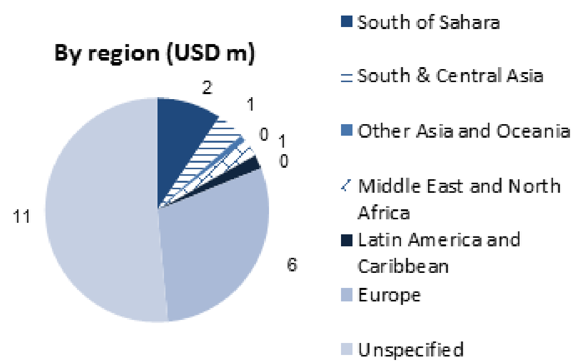
SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Gross Bilateral ODA, 2015-16 average, unless otherwise shown

Net ODA	2015	2016	Change 2015/16
Current (USD m)	85	106	24.8%
Constant (2015 USD m)	85	107	25.5%
In Euro (million)	77	96	25.2%
ODA/GNI	0.10%	0.12%	
Bilateral share	20%	24%	

Top Ten Recipients of Gross ODA (USD million)	
1 Ukraine	2
2 Kenya	2
3 Serbia	1
4 Moldova	1
5 Georgia	0
6 Kosovo	0
7 Albania	0
8 Montenegro	0
9 Haiti	0
10 Afghanistan	0
Memo: Share of gross bilateral ODA	
Top 5 recipients	29%
Top 10 recipients	36%
Top 20 recipients	42%





Source: OECD-DAC; www.oecd.org/dac/stats

Context of the peer review of the Slovak Republic

Political and economic context

The Slovak Republic had a population of 5.4 million and a gross domestic product (GDP) of USD 30 460 per capita in 2016 (OECD, 2017a). It is a parliamentary democracy with a single chamber and a single constituency. A coalition government has been led by the Social Democracy (Smer) party since March 2016, with the next elections due in 2020. A period of political unrest in February/March 2018 followed the murder of a journalist who had been investigating organised crime. The Prime Minister, Interior Minister (also President of Police Force) and Minister of Culture resigned to safeguard political stability.

The Slovak economy continues to perform extremely well both in terms of macroeconomic outcomes and public finances. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth exceeded 3.5% on average in 2015-16 and is projected to stay between 3.5% and 4% in 2017-18 (OECD, 2017b). The budget deficit was well below 2% of GDP in 2016 and public debt was 52% of GDP, far below the OECD average. The government is aiming for a balanced budget by 2020.

The Slovak Republic nonetheless faces challenges to ensure a more sustainable and inclusive society. While the unemployment rate has fallen below 10%, its lowest level in seven years, employment levels are still below the OECD average and are particularly low for women with small children, and disadvantaged groups such as the Roma. Population ageing, which is projected to be one of the sharpest in the OECD, will pose a long-term challenge for fiscal policy and higher living standards (OECD, 2017c).

Development co-operation system

The Slovak Republic established an official development co-operation programme in 2003. In 2007 the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) established the Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC). Finally, the Slovak Republic became a fully-fledged member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2013.

The MFEA is the designated National Co-ordinator of development co-operation, managing one-quarter of the Slovak Republic's official development assistance budget in 2016. The Ministry of Finance managed two-thirds of the ODA budget, with the rest spread across a number of line ministries (MFEA, 2017a). The Coordination Committee of the Slovak Development Co-operation advises the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and is tasked with co-ordinating government and non-government players (MFEA, 2017b). It includes representatives from the state administration, non-government development organisations, academia, private sector, the National Council (parliament), the European Parliament and the media. Due to the timing of the visit in March 2018, the review team was unable to meet any parliamentary bodies.

As this is the first development co-operation peer review of the Slovak Republic, it places strong emphasis on learning and on setting a baseline for Slovak development co-operation in the future. The report nonetheless holds the Slovak Republic to account for the commitments it has made domestically and internationally, as well as for progress against the recommendations of the 2011Special Review (OECD, 2011) and 2015 Mid-term Review (OECD, 2011).

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The DAC's main findings and recommendations

The Slovak Republic is an active global actor and is professionalising its development co-operation efforts

A relatively new member of the international community, the Slovak Republic positions itself strategically in international fora, where its leadership and influence are impressive for its size. It uses its European Union (EU) membership and alliances with like-minded donors to advance its priorities. Its transition experience gives it a particular comparative advantage in countries hoping to join the EU. The government has a comprehensive approach to building global citizenship, including through its formal education system.

The Slovak Republic leverages its membership of global groupings strategically and works with others to advance its key priorities

The Slovak Republic is a committed champion of multilateral action and has demonstrated an impressive and effective leadership role in select international fora such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Human Rights Council and United Nations General Assembly. These efforts help the Slovak Republic to gain visibility and build its capacity and credibility as a global development actor beyond what would normally be possible with a relatively small administration and budget **(Section 1.1)**.

The fresh perspective which the Slovak Republic brings to the table makes it a valuable development co-operation partner. In order to leverage its aid and increase effectiveness, the Slovak Republic has developed solid partnerships with the Višegrad Group and like-minded donors. It contributes to EU dialogue and to joint programming exercises in partner countries, aligning its aid to the EU's broader common strategic objectives **(Section 1.1, 5.1)**.

The Slovak Republic is committed to taking forward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by integrating it in its long-term strategic planning and governance framework. A Development Strategy until 2030 is currently being drafted, which will serve to implement the 2030 Agenda nationally. An updated comprehensive National Investment Plan, containing specific mechanisms to implement this strategy, is also being developed. In addition, its comprehensive approach to building global citizenship, with a particular focus on social cohesion, is embedded in its formal education system **(Section 1.1, 1.3)**.

The Slovak Republic has made strides in putting its development co-operation on a professional footing

Since joining the DAC in 2013, the Slovak Republic has continued to develop its legal framework and institutional structure, which support decision making in the delivery of development co-operation **(Section 2.1, 2.2)**.

The Slovak Republic has been successful in supporting these structures with professional systems and staff in ministries, embassies and its development agency. Its programme is driven by young, dynamic teams that are motivated and committed. The Slovak Republic is open to new approaches for increasing the effectiveness of its development co-operation efforts **(Section 4.3)**.

The Slovak Republic could build on its achievements

The next mid-term strategy could serve as a unifying framework across government

The Slovak Republic's mid-term strategy for development co-operation, 2014-2018, is part of its foreign policy and specifies its geographic and thematic focus. However, as the strategy is mainly identified with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC), it does not benefit from full ownership across government, despite the cross-government consultation as it was developed. The new mid-term strategy will be an opportunity to re-affirm the role of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs as the national co-ordinator of development co-operation, while reflecting the full range of government departments involved in implementing it **(Section 2.1)**.

As the Slovak Republic increases its bilateral budget, a clearer sense of its comparative advantage and what kind of development partner it wishes to become will help guide its plans in priority countries. Its limited resources can then be directed to fewer, more strategic partnerships, including with the private sector. In countries where the Slovak Republic's transition experience is in demand, high-quality technical assistance underpins strong partnerships with governments. There are further opportunities to work with other EU donors sharing transition experience so as to help the Slovak Republic identify or further refine its particular niche in this area **(Section 2.1, 5.2)**.

The streamlined Slovak development co-operation system is nimble and relatively flexible, thanks in part to a light touch on strategies, documentation and guidance. Nonetheless, high turnover of staff and a rapidly evolving policy framework make it important to establish a common understanding of the principles and priorities that underpin decisions across government in a select number of policy areas. In addition, uniform implementation of the strategy across government will require robust appraisal and monitoring tools **(Section 2.1, 6.1)**.

The Slovak Republic has invested considerable effort in statistical and financial reporting systems and adopting the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). Public information on how the aid budget is spent is clear and publicised through the SlovakAid website. It is less easy however for outsiders to understand how funding and partnership decisions are made. This hinders a shared sense of ownership across the development system **(Section 6.3)**.

Recommendations:

(i) **The Slovak Republic should ensure that its next mid-term strategy is recognised as the framework for all development co-operation efforts across government and re-affirms the role of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs as the national co-ordinator of development co-operation.**

(ii) **As an overarching policy statement, the mid-term strategy should:**

- **a)** **make a clear link between the Slovak Republic's development co-operation programme and the government's long-term Development Strategy until 2030, as well as the National Investment Plan**
- **b)** **explain clearly the Slovak Republic's comparative advantage**
- **c)** **identify the principles and standards, including on poverty reduction and cross-cutting issues, to be applied through all channels of Slovak development co-operation.**

(iii) **The Slovak Republic should develop common appraisal, monitoring and reporting tools for use across government in order to ensure consistent implementation of the mid-term strategy.**

A clear and consistent approach to strategy and decision making is needed across all channels

The Slovak Republic is committed to engaging the private sector in development co-operation and has already achieved some successes on which to build. As it develops further mechanisms for engaging the private sector, guidance will be needed to ensure development objectives remain paramount and to make further progress on untying the Slovak Republic's aid **(Section 2.3, 5.1)**.

The Slovak Republic places a heavy emphasis on the multilateral channel – interacting with 50 multilateral organisations through 10 ministries. However, it is not always clear how it decides which multilateral organisations to support and why (**Section 5.1**).

Several of the Slovak Republic's development activities are implemented through non-government organisations (NGOs) in fragile contexts. It will need to build its fragility policy expertise in order to be more systematic in its programme design and monitoring and to ensure better linkages with its international focus on peace and conflict prevention (**Section 5.1, 5.2**).

The Slovak Republic's humanitarian ambitions are revealed by its commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit and its increased budget. However, its humanitarian approach is somewhat outdated. It would benefit from an overarching strategy covering all humanitarian and civil defence resources across government, which identifies when to respond and what assistance to offer. The regional approach that is currently under consideration could help the Slovak Republic to be more focused by linking its various tools and funding instruments in responding to a humanitarian crisis (**Section 7.1, 7.4**).

Recommendations:

(iv) **The Slovak Republic should develop a limited number of strategies – notably for private sector partnerships and humanitarian assistance – to clarify and strengthen the implementation of its policy.**

(v) **The Slovak Republic should strengthen transparency by publishing the criteria it uses to select its multilateral partners.**

(vi) **The Slovak Republic should improve the links between its development co-operation and its foreign policy priorities for promoting peace and security.**

(vii) **The Slovak Republic should review legal requirements that restrict grants to Slovak entities in order to make further progress on untying its ODA in line with its international commitments.**

Staffing capacity could increase further

The Slovak Republic has a relatively small pool of staff working on its development co-operation, supported by improved information and programme management systems. Hiring development diplomats in Nairobi and Chisinau has increased Slovak capacity and credibility, likely to increase further as development expertise rotates between the agency, ministries and embassies. Nonetheless, personnel numbers and skills still need to increase in order to ensure programme quality and manage risk (**Section 4.2, 5.2**).

Recommendation:

(viii) **The Slovak Republic should match the growth in its ODA budget with human resources both in Bratislava and in key embassies.**

The Slovak Republic needs to address some challenges

The ODA budget and proportion of untied aid do not yet meet international commitments

The Slovak Republic has repeatedly committed to devoting 0.33% of its gross national income (GNI) to official development assistance (ODA) by 2030. While its overall ODA growth is positive, there is no set plan for meeting this target, taking GNI growth into account (the ODA/GNI ratio was 0.12% in 2017, according to preliminary figures). In addition, the structure of the ODA budget limits the ability of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, in its role as national co-ordinator, to ensure that all the Slovak Republic's development activities are ODA-eligible, increasingly untied (35.7% of Slovak bilateral aid was tied in 2016) and that ODA volumes are growing at a sufficient pace.

Recommendations:

(ix) **The Slovak Republic should produce a plan for meeting and monitoring its commitment to devote 0.33% of its national income to ODA by 2030.**

Programming and budgeting need to be aligned with the development effectiveness agenda

The Slovak Republic is a member of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation and takes steps to ensure that it works in co-ordination with other donors and discusses its country strategies with host governments. However, it has many stand-alone and broad interventions outside its focus countries, limiting the scope for bilateral relations between governments and local ownership. Further, the distinction between so-called programme and project countries is unclear given the similar nature of interventions in both groups **(Section 2.3)**.

Most interventions are implemented by civil society organisations selected through calls for proposals. As well as resulting in fragmentation and greater transaction costs, this approach limits predictability. Current plans to introduce framework agreements will allow the Slovak Republic to develop a select number of longer-term partnerships to deliver sustainable results and adhere to development effectiveness principles (**Section 5.1, 5.2**).

Recommendations:

(x) **The Slovak Republic should identify countries for prioritising a bilateral relationship and develop country strategies to deliver a set of measurable, time-bound results based on partner country priorities.**

(xi) **The Slovak Republic should develop modalities for providing partners with predictable finance as part of longer-term and strategic partnership arrangements, including for humanitarian work.**

The Slovak Republic's oversight systems are not yet adequate

The Slovak Republic's development co-operation system needs more substantial and independent risk management, audit and oversight functions, resulting in a tendency to focus on control rather than risk management. This is of particular concern as the Slovak Republic embarks on new, riskier financial instruments **(Section 4.2, 5.1)**. A clear system of accountability would strengthen the Slovak Republic's credibility and help it to prepare for managing the risks of delivering a larger programme **(Section 3.1, 4.1)**.

In order to ensure impact, the Slovak Republic needs to start managing for results across its programme. The current focus is on project monitoring rather than development outcomes. The OECD DAC results community can offer valuable guidance and support for this work (**Section 6.3**).

In the field of evaluation, the Slovak Republic has developed a policy, committee and dedicated budget. However, independent evaluation and oversight are lacking, and are not yet identified in a fully strategic manner (**Section 6.2**).

Recommendation:

(xii) **The Slovak Republic should reinforce its systems to allow for external oversight of its programmes and policies, including independent evaluation.**

(xiii) **The Slovak Republic should introduce results-based management to ensure all strategies and interventions pursue a set of stated development results.**

Summary of Recommendations

List of all recommendations featured above:

(i) **The Slovak Republic should ensure that its next mid-term strategy is recognised as the framework for all development co-operation efforts across government and re-affirms the role of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs as the national co-ordinator of development co-operation.**

(ii) **As an overarching policy statement, the mid-term strategy should:**

- **i. make a clear link between the Slovak Republic's development co-operation programme and the government's long-term Development Strategy until 2030, as well as the National Investment Plan**
- **ii. explain clearly the Slovak Republic's comparative advantage**
- **iii. identify the principles and standards, including on poverty reduction and cross-cutting issues, to be applied through all channels of Slovak development co-operation.**

(iii) **The Slovak Republic should develop common appraisal, monitoring and reporting tools for use across government in order to ensure consistent implementation of the mid-term strategy.**

(iv) **The Slovak Republic should develop a limited number of strategies – notably for private sector partnerships and humanitarian assistance – to clarify and strengthen the implementation of its policy.**

(v) **The Slovak Republic should strengthen transparency by publishing the criteria it uses to select its multilateral partners.**

(vi) **The Slovak Republic should improve the links between its development co-operation and its foreign policy priorities for promoting peace and security.**

(vii) **The Slovak Republic should review legal requirements that restrict grants to Slovak entities in order to make further progress on untying its ODA in line with its international commitments.**

(viii) **The Slovak Republic should match the growth in its ODA budget with human resources both in Bratislava and in key embassies.**

(ix) **The Slovak Republic should produce a plan for meeting and monitoring its commitment to devote 0.33% of its national income to ODA by 2030.**

(x) **The Slovak Republic should identify countries for prioritising a bilateral relationship and develop country strategies to deliver a set of measurable, time-bound results based on partner country priorities.**

(xi) **The Slovak Republic should develop modalities for providing partners with predictable finance as part of longer-term and strategic partnership arrangements, including for humanitarian work.**

(xii) **The Slovak Republic should reinforce its systems to allow for external oversight of its programmes and policies, including independent evaluation.**

(xiii) **The Slovak Republic should introduce results-based management to ensure all strategies and interventions pursue a set of stated development results.**

Secretariat's Report

Chapter 1. The Slovak Republic's global efforts for sustainable development

Efforts to support global sustainable development

Peer review indicator: The member plays an active role in contributing to global norms, frameworks and public goods that benefit developing countries

The Slovak Republic is an engaged member of the international community and particularly active on issues of peace and security. Its willingness to be involved in global fora has given the Slovak Republic international visibility and recognition. This nonetheless comes with opportunity costs in a context of limited financial and human resources. The Slovak Republic is taking significant steps towards translating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into a national development plan.

Multilateralism is a hallmark of the Slovak Republic's foreign policy

A relatively young and small country, the Slovak Republic is a proud member of the European Union and the Euro area, and an avid advocate of global partnerships and effective multilateral co-operation. Following independence in 1992, the Slovak Republic joined a large number of international organisations and groupings, in particular the United Nations (1993), OECD (2000), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) (2004) and European Union (2004). It positions itself within regional groups such as the Višegrad Group (V4), an informal co-operation of four Central European countries (Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland); and Slovak Cooperation (S3) - a platform for regional co-operation among Slovakia, Czech Republic and Austria. Within the World Trade Organisation, the Slovak Republic actively participates in accession negotiations, in particular for its strategic trade partners such as Ukraine, Russian Federation, Belarus, Lithuania and Croatia (MFEA, 2017).

The Slovak Republic has been active in hosting and participating in global conferences and events on a wide range of issues. It is now starting to be more selective in deciding where it will have most impact and relevance and undertakes a biennial review of its membership of international organisations (Chapters 2, 5). It has recently taken on an impressive range of formal roles in a phased and considered manner, identifying a set of policy priorities in each case. Examples include:

- successfully laying the groundwork for the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) and its associated instruments during its Presidency of the European Council during the second half of 2016
- making full use of its Minister of Foreign and European Affairs' role as President of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly in 2017-18. While representing the interests of all UN members, the Presidency's priorities mirror Slovak foreign policy on issues of peace and conflict prevention, migration, a sustainable planet, human dignity and modernising the United Nations

- using its membership of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from 2010-12, with a chairing role in 2012, to enhance ECOSOC's role in global sustainable development, particularly through engaging more with international finance institutions, civil society, youth, business and the academic community.

In 2019, the Slovak Republic will chair the Organisation for Security Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the OECD Ministerial Council.

These roles nonetheless have opportunity costs in terms of financial and human resources and, in the context of a single budget for the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA), might affect the growth of its official development assistance (ODA) budget (Chapter 3). It is thus important for the Slovak Republic to be careful not to over-stretch its limited resources in pursuing its global leadership ambitions.

Peace and security are political priorities, though not all its actions are coherent

Three out of seven of the Slovak Republic's foreign and European policy priorities concern elements of peace and security (MFEA, 2015). In light of this, the Slovak Republic is an engaged member of OSCE and NATO and actively participates in EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and UN Peacekeeping operations.[1] It is a permanent Co-Chair of the UN Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform (SSR) and recently signed up to the new EU Structured Cooperation initiative on defence, known as PESCO. In addition, the MFEA collaborates with non-government organisations (NGOs) on foreign and security policy, organising annual events such as the Globsec Security Conference and the Tatra Summit.

However, the high political priority given to peace and security is not consistent across all of the Slovak Republic's international engagements. As noted in Chapter 2, very little development co-operation funding is directed to stabilisation or peacebuilding activities in fragile states.

The 2030 Agenda is being converted into a national development plan, but effective co-ordination will require sustained leadership and political support

Like other DAC members, the Slovak Republic took part in negotiations on the 2030 Agenda and has taken steps to plan for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): in March 2016, the government adopted a resolution on the "Implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development". In 2017, Slovakia ranked 23rd out of 157 countries covered by the 2017 SDG Index and Dashboards report, with an SDG Index score of 76.9, compared to an OECD average of 77.7 (Sachs et al., 2017). In April 2018, a public consultation was underway to identify six national priorities for implementing the 2030 Agenda. The Slovak Republic is currently on track to achieve 13 of the 17 goals, with particular progress on environmental issues and poverty reduction. Performance in areas such as gender equality and infrastructure is weaker than the OECD average (OECD, 2017a). A full report on the Slovak Republic's progress towards the SDG targets is planned for late 2019.

While the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatisation is responsible for overall implementation, MFEA is responsible for co-ordinating the international aspects (MFEA, 2017). The government has committed to presenting a national voluntary review of the SDGs to the UN high level political forum in July 2018. This will require input across government and should help the ongoing effort to build national awareness and co-ordination. It is not yet evident whether this process has broad political support or an adequate governance structure. This is despite participation by President Andrej Kiska in a high-level thematic debate in New York in April 2016 on achieving the SDGs (MFEA, 2016). A government council to drive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with membership at ministerial level, met for the first time in December 2017.

The Slovak Republic is participating in an OECD pilot project[2] to support strategic planning and preparations for a National Investment Plan, intended to translate the 2030 Agenda into a national development strategy. The pilot covers institutional mechanisms, strategic foresight and measurement as well as priority setting and a financing framework for the National Investment Plan. A number of these elements were raised in the 2015 OECD public governance review, and in particular the need for an appropriate institutional framework within central government for strategic planning (OECD, 2015).

Policy coherence for development

Peer review indicator: Domestic policies support or do not harm developing countries

While Slovak ministries have demonstrated a solid understanding of policy coherence for development and identified a number of relevant issues, no plan has been put in place to assess and remedy issues of incoherence. The upcoming mid-term strategy for development co-operation provides an opportunity to correct this.

Early progress on policy coherence has run aground

In 2014, a Working Group on Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) was created within the Coordination Committee of the Slovak Development Cooperation, which is an advisory body to the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. This group got off to a positive start and a number of ministries identified potential issues of incoherence in areas of national or EU competence – including trade, export of weapons to conflict areas, agriculture subsidies and climate change. This demonstrated good understanding of policy coherence for development and a degree of political support across government (MFEA, 2017; CONCORD, 2015). However, in its peer review memorandum, the MFEA identified the need for a national strategy on policy coherence, noting that the Coordination Committee has since run aground and there has been little follow-up (MFEA, 2017). Rather than developing a stand-alone strategy, the next mid-term strategy for development co-operation (see Chapter 2) could include a limited number of priority areas and a clear monitoring and reporting framework. This would allow the Coordination Committee to track the impact of relevant European or national policies on developing countries. A renewed PCD Working Group could also be linked to the 2030 Agenda co-ordination structures once they gain momentum.

Global reports identify several priority policy coherence issues

The 2017 Commitment to Development Index – which considers aid, finance, technology, environment, trade, security, and migration – ranks the Slovak Republic 21st out of 27 countries. The country performs best on environment and security, with its contributions to international peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions noted as above average. It scores less well on trade and technology due to trade barriers and low investment. Its scores on migration are also low because the Slovak Republic welcomes relatively few migrants, students, asylum-seekers and refugees from developing countries (CGD, 2017). Concerns about climate action and innovation are echoed in the SDG Index as well as in recent analysis of the negative spill over effects of poor SDG performance (Sachs et al., 2017), which similarly ranks the Slovak Republic 23rd out of 157 countries.

In relation to taxation, the Slovak government expanded its "Action plan to combat tax fraud" in 2015 to include 30 additional measures. In 2017, an additional action plan to fight tax evasion was adopted (OECD, 2016). Progress has also been noted in relation to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, adopted in 1997 and ratified and implemented by the Slovak Republic from 1999. The Slovak Republic acted upon shortcomings noted by the Anti-bribery Working Group over the period 2003-14 and updated its Law on the Criminal Liability of Legal Persons (CCL) to largely conform to the standards of the convention. However, this is a new law that has yet to be tested by the courts (OECD, 2017b). The 2017 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranks the Slovak Republic 54th out of 180 countries, well below the OECD average (TI, 2017).

Global awareness

Peer review indicator: The member promotes whole-of-society contributions to sustainable development

The Slovak Republic has a comprehensive approach to global awareness and building global citizenship, which includes integrating these themes into the formal education system. There is a broad understanding of what constitutes global citizenship, with an emphasis on tolerance, diversity and understanding the root causes of violent extremism.

The Slovak Republic understands global citizenship well, with a number of initiatives building global values across society

Global education has been regarded as an integral part of the Slovak Republic's development co-operation from the outset and a total budget of approximately EUR 1 million was invested in this area from 2005 to 2011. A National Strategy for Global Education from 2012 to 2016 shaped initiatives across a number of ministries, notably Foreign and European Affairs and Education (GSR, 2012). The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports leads on formal education, while MFEA leads on informal education. The scope of global education is broad with a focus on diversity, integration of migrants, religious tolerance, sustainable development and violent extremism. This broad scope and the mainstreaming of global issues and the challenges of developing countries at all levels of the Slovak education system is considered good practice.

Complementary work by the Ministry of Environment focuses on climate change and environmental sustainability, including through an innovative funding mechanism drawing on private sector resources.

The Global Education Network Europe (GENE) produced a national report in 2013 on the Slovak Republic's global education system and performance, which was generally positive. Recommendations included increased funding; anchoring the work more solidly in school curricula; compulsory continued professional development for teachers; and updating the national forum and definition of global education (GENE, 2013). This area of work has become more important and relevant in the light of negative public attitudes to illegal migration and there is further scope to bring together the work of the three ministries in an updated strategy.

Government and NGO efforts to increase public awareness and development education are not yet reflected in public opinion

Since 2005, MFEA in conjunction with the Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC) have supported the activities of Slovak organisations working in development education and building public awareness of development co-operation. The 2014-2018 mid-term strategy includes plans to build public support for SlovakAid's activities and to integrate development issues into school plans and curricula (MFEA, 2013). In spite of these efforts, awareness of the SDGs in Slovakia is below the EU average (27% vs. 36%). More concerning is that Slovak respondents are less positive about development aid than Europeans in general, and a high proportion do not consider development co-operation a tool to discourage irregular migration (EC, 2015). The Slovak Republic has launched a series of media activities to reverse this trend.

Notes

[1] The Slovak Republic's military and civilian experts have participated in the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) in Ukraine, the European Union Force (EUFOR) Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Police mission (EUPOL) in Afghanistan, the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in Georgia, the European Rule of Law mission (EULEX) Kosovo, the European Union Border Assistance mission (EUBAM) in Moldova and Ukraine, EUPOL in Palestinian territories, and the European Union training Mission (EUTM) in Mali. Slovakia has participated in and completed 24 missions with personnel of up to 10 000 under the mandates of the UN, NATO, the EU and the OSCE, and is currently taking part in another five missions (Goda, 2015).

[2] OECD pilot projects on SDG-aligned national strategies are also underway with Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

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Chapter 2. The Slovak Republic's policy vision and framework

Framework

> **Peer review indicator: Clear policy vision aligned with the 2030 Agenda based on member's strengths**
>
> *Development co-operation is well integrated into the Slovak Republic's foreign policy. The Mid-Term Strategy 2014-2018 spells out clearly development co-operation priorities and objectives to reduce poverty and support human development. In preparing its new mid-term strategy, the Slovak Republic will need to involve all relevant ministries more fully and build a common vision for its development co-operation that is integrated within the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Doing so will also help the Slovak Republic to identify its comparative advantage in its partner countries, drawing on its own transition experience.*

A cross-government vision is yet to emerge

The Slovak Republic's development co-operation derives from the 2007 Act on Development Cooperation and on Amendment to Certain Acts, revised in 2015 (GSR, 2015). The act legislates on the principles and sets the basis for the Slovak Republic's development co-operation, whereas its vision and scope are defined in the Mid-term Strategy for Development Cooperation of the Slovak Republic for 2014-2018 (MFEA, 2013). This states that, in engaging in development co-operation, the Slovak Republic wants to "contribute to sustainable development, mainly via reducing poverty, strengthening democracy and good governance" (MFEA, 2013).

The mid-term strategy provides clear guidelines for the MFEA and the Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC) in programming aid. Other ministries, such as the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports also engage in bilateral development co-operation and humanitarian aid. However, their contribution is not fully reflected in the mid-term strategy. As a result, the sum of all Slovak development activities does not add up to a single vision for development co-operation. In order to remedy this situation, the MFEA has launched a broad consultative process involving all relevant ministries, NGOs, private sector and other relevant stakeholders, with a view to preparing the next mid-term strategy for development co-operation. The preparation of the government's National Investment Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda should also be a good opportunity to involve all relevant ministries and build ownership of the next mid-term strategy for Slovak development co-operation, as well as to reflect on the Slovak Republic's overall vision and comparative advantage.

The Slovak Republic's comparative advantage may need to evolve

The Slovak Republic, like many countries in Central and Eastern Europe, sees its comparative advantage in sharing its specific experience and skills in transforming its public administration during the transition to a democratic market economy. Building upon its Centre for Experience Transfer in Integration and Reforms (CETIR) programme and its partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Chapter 5), the Slovak Republic has developed a set of instruments for transforming the state administration, making the most of its expertise and its government-to-government bilateral relations. Other DAC members in Europe with a similar transition experience share the same views on the added value of their development co-operation. Members of the Višegrad Group, for example, could therefore co-ordinate their support to public administration transformation when they have the same partner countries. As this transition experience becomes less relevant in the future, the Slovak Republic will have to find a new niche in which it can add value, notably to least developed countries (LDCs).

Principles and guidance

Peer review indicator: Policy guidance sets out a clear and comprehensive approach, including to poverty and fragility

The Slovak Republic's system is lean and constructed around broad priorities that focus on the poorest and the most vulnerable. Cross-cutting issues are integrated in all country strategies. However, not all cross-cutting issues are systematically reflected in programming or reporting, making it difficult for the Slovak Republic to measure progress. Policy and guidance on a selected number of priorities would help the Slovak Republic to clarify its objectives and ensure that its aid is effective, including in fragile states.

A certain amount of new guidance is needed

The Slovak Republic's development co-operation system is nimble and relatively flexible, thanks in part to a light touch on strategies, documentation and guidance. Nonetheless, high staff turnover and a rapidly evolving policy framework make it particularly important to establish a shared understanding of the principles and priorities that underpin decisions across government in a select number of policy areas. The Mid Term Strategy for 2014-2018 committed the Slovak Republic to fighting poverty in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and sustainable development (MFEA, 2013). This commitment was reflected in broad priority sectors – mainly social sectors such as education and healthcare, water and sanitation – that focus on the poorest and the most vulnerable. With the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals now setting the scene, the Slovak Republic is aware that additional policy and guidance is needed.

As noted in the DAC special review and mid-term review of the Slovak Republic (OECD, 2011 and 2013), a number of strategies have been planned but are still outstanding. The new mid-term strategy will need to clarify the Slovak Republic's objectives for poverty reduction and cross-cutting issues; and its priorities in areas such as multilateral aid, policy coherence for development and its approach to fragility, so that the strategy can be implemented coherently through all development co-operation channels. Stand-alone policies, such as for humanitarian aid, and an updated policy on engaging with the private sector in development co-operation, would also help staff in Bratislava and the embassies develop effective programmes for these policy priorities. The Slovak Republic needs to be realistic about how many strategy documents are required to ensure that its aid is effective, and in turn should formulate a limited number of strategies as a matter of priority.

The Slovak Republic could be more strategic in fragile states

Up until the Syria crisis, the Slovak Republic's response to crises mainly took the form of humanitarian assistance. As noted in Chapter 1, peace and security are political priorities for the Slovak Republic. Moreover, in 2016 50% of the Slovak Republic's bilateral development co-operation went to fragile and crisis-affected states.[1] However, the share of ODA allocated to conflict, peace and security remains low.[2] As detailed in Chapter 5, the Slovak Republic could change how it uses micro-grants to become a more strategic actor in fragile contexts, notably to prevent conflict at community level, where contextual understanding and a swift response can matter more than a large financial contribution. There is scope for the Slovak Republic to be more strategic in the fragile states in which it has an embassy, combining its multilateral contributions with conflict-sensitive bilateral aid in those contexts. This would require the Slovak Republic to make fragility a cross cutting issue in those particular countries and to review how its support can make a meaningful contribution to one of its foreign policy priorities.

Cross-cutting issues could be better integrated

Four broad cross-cutting issues are part of the mid-term strategy 2014-2018:

1. environmental protection and climate change
2. gender equality
3. good governance
4. human rights and human dignity.

Taking advantage of its role in multilateral institutions (Chapter 1), and notably during the 2016 Slovak EU Presidency, the Slovak Republic has focused on climate change adaptation, for example securing consensus on the ratification of the Paris Agreement at EU level at the 2016 Bratislava Summit. The Slovak Republic has also shown real commitment to gender equality, with national strategies and programmes in place to combat discrimination domestically (EP, 2017). Gender equality was also high on the agenda during the Slovak EU Presidency, namely in the Working Party on Humanitarian and Food Aid, where elimination of gender based violence in emergencies was one of the national priorities.

These cross-cutting issues are integrated into all country strategies. However, not all of them are systematically reflected in programming or reporting, making it difficult for the Slovak Republic to measure progress in these four areas. For example, the Slovak Republic is an advocate of women's empowerment and takes Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality seriously: the SAIDC supports development projects which are gender sensitive and are screened by a gender focal point. However, the capacity of this focal point is stretched and the agency does not monitor whether projects have a sustainable impact on gender equality. In order to make efforts to mainstream gender more systematic and coherent, the MFEA has started to elaborate its first strategy for gender equality and women's empowerment within the context of development co-operation. The Slovak Republic could build on solid work undertaken by other similar-sized donors, and could learn from the expertise and knowledge of its multilateral partners in this field.

Human rights and human dignity is another cross-cutting issue for the Slovak Republic, reflected in some of its technical assistance projects in the Western Balkans and Eastern partnership. However, the Slovak Republic also contributes to EU instruments that have been associated with some human rights concerns, such as its financial contribution to the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy (OHCHR, 2017) and to the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (AI, 2017). Cross-cutting issues can strengthen the overall coherence of the Slovak Republic's development co-operation, but this will require a thorough review, and greater guidance and capacity to follow through on the priority given to those areas (Chapter 3).

Basis for decision making

Peer review indicator: Policy provides sufficient guidance for decisions on channels and engagements

The Slovak Republic's rationale and criteria for selecting partner countries and sectors are based on its perceived comparative advantage and on pragmatic considerations of development opportunities that can be effectively seized by individual ministries. The result is a less consistent development co-operation approach, in which the reasons for differences in partnership selection and approaches between countries are unclear. The broad priorities in the current strategy do not help the Slovak Republic decide on the best type of partnership for achieving its objectives. Clarifying its objectives, for example in fragile contexts, could help the Slovak Republic choose its instruments more strategically.

The differences in partner country categories remain unclear

The Slovak Republic bases its partnerships on its perceived comparative advantage, notably in its immediate neighbourhood; but also on the history of engagement by its civil society, as in Kenya or South Sudan; or by its armed forces, as in Afghanistan. Following the DAC special review (OECD, 2011), the Slovak Republic gave its 2014-2018 mid-term strategy for development co-operation a limited geographical focus, with partner countries divided into three main categories:

1. Three programme countries (Afghanistan, Kenya, Moldova)
2. Six project countries (Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Ukraine)
3. One country with exceptional humanitarian and development needs (South Sudan).

The Middle East was added as a priority region in 2016, and rapidly took up 19% of the Slovak Republic's total ODA, while ODA to programme and partner countries has been decreasing.[3]

A review of the Slovak Republic's engagement in these countries does not however reveal a clear difference between the projects implemented in these different types of partner countries. The nature of projects and activities in the three programme countries and six project countries is similar. Further, the priority sectors in the three programme countries are often too broad for the Slovak Republic to have a durable impact. Some project countries receive more comprehensive support than some programme countries, with a deeper government-to-government relationship, blurring the concrete difference between the types of country partnerships. It will be important for the Slovak Republic to review the nature of its partnerships according to the depth of its engagement with the host government. Doing so will allow the Slovak Republic to better calibrate its programming and engage the various Slovak ministries in a more coherent manner.

Selecting partner countries could be a cross-government exercise

The Slovak Republic's mid-term strategy for 2014-2018 has a clear geographic and thematic focus. It is, however, mainly identified with the MFEA and the SAIDC. Other ministries provide ODA based on different criteria and according to their own country focus, which does not always coincide with the MFEA's priorities. For example, in 2016 the Ministry of Finance had activities in only one of the MFEA's programme countries (MFEA, 2017).[4] Given its limited resources, the Slovak Republic needs to rationalise its bilateral strategy further by focusing on the geographic priorities agreed at national level. A well-defined set of priority countries and sectors that applies to all ministries would clarify how decisions are made. As noted above, a common approach by all ministries and a set of guidance on priority sectors, such as on engaging with the private sector, would also link individual projects more coherently. The upcoming regional approach to fragile or crisis contexts (Chapter 5) is an opportunity for the Slovak Republic to focus its development co-operation effort where its ministries can clearly add value and maximise the impact of interventions.

More focused objectives can help decision making

The Slovak Republic's mid-term strategy for 2014-2018 describes clearly the different instruments available for programming its development co-operation, allowing it to decide which programmes it wants to use to achieve its objectives. The mid-term strategy is built around seven priority sectors: (1) education, (2) healthcare, (3) good governance and building of civil society, (4) agriculture and forestry, (5) water and sanitation, (6) energy, and (7) support to a market environment (MFEA, 2013).

With a limited budget, however, such broad priorities can result in fragmented development co-operation and incoherent projects. Moreover, opening calls for tenders to a wide range of different actors, such as NGOs, private sector and government bodies alike, prevents the Slovak Republic from deciding on and keeping control of the results that can be achieved through each type of partner. The sharing of its expertise and transition experience, a demand-driven activity by default, is a good example of the way the Slovak Republic can focus its aid on very specific sectors.

Notes

[1] Including Ukraine, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. Creditor Reporting System, accessed 09 April 2018, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1

[2] In 2016, the Slovak Republic reported to the Creditor Reporting System allocating 4.8% of its ODA to conflict, peace and stability (Chapter 3). See http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1, accessed 03 May 2018.

[3] Creditor Reporting System. See http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1, accessed 03 May 2018.

[4] In 2016, the Ministry of Finance reported bilateral co-operation with seven countries. Amongst these, only Ukraine is a SAIDC programme country. Conversely, a project country like Montenegro received support from the MFEA, the SAIDC, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Interior. Creditor Reporting System, consulted 12 April 2018, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1

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Chapter 3. The Slovak Republic's financing for development

Overall ODA volume

Peer review indicator: The member makes every effort to meet domestic and international ODA targets

The Slovak Republic's official development assistance (ODA) has increased at a slow pace since it joined the OECD Development Assistance Committee. It aims to increase its ODA to reach the target of 0.33% of gross national income (GNI) by 2030, but has yet to develop a credible plan for doing so. The Slovak Republic's statistical reporting conforms to OECD guidelines; however, it does not report on other official flows or private flows.

ODA is growing, but a plan is needed for boosting it

In 2016, the Slovak Republic provided USD 106 million in net ODA. This was a rise of 26.8% in real terms over 2015, explained by increases in the bilateral budget. Preliminary data for 2017 of USD 110 million of net ODA suggests this positive trajectory is continuing. This represents 0.12% of GNI for 2016 and 2017. This makes the Slovak Republic the 29th largest DAC provider in terms of ODA as a percentage of GNI in 2016, the 28th according to 2017 preliminary figures, and 27th by volume in 2016 and 2017, out of 30 members (Annex A, Figure A.6; OECD, 2016). The Slovak Republic aims at allocating 0.33% of its GNI as ODA by 2030. Assuming a GNI growth of 3% per annum over 2018-2030, this would mean increasing the total ODA budget by over 10%. Achieving this objective will require taking GNI growth into account and a firm commitment and credible plan that are shared across government.

The Slovak Republic allocates a high share of its total ODA to multilateral organisations (Figure and Table 3.1). The European Union institutions receive the lion's share (88% of gross multilateral disbursements in 2016). As the Slovak Republic is seeking to increase the bilateral share of its ODA, it will need to ensure that its bilateral budget outstrips GNI growth in order to avoid assessed contributions to the EU absorbing most of the increase.

The Slovak Republic has significantly increased the untied share of its bilateral ODA, from 47.5% in 2015 to 64.3% in 2016. However, it still performed considerably below the 81.2% DAC average in 2016. To meet its commitments, the Slovak Republic needs to step up its efforts to further untie its aid (OECD, 2018).

Table 3.1. The Slovak Republic's total, bilateral and multilateral ODA, 2008-2017

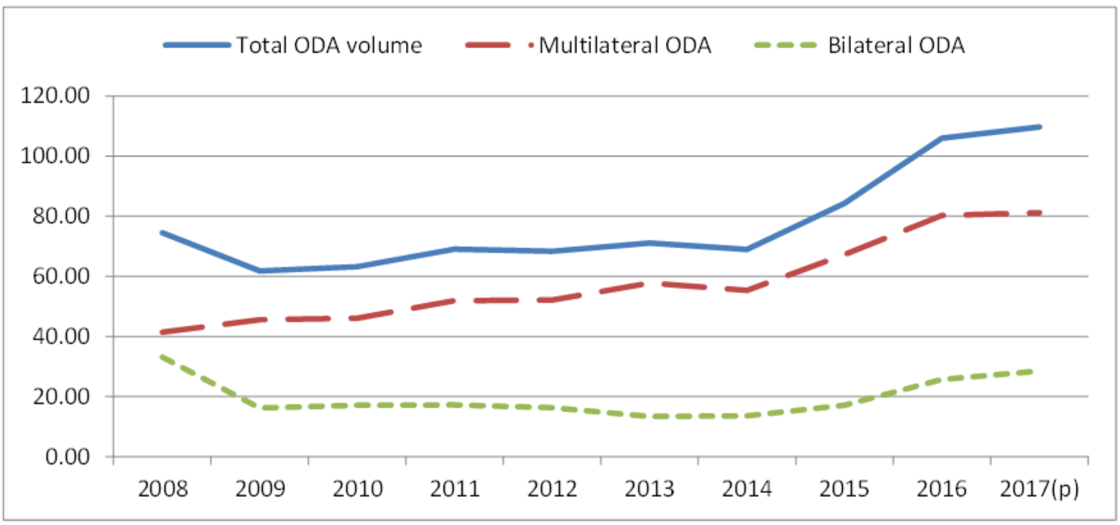
Net disbursements, constant prices (USD 2016)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017(p)
Total ODA volume	74.50	61.77	63.18	69.10	68.38	71.11	68.94	84.32	106.01	109.73(p)
Multilateral ODA (in USD million)	55.55%	73.69%	72.95%	75.08%	76.21%	81.20%	80.32%	79.74%	75.76%	74.00%(p)
Bilateral ODA (in USD million)	44.44%	26.31%	27.05%	24.91%	23.78%	18.79%	19.68%	20.26%	24.24%	26.00%(p)

Source: OECD (2018), "Total flows by donor'', OECD International Development Statistics (database)

Figure 3.1. Trends in the Slovak Republic's ODA flows, 2008-2017(p)

USD million, constant prices (USD 2016)



Source: OECD (2018), "Detailed aid statistics: Official and private flows'', *OECD International Development Statistics* (database), http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00072-en (accessed on 11 April 2018).

Reporting conforms to OECD rules, but data are missing

The Slovak Republic's statistical reporting to the DAC mostly conforms to the DAC's ODA rules, with improvements in timeliness and quality of reporting (tying status, purpose-codes) required, giving the country a "fair" reporting score (OECD, 2017b). The Slovak Republic is also encouraged to report to the DAC on other sources of development finance, such as private flows and export credits.

Bilateral ODA allocations

Peer review indicator: Aid is allocated according to the statement of intent and international commitments

The Slovak Republic allocates most of its bilateral aid according to geographical and sectoral priorities. However, consisting mainly of small grants spread across many short-term interventions, Slovak bilateral ODA is fragmented. Moving to a more integrated programme, notably in least-developed countries, could help the Slovak Republic to target its aid to where it can add the most value.

Aid modalities will need to evolve with new geographic priorities

The Slovak Republic is not focusing its aid on the least developed countries (LDCs); they received only 11% of its allocable bilateral aid in 2016, well below the DAC average of 37%. The highest share of the Slovak Republic's gross bilateral aid allocable by income went to lower middle-income countries in 2016 (36%), followed by upper middle-income countries (32%) (Annex A, Figure A.3). This reflects the Slovak Republic's focus on economic and societal transition in the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe. As noted in Chapter 2, most LDCs do not have the same political and economic transition trajectory as the Slovak Republic. As it aims to increase its contributions to LDCs within the timeframe of its future mid-term strategy, the Slovak Republic should adapt its comparative advantage. This will require it to adjust its modalities of support and develop thematic and geographical priorities adapted to LDCs.

In 2016, 24% of the Slovak Republic's total ODA was provided bilaterally, amounting to USD 25.7 million. The Slovak Republic programmed 36.3% (USD 9 million) of its bilateral ODA at partner country level, down from 48% in 2015, which was very close to the DAC average of 48.8% (OECD, 2017c). In 2015-16, while the Slovak Republic's 10 priority countries were among its top 15 recipients, the three programme countries - Afghanistan, Kenya and Moldova – received only 1%, 8%, and 3% respectively of gross bilateral disbursements. This distribution blurs the distinction between programme and project countries. Moreover, some countries that are not amongst the 10 priority countries also receive significant funds. For example, in 2016 Serbia was the third largest recipient of Slovak bilateral ODA, mainly due to its high scholarship budget managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports (Annex A, Figure A.4).[1]

Sectoral priorities are reflected in ODA allocations, but cross-cutting issues remain underfunded

The Slovak Republic has identified seven sectoral priorities[2] in its Medium-Term Strategy for Development Co-operation for 2014-2018. Allocations are aligned with these broad priorities. Because the Slovak Republic strives to capitalise on its expertise in economic transition, most of its bilateral aid focuses on government and civil society, and education (25% and 24% of total allocable bilateral commitments respectively in 2015-16). Other social services receive less attention, such as water supply and sanitation (3%), and health (5%) (Annex A, Figure A.5).

Although gender and environment are cross-cutting issues for the Slovak Republic, financial reporting does not suggest that these priorities are reflected adequately in its bilateral programme. In 2015-16, Slovak support to gender equality represented 21% of total allocable bilateral aid. Although that represents a substantial increase from the 5% share in 2013-14, only 6% included gender as a significant objective (equal to USD 0.093 million). The Slovak Republic's bilateral aid committed to the environment was USD 1.9 million in 2015-16, representing 10% of its total bilateral ODA commitments (Annex A, Figure A.5).

The Slovak Republic implements a large number of short-term project-type interventions consisting of very limited volumes spread across broad sectors. In 2016 there were 85 such interventions, with an average grant size of USD 0.13 million. The result is a fragmented portfolio. The biggest share (41%) of the Slovak Republic's country programmable aid (CPA) was made up of project-type interventions, followed by contributions to pooled programmes and funds (27%), and technical assistance (18%). In addition, the largest part of Slovak bilateral ODA went to other/unallocated items[3] (44%); in-donor country refugee costs received 6% (USD 1.6 million). In 2016, USD 1.83 million was spent on scholarships and training in the Slovak Republic, provided by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports. This represented a significant share of bilateral aid (7.1%, down from 7.7% in 2015). In addition, in 2015 the MFEA provided funds to a Višegrad Scholarship Programme in 10 countries[4] for a total amount of USD 0.14 million. The Slovak Republic has made progress in reducing its administrative costs from 10% to 7% of bilateral aid between 2015 and 2016 (Annex A, Figure A.2).

The multi-bi channel is heavily used

The Slovak Republic channelled USD 8.5 million as bilateral aid through multilateral organisations in 2016 (USD 1.01 million through UN agencies, USD 7.45 through EU institutions, and USD 0.06 through other multilateral institutions such as the OECD and NATO). A further USD 6.2 million were channelled through NGOs and civil society organisations; USD 6.9 million through the public sector; USD 2.3 million through teaching institutions, research institutes or think-tanks; and USD 1.1 million through private sector institutions. No funding is currently channelled through partner governments.

Multilateral ODA allocations

Peer review indicator: The member uses the multilateral aid channel effectively

The Slovak Republic uses the multilateral channel to fulfil its mandatory assessed contributions, mainly to the EU. As a country with a limited ODA budget, the Slovak Republic pays great attention to its multilateral partnerships. It also increasingly provides voluntary contributions to some UN agencies and multilateral development banks as a way of pursuing its strategic priorities, such as migration management.

Although its relative share in total ODA has been decreasing since 2014, multilateral aid still represents the most important part of Slovak ODA. In 2016, the Slovak Republic's total funding of the multilateral system amounted to USD 80.31 million, representing 75.8% of its total net ODA at current prices.

Contributions to the EU make up most of the Slovak Republic's multilateral ODA

Most of the Slovak Republic's multilateral ODA is made up of mandatory contributions to the EU's budget; this share is increasing with Slovak economic growth, and voluntary contribution to the European Development Fund (EDF). Taken together, the EU institutions represented 88% of the Slovak Republic's gross multilateral disbursements in 2016, rising from USD 53 million in 2015 to USD 70.3 million in 2016. As it represents such a significant part of ODA, great attention is paid to the evolution of the EU's development policies. The Slovak Republic is active in relevant committees, such as the European Council Working Party on Development Co-operation (CODEV) and the European Council Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA). It also amplifies its voice by participating in joint donor positions, for example through the Višegrad Group (see Chapter 1 and Box 5.1).

Contributions to the UN and other multilateral banks are increasing

The Slovak Republic provides both assessed and voluntary contributions to UN specialised agencies, programmes and funds, amounting to 8% of its gross multilateral ODA in 2016. Its total core contributions to the UN system are increasing, from USD 4.02 million in 2015 to USD 6.40 million in 2016. Earmarked contributions to specific projects and funds were USD 2.85 million. The Slovak Republic has a long-term relationship with the UNDP, which it views as a key partner, and to which it started to provide core contributions in 2017.

In 2016 the Slovak Republic provided USD 3.5 million (4%) as core contributions to other multilateral organisations. This included the International Organisation for Migration, which is an increasingly strategic partner during the migration crisis. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe was also allocated 19% (USD 0.67 million) of the Slovak Republic's multilateral ODA, in line with its focus on peace and security and on Eastern Europe. This reflects how the Slovak Republic is paying greater attention to aid effectiveness and alignment with its strategic priorities, following the biannual performance assessment started in 2016 (Chapters 5 and 6).

The World Bank Group received USD 9.7 million of Slovak aid in 2015 (14% of its gross multilateral disbursements) as part of the 18th replenishment contribution to the International Development Association (IDA). During the peer review meetings, the Slovak Republic indicated its intention to contribute to the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund to help developing countries build resilience and adapt to climate change.[5]

Finally, the Slovak Republic reported to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) USD 1.23 million as climate-specific finance to developing countries in 2014 (latest data available). This was down from USD 1.52 million in 2013, USD 4.31 million in 2012, and USD 2.12 million in 2011 (UNFCCC, 2016).

Financing for development

Peer review indicator: The member promotes and catalyses development finance additional to ODA

The Slovak Republic encourages other development actors, such as the EU, to mobilise additional development finance other than ODA. Its Export Credit Agency EXIMBANKA SR has developed a concessional loans scheme. The Slovak Republic is committed to collaborating with the private sector; at present, this is implemented through ODA grants to help companies enter developing country markets.

The Slovak Republic is considering how ODA might serve as a catalyst for private investment

The Slovak Republic recognises the importance of using financial sources other than ODA to support development in partner countries and is making efforts in piloting alternative finance mechanisms to attract additional development funding from private resources. However, the Slovak Republic itself provides no other development finance additional to ODA and its partnerships with the private sector consist of ODA grants to help private companies enter developing country markets. Things are changing, however: a specific paragraph in the Development Assistance Law dedicated to Concessional Loans is valid since 2016 but further legislative updates are still necessary before the Slovak Republic´s Export Credit Agency, EXIMBANKA SR, can launch its first project under the concessional loan scheme (Chapter 5). In addition, Slovakia together with other V4 countries is making efforts to involve the private sector in projects financed by the IFC.

Notes

[1] The 2014-2018 mid-term strategy identifies three partner countries – Afghanistan, Kenya, and Moldova (the latter became a programme country in 2014) – and six projects countries – Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Georgia, Kosovo, and Ukraine. Finally, South Sudan and the Syrian Region (since 2016) are considered as countries with exceptional humanitarian and development needs (MFEA, 2017).

[2] Those are: (1) education, (2) healthcare, (3) good governance and building of civil society, (4) agriculture and forestry, (5) water and sanitation, (6) energy, (7) support of market environment (MFEA, 2013).

[3] Fund for Africa; the EU facility for refugees in Turkey; the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis – MADAD; the UNDP Crisis, Prevention and Recovery Thematic Trust Fund; and a voluntary financial contribution to support the activities of the OECD DAC; core support to NGOs, other private bodies, PPPs and research institutes, such as assessed contributions to ISTA for 2017 and a contribution to ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross); financial contributions to project-type interventions, such as the development co-operation projects implemented by the Višegrad Fund; and contributions for development awareness initiatives (CRS dataset).

[4] Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine.

[5] The Adaptation Fund finances projects and programmes that help vulnerable communities in developing countries adapt to climate change. Initiatives are based on country needs, views and priorities. See more at https://www.adaptation-fund.org/about/

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Chapter 4. The Slovak Republic's structure and systems

Authority, mandate and co-ordination

Peer review indicator: Responsibility for development co-operation is clearly defined, with the capacity to make a positive contribution to sustainable development outcomes

The mandate and governance of each ministry involved in Slovak development co-operation is relatively clear, with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) clearly identified as the National Co-ordinator. In practice, however, each ministry operates independently and the MFEA has limited tools to carry out its co-ordination role. This leaves no clear point of accountability for delivering the mid-term strategy, which reduces learning among ministries and limits opportunities to consolidate the Slovak Republic's limited resources to maximise its contribution to sustainable development outcomes.

Mandates and structures for co-ordinating development co-operation are in place but not yet effective

Since joining the DAC in 2013 the Slovak Republic has continued to strengthen its institutional system and structures to deliver quality development co-operation. These structures are appropriate to its size, but are not yet working effectively.

The Act on Official Development Cooperation designates the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) as the National Coordinator for development assistance. Key to this co-ordination role is the Coordination Committee of the Slovak Development Co-operation, chaired by the Secretary of State of MFEA and bringing together a wide range of ministries. In practice, however, the committee meets rarely and each ministry works independently. This leaves no clear point of accountability for delivering the mid-term strategy. As is clear from a recent OECD public governance review, this situation is not unique to development co-operation. The review highlighted the need to strengthen co-ordination among the Centre of Government (CoG) institutions – the Government Office, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior – and between these CoG institutions and line ministries and agencies across the public administration (OECD, 2015).

One consequence of this institutional autonomy, as discussed in Chapter 2, is that the 2014-2018 mid-term strategy is not seen as the framework for all ministries, in spite of extensive consultation during its preparation. The Ministry of Finance in particular manages the lion's share of the Slovak ODA budget – EUR 68.4 million – compared to EUR 7.2 million managed by MFEA in 2016 (Table 4.1). However, 80% of the Ministry of Finance's ODA consists of a direct transfer to EU institutions, without being involved in the decision making at the EU level on the use of these funds, which instead falls to

MFEA. The Ministry of Finance does not link its portfolio with the SlovakAid brand or refer to the mid-term strategy as the basis for its strategic direction.

Table 4.1. Government institutions managing Slovak development co-operation

	% ODA budget 2015	% ODA budget 2016
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (including SAIDC)	13%	25.4%
Ministry of Finance	76%	65.5%
Ministry of Interior	3%	3.2%
Ministry of Education, Science, Research & Sports	4%	2.4%
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	<1%	<1%
Ministry of Environment	1%	<1%
Other ministries and state authorities	2%	1.5%

Source: MFEA (2017), "Annual report of the development cooperation of the Slovak Republic", Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Bratislava.

This lack of co-ordination undermines the effectiveness and coherence of the Slovak Republic's efforts and is confusing for external partners. Building ownership of the next mid-term strategy across government will be essential to ensure that the government's full resources are visible and deployed effectively. Newer structures introduced within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to oversee implementation of the 2030 Agenda could help to fill this co-ordination gap (Chapter 1), but they will need to demonstrate sufficient political weight to do so.

The MFEA has appropriate structures to deliver its own plans but lacks the tools and incentives to act as National Coordinator

The MFEA has very few incentives to carry out its role as the National Coordinator of development assistance. Accountability for delivering on the mid-term strategy takes the form of a retrospective annual report which is compiled by MFEA and presented to parliament before being made public. However, the MFEA has no role in each ministry's annual ODA planning process, which limits the extent to which it can proactively ensure that the government is implementing the mid-term strategy effectively.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, as the Slovak government has no plan of action in place for meeting international commitments on ODA volumes, there is no overall accountability to MFEA or parliament for the amount of the national budget reported as ODA. The annual bilateral ODA plan submitted to parliament covers mainly the MFEA budget. Furthermore, the ODA budget is split across a number of budget chapters managed by different ministries and each ministry is expected to generate ODA increases from its overall budget allocation, but with few if any incentives to do so.

Identifying MFEA as the body accountable for planning for, and reporting against, specific ODA milestones may help to strengthen its mandate. MFEA could also play a central co-ordinating role in the Slovak Republic's engagement with multilateral institutions – currently, 10 ministries and 3 central bodies liaise with 50 multilateral organisations.

In addition to its co-ordination function, the MFEA has its own budget for development co-operation which is largely disbursed through the semi-autonomous Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC). In making decisions on programmes and policy issues, MFEA closely follows the mid-term strategy and annual spending plans and has defined a clear and appropriate division of labour between the ministry and the agency which is set out in a management contract, renewed on an annual basis.

Co-ordination at country level is effective

Within partner countries co-ordination works well. Although small, the Slovak embassies are recognised as the central point of contact for the Slovak government and, in Kenya and Moldova in particular, all ministries consult the embassy on their plans and keep them informed of their work. Similar to Bratislava, there is a clear division of labour between embassy and agency staff and appropriate decentralised decision-making and financial authority (Annex B).

Systems

Peer review indicator: The member has clear and relevant processes and mechanisms in place

The Slovak Republic has invested in professionalising its systems, processes and mechanisms since joining the DAC in 2013. These are particularly well developed in the SAIDC, where there is a good balance between rigour and flexibility. However, there is scope to further consolidate funding instruments, draw on external expertise and reduce the bureaucratic burden on both the agency and implementing partners. There is also room for improvement across government as there are no independent audit and oversight functions for development co-operation and there is a reliance on control rather than risk management.

SAIDC is evolving into a capable implementing body

SAIDC is evolving into a capable implementing body with solid procedures and good project management, drawing on the Slovak Republic's experience of managing grants from European institutions. Recent improvements include:

- An updated financial handbook to simplify the budget structure for applications
- new templates for funding applications, monitoring and reporting, including a revised logical framework
- the introduction of new project selection criteria.

The agency's plans to develop a procedures manual and to re-shape its team to combine programming and financial management functions will help to ensure a systematic and transparent approach. The agency has the capacity to absorb a larger staff and aid budget but it would be prudent to first consolidate its existing portfolio.

There are too many programme and project instruments and procedures given the small Slovak ODA budget

The agency disburses funds through three main channels – financial contributions for humanitarian assistance, project grants (for NGOs and private start-ups), and technical assistance co-ordinated through the Centre for Experience Transfer from Integration and Reforms (CETIR). SAIDC has recently been tasked to enter into contracts with the private sector for defined services, but has not yet developed the systems or expertise to execute this role.

The vast majority of grants administered by the agency are awarded through competitive calls for proposals. Each call for proposal addresses a theme or country, with the result that there are up to a dozen calls per year, each comprising small grants. The paperwork involved in each application could be reduced, for example by pre-screening implementing partners using an organisational assessment every two or three years. Once projects are screened against approved criteria, the decision for each project lies with the Supervisory Board comprised of Directors from relevant departments of MFEA. Each project approval and contract are then signed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Again, this process could be rationalised if the agency could recommend a list of the grants to be awarded based on agreed criteria. The Supervisory Board could then play a more strategic role in scrutinising elements such as whether the overall portfolio reflects the mid-term strategy objectives, represents an acceptable level of risk, etc.

Importantly, the current SAIDC systems are more conducive to funding discrete activities rather than longer-term partnerships focused on shared development outcomes. A smaller number of calls for proposals with larger allocations for longer-term partnerships would increase effectiveness and further reduce the transaction costs for the agency, ministry and implementing partners. Opportunities to consider more programmatic approaches are explored further in Chapter 5.

Independent audit and oversight functions are not yet established

The annual ODA report is a good example of transparent and comprehensive public information on the whole of the Slovak Republic's development co-operation programme. In addition to describing programme and policy developments and reviewing progress against the commitments set out in the 2014-2018 Mid-Term Strategy, the report identifies areas of success and challenges (MFEA, 2018; MFEA, 2017).

The 2015 DAC mid-term review (OECD, 2015) noted that the Slovak Parliament could play a stronger role in overseeing the ODA strategy, annual plan and results reporting. The supreme audit office has yet to carry out an audit of the development co-operation budget or systems in MFEA and the other ministries. More robust external checks or balances would add weight to the structures intended to shape Slovak development co-operation – the mid-term strategy, co-ordination committee, annual ODA plan and report – and counter-balance the autonomy of each ministry described above.

Within MFEA, an internal audit function is in place and has helped to identify a number of irregularities in individual project grants. However, it has not yet carried out a functional or systems audit of the ODA budget managed by the ministry. Finally, there is no clear mandate for MFEA to oversee financial reporting to the OECD DAC by other ministries to ensure that all items are eligible to be reported as ODA.

Financial control measures are in place but do not extend to risk management

The Slovak Republic has well-developed centralised procurement and financial control systems which follow EU norms. Risk management is less well developed – reputational, financial, operational and institutional risks are not identified and monitored in a formal way in order to shape strategic decisions. While individual project proposals include a risk matrix covering mainly financial and operational risks, it is not apparent that this risk assessment is taken into account for project management, particularly compared to the high level of monitoring and the flexibility given to the implementing partner. Moreover, there are few measures in place to deal with social and governance risks, including corruption challenges in the execution of Slovak grants. In working to strengthen guidance in this area for itself and its partners, the Slovak Republic could learn from other development partners, including through GOVNET (the OECD-DAC network on governance). This will also help the Slovak Republic in implementing the OECD recommendation on managing the risks of corruption (OECD, 2016).

The Slovak Republic's relatively strong appetite for innovation would benefit from a sounder evidence base

The review found a number of examples of innovation in the Slovak Republic's development co-operation system, especially new funding mechanisms. Examples include:

- an interesting model for funding environmental awareness in partnership with business, managed by the Ministry of Environment
- a UNDP-managed hub for financing innovation, including impact bonds, led by the Ministry of Finance (AltFin Lab) and efforts to launch a pilot project under the concessional loans scheme by EXIMBANKA SR
- a new proposal for Award of Contracts to involve the private sector in delivering specific development objectives, to be managed by SAIDC.

These initiatives are welcome and in line with the mid-term strategy and international commitments. They build on experience of similar initiatives managed by other donors, and adopt a learning-by-doing approach.

To increase demand for evidence by decision makers in development co-operation, the 2015 OECD public governance review made a number of recommendations for using analytical capacity more effectively in the Slovak administration, noting that "the use of robust evidence and sound evidence-based analysis in government decision making with respect to policies, legislation and spending appears to be limited when compared to other OECD countries" and that "many consultations take place solely on an informal basis or too late in the processes when it is rather difficult to change the policy or regulation substantively" (OECD, 2015). The review's recommendations are relevant for, and would benefit, Slovak development co-operation.

Capabilities throughout the system

Peer review indicator: The member has appropriate skills and knowledge to manage and deliver its development co-operation, and ensures these are located in the right places

Small teams of young and dynamic individuals drive the Slovak Republic's development co-operation system. However, their limited numbers are compounded by frequent turnover, particularly at senior management level, which affects continuity and institutional memory. Comparatively weak terms and conditions for agency staff affect their mobility and the agency's ability to retain experienced staff, and constrain the ability of the government to realise its ambitions.

Human resources are a key constraint for expanding Slovak development co-operation

Fewer than 40 people work full time on development co-operation across the Slovak system (see Table 4.2). Individual officials regularly manage several demanding portfolios at the same time. Combined with the significant workload involved in engaging the political system and servicing national, international, EU and other processes, this reduces the Slovak Republic's ability to achieve its ambitions and may also affect accountability and oversight.

Table 4.2. Human resources in Slovak development co-operation (2017 data)

	Total staff in Bratislava	Total staff in partner countries
Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff working on development cooperation - Bratislava	8	-
Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation (SAIDC)	14	2
Other ministries and state authorities	15	-

Source: Slovak Republic Memorandum (2018) with updates received during meetings in Bratislava (2018)

SAIDC staffing levels and capacity are increasing however, with four additional posts approved in 2018. Two agency staff have been posted as development diplomats to embassies in Kenya and Moldova, which has increased the Slovak Republic's credibility and capacity, and there are plans to expand this further. The plan is to rotate officials between SAIDC, the Department of Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid (DDCHA) and the embassies, which will make the most of the potential for cross-learning and relationships.

At present, SAIDC staff are classified as public servants, giving them less advantageous terms and conditions than the civil servants employed in the ministries. This undermines staff retention and morale and makes it challenging for staff to move between the agency and other ministries working on development co-operation.

Staff rotation within the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) is still somewhat exceptional, with a total of 400 posts in headquarters compared to 700 abroad. This lack of rotation is a common feature of smaller administrations. There are significant financial benefits to overseas postings, so staff tend to only spend the required minimum of two years in Bratislava. Incentives are in place to encourage officials to take up posts in more challenging countries, including Kenya and Moldova.

As rotation is low, staff tend not to stay long within MFEA. This high turnover of staff, particularly at management level, reduces institutional memory and may affect the quality of relationships with other development partners.

Other line ministries also respond to demands from developing countries (and international organisations) for transition-related technical assistance. The Ministry of Finance has three people dedicated to managing its bilateral assistance, and two managing multilateral contributions, including to the international financial institutions. Its capacity in bilateral assistance – which has a strong focus on public financial management – is complemented by a partnership with UNDP (see Section 5.1) to manage the supply and demand of experts and a roster of public financial management experts from within government and externally. While the mid-term strategy 2014-2018 is clear that this type of technical assistance is central to the Slovak Republic's development co-operation and comparative advantage, there is no plan in place for resourcing this work.

One way to improve relations between institutions would be to include more aspects of development co-operation in MFEA's compulsory training modules and extend these to officials in other ministries.

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Chapter 5. The Slovak Republic's delivery modalities and partnerships

Partnering

Peer review indicator: The member has effective partnerships in support of development goals with a range of actors, recognising the different and complementary roles of all actors

The Slovak Republic has a broad network of partners and uses strategic partnerships to share its public reform experience effectively in the Eastern partnership and Western Balkans region. Further afield, the development portfolio is composed of fragmented projects with less emphasis on bilateral partnerships with host governments. Instead, the Slovak Republic relies significantly on Slovak NGOs, though is exploring opportunities for strengthening its private sector engagement. The Slovak Republic has some capacity to direct an increased proportion of its development co-operation to preventing conflict and promoting peace in those fragile situations where it has a good understanding of the context.

Multilateral aid is a pragmatic choice

The Slovak Republic sees great value in using multilateral channels to deliver its ODA because it allows it to make the most of its limited resources. It has good dialogue with the multilateral organisations to which it belongs, and is able to strengthen its voice within the European Union's institutions by participating in joint positions, such as through the Višegrad Group (Box 5.1). The Slovak Republic interacts with 50 multilateral organisations through 10 ministries (MFEA, 2017), making it difficult to design a comprehensive multilateral strategy, and stretching its limited resources. Conscious of this, the Slovak Republic is becoming more selective and has started to review its partnerships with multilateral organisation biennially, assessing the alignment of the multilateral organisation's work with its own priorities. This is good practice, and resulted in the Slovak Republic leaving the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in December 2017. The Slovak Republic will now need to clarify further the criteria it uses to select its multilateral partners, and could usefully draw on existing shared assessments such as the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) to review its multilateral partners' performance.

The UNDP has been a long-term strategic partner for the Slovak Republic

The country's partnership with the UNDP is a good example of a strategic partnership which draws on the Slovak Republic's comparative advantage. The UNDP has co-operated with the Slovak Republic since 2002 through the Slovak-UNDP Trust Fund, and played a key role in creating the Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC). The Slovak Republic's long-term partnership with the UNDP is a strength, helping it to build capacity and share knowledge. The establishment of the UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and Central Asia in 1997 in Bratislava also gave the Slovak Republic a central role in the region during the economic transition period, until the centre's relocation to Istanbul in 2015. The partnership with the UNDP is continuing,[1] allowing the Slovak Republic to share its experience in public finance management with partners in Montenegro and Moldova to contribute to their public finance reforms, to help them become more efficient and move closer to the European Union (UNDP, 2018). While the partnership with UNDP on public sector reform is split between the MFEA and the Ministry of Finance, the synergies between the two ministries have been strengthened.

Slovak civil society is a key implementing partner

The Slovak Republic has a long-term relationship with its civil society, which represents an important channel for delivering aid and makes regular contributions to the Slovak Republic's strategies. The Slovak NGOs are co-ordinated through the Slovak Non-governmental Development Organisations Platform (MVRO), which brings together 27 members, including 3 universities. The MFEA signed a memorandum of understanding with the platform in 2012, which recognised MVRO as an official partner of the MFEA (MVRO, 2018). While civil society organisations (CSOs) praise the quality of the dialogue with the Slovak Government, and the positive changes in the administrative workload, they believe the partnership can still be strengthened, and that the small budget available to them does not reflect their real capacity to deliver. The Slovak Republic provides support to its civil society through more than 10 calls for proposals per year. As well as resulting in fragmentation, this high number of annual calls for proposals has considerable transaction costs for the MFEA, the agency and the implementing partners. Plans to introduce framework agreements will allow the Slovak Republic to develop a select number of longer-term partnerships in order to deliver sustainable results and adhere to development effectiveness principles. Moreover, some partners met by the peer review team mentioned tedious bureaucratic procedures as a concern, as they may hinder rapid project implementation.

The Slovak private sector has a particular role

The Slovak Republic is committed to engaging the private sector in development co-operation and has already achieved some successes on which to build. After the 2011 DAC Special Review of the Slovak Republic (OECD, 2011), the MFEA published its first policy on engaging with the private sector (MFEA, 2012). This clearly states the development objective of the government's support to the private sector in developing countries, and is explicit about the main sectors to support.[2] Like CSOs, Slovak companies are grouped into a Platform for Entrepreneurs for Foreign Development Cooperation. To support private sector involvement in development co-operation, the "Development Masters" (*Rozvojmajstri*)[3] were created through a partnership with the UNDP to help Slovak private entities compete for international organisations' call for tenders.

EXIMBANKA SR – the state-owned ECA – has developed a concessional loans scheme in order to support Slovak exporters involvement in development co-operation. The scheme is regulated by the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Sustainable Lending Practices and Officially Supported Export Credits. In designing these instruments, the Slovak Republic should ensure that the focus remains on development outcomes rather than trade objectives and that every effort is made to untie ODA to the maximum extent possible. The Slovak Republic could learn from other DAC members' experience with the private sector, for example through the DAC peer learning exercise on private sector engagement for sustainable development (OECD, 2016).

The Slovak Republic co-ordinates well with other donors

The Slovak Republic engages in policy dialogue and co-ordination with other providers in order to leverage its aid and increase effectiveness. Notably, it contributes to the EU dialogue and to joint programming exercises in partner countries. In supporting and engaging with EU Trust Funds, it aligns its aid with the EU's broader common strategic objectives. The Slovak Republic has developed solid partnerships within the Višegrad Group to increase its influence within the EU, as well as to develop joint programmes. This partnership also includes trilateral co-operation and joint projects, for example in Kenya (Box 5.1). The Slovak Republic is also building other partnerships on specific issues or projects, such as with Israel's Agency for International Development (MASHAV) for women's empowerment, with the German GIZ and Austrian ADRA for business sector involvement to increase policy learning, as well as with USAID for implementing joint projects on good governance. These efforts reflect the country's laudable efforts to increase aid effectiveness through partnerships. As noted in Chapter 2, several EU countries have similar transition experience and see sharing this experience as one of their main routes for adding value through development co-operation. Co-ordination amongst these donors could help the Slovak Republic to identify its specific niche in this domain.

Box 5.1. Working on joint projects through the Višegrad Group

The Višegrad Group (also known as the "Višegrad Four" or simply "V4") reflects the efforts of the countries of the Central European region to work together in a number of fields of common interest within the all-European integration. It is composed of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic. The Višegrad Group aims to strengthen stability in the Central European region through co-operation, notably within the European Union structure.

The Slovak Republic amplifies its development co-operation impact within the political framework of the Višegrad Group, which implements a number of joint projects. For example, in 2017 the Slovak Republic was granted a EUR 2 million allocation from the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa for a Višegrad Group pilot project to improve the livelihoods of 15,000 small farmers and to create new jobs in north-eastern Kenya. The Slovak Republic is both a leading member and implementer of the project, which is managed by SAIDC (MFEA, 2017).

Source: http://www.visegradgroup.eu/about; MFEA (2017); V4 (2018).

The migration crisis is shaping a new regional approach

The crises in the Middle East and the subsequent migration flows to Europe have brought about a new regional approach to development co-operation. The Slovak Republic has aligned with the European Union's approach and was an early supporter of the EU tools that were created to bring a more flexible response to a complex crisis, such as the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (EU, 2018a) and the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (EU, 2018b). By allocating additional humanitarian aid to affected countries all along the migration route to Europe, the Slovak Republic has started to look at the crisis in a regional way, and to strengthen its regional partnerships, for example with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Beyond the crises in the Middle East, addressing development and humanitarian needs through a regional outlook can help the Slovak Republic focus its aid and be more coherent, integrating migration into its sectoral priorities, such as water and education, in countries affected by crises or hosting refugees. This will require the Slovak Republic to build regional strategies and align its current bilateral projects with those strategies.

Local partnerships are an opportunity for the Slovak Republic in fragile contexts

In countries where it has an embassy, the Slovak Republic can nurture a network of local NGOs through one of its instruments – direct financial contributions, or micro-grants. The micro-grant instrument is used to highlight the Slovak Republic's presence in its partner countries (MFEA, 2013). In fragile contexts, the ability to provide limited but swift support to local actors can prove exceptionally useful for easing tensions at community level, and can be a notable comparative advantage as many bigger donors do not have the flexibility to provide this rapid support to those local actors who can prevent local tensions from escalating. Achieving this will require the Slovak Republic to review how its micro-grant functions and to strengthen its sensitivity to fragility and conflict prevention, both in headquarters and in the field, thus aligning its policy priority on peace and security with concrete programming (Chapter 1). The Slovak Republic can build on its experience in Kenya, where micro-grants were deliberately allocated in the coastal region of Mombasa where there was a high incidence of radicalisation and heightened potential for violence.

Country-level engagement

Peer review indicator: The member's engagement in partner countries is consistent with its domestic and international commitments, including those specific to fragile states

The Slovak Republic has designed comprehensive strategies in its three programme countries that take into consideration its partners' priorities and other donors' programming. However, individual projects are not always connected in a coherent way, and thereby fail to support government-to-government relations between the Slovak Republic and its partner country. A clearer sense of what kind of development partner the Slovak Republic wishes to become could help shape its plans and allow limited resources to be directed to fewer, more strategic partnerships, including with the private sector.

Strategic and longer-term partnerships can maximise impact

The Slovak Republic is a member of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation and takes steps to ensure that it works in co-ordination with other donors and discusses its country strategies with host governments. This is reflected in its three partner countries' strategies: Afghanistan, Moldova and Kenya (MFEA, 2018). The country strategies clearly express the objectives of the Slovak Republic's engagement and detail how activities link with national development frameworks and how they will be monitored. However, because the Slovak Republic's objectives are broad, engagement in countries like Afghanistan and Kenya involves individual projects that are not connected in a way that maximises their impact. Most of the interventions in these countries mobilise civil society, which limits opportunities for dialogue with the partner country's government. And as NGO projects are selected through a call for proposal, the predictability of their action is also limited. In future, the Slovak Republic could identify in which countries it wants a bilateral government-government relationship, and develop country strategies to deliver a set of measurable, time-bound results based on national priorities and the Slovak Republic's comparative advantage through a small number of strategic, longer-term partnerships.

The Slovak Republic needs to define its comparative advantage in countries outside Europe

As noted in Chapter 3, the Slovak Republic's bilateral ODA is directed primarily to the ten priority countries set out in the mid-term strategy, and to the Middle East in response to migration flows. Sectoral priorities are very broad: while this gives the Slovak Republic some leeway in its engagement in each country, individual projects are spread too thinly to enable the Slovak Republic to identify its unique contribution in most countries.

When the SAIDC was created in 2003, the Slovak Republic's development co-operation outside Europe was built on historical ties, notably emerging from its civil society's work in developing countries. This work favoured partnerships based on individual projects, such as in Kenya or in South Sudan. In such contexts, even though projects fall into the country's broad development priorities, they are not connected in a way that can steer change at a large scale.

The Slovak Republic's development co-operation in Europe is built along strategic partnerships and a clear objective to support partner countries in their own transition political and economic model. However, in its non-European priority countries, including in fragile states, a clearer sense of its comparative advantage and what kind of development partner it wishes to become will help shape its plans and allow limited resources to be directed to fewer, more strategic partnerships, including with the private sector.

Notes

[1] In December 2016 a new programme document on public and private finance for development was signed by the MFSR and UNDP, and extends until the end of 2019 (MFSR/UNDP, 2017).

[2] The priorities are (1) energy: production and distribution of energy, promotion of sustainable energy sources, energy efficiency of buildings; (2) infrastructure: building transport, logistics and communication infrastructure; (3) environment: supply, treatment and distribution of drinking water, management of waste management, ecological technologies, protection against natural disasters, hydrogeology and drinking water supply; (4) agriculture: forestry, management of agricultural production, increasing the profitability of agricultural production, construction of irrigation systems, food safety; (5) social infrastructure: activities in the field of education and delivering medical facilities (MFEA, 2012).

[3] *Rozvojmajstri* is a virtual platform helping the business sector engage with development institutions. It is implemented by a consultancy company with the support of the UNDP and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic. For more information about the project, see https://rozvojmajstri.com//.

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Chapter 6. The Slovak Republic's results, evaluation and learning

Management for development results

Peer review indicator: A results-based management system is being applied

While measures are in place to monitor individual projects, the Slovak Republic has some way to go to have a results-based management system. Investing further in this area – particularly defining results and relevant indicators at a strategic level – would provide a more robust basis for strategic decision making, communication, accountability and learning.

A results-based management system is not yet being applied

The Slovak Republic is committed to tracking the impact of its investments and making them more effective. A number of steps have been taken since joining the DAC which will be helpful in establishing a system for managing results. For example:

- The 2014-2018 mid-term strategy includes a number of goals and objectives for the development co-operation programme overall, and country strategies in programme countries include high-level objectives.
- The Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC) has introduced logical frameworks with indicators at a project level.
- Significant effort is invested in project monitoring and project visits in partner countries to track expected activities and outputs.

However, there is some way to go before policies, structures and systems are focused on results. The broad objectives set out in the mid-term strategy and country strategies are not suitable for identifying the specific, measurable results to which SlovakAid is expected to contribute in a particular country or sector. As a result, the annual ODA report, which is useful in many ways, focuses on disbursements and project descriptions rather than the more global development results to which the Slovak Republic is contributing (MFEA, 2018; MFEA 2017b).

The preparation of the next mid-term strategy provides an opportunity to move to the next step, i.e. monitoring (and managing for) the outcomes brought about by SlovakAid support. Including specific, measurable results in the mid-term strategy –linked to the goals set out in legislation – would allow MFEA as the national co-ordinator to ensure that, as far as possible, all ODA-funded interventions contribute to one or more of these results. Designing a strong theory of change and a logical link from project, to programme and to corporate level will allow the Slovak Republic to use results for strategic direction, accountability and learning, as well as for communicating its objectives and achievements in a more comprehensive manner. In addition, it will allow the Slovak Republic to identify where its mid-term strategy results align with the priorities of its partner countries, thus helping to identify and communicate its specific contribution within chosen sectors. Developing links to the SDGs and targets prioritised by partner countries would be a useful first step (Engberg-Pedersen and Zwart, 2018).

The DAC Results Community has much useful experience to share in this area and may be a useful platform for linking the Slovak Republic with other DAC members who are at a similar stage in setting up their results systems.[1]

Evaluation system

Peer review indicator: The evaluation system is in line with the DAC evaluation principles

The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) is increasingly investing in evaluations and reviews. Further steps are needed to ensure the independence of the evaluation process, including through a more strategic role for the evaluation committee. There is also scope to extend the evaluation strategy and annual plan to development co-operation managed by other parts of government, particularly the Ministry of Finance.

Steps have been taken to strengthen MFEA's evaluation function, but external scrutiny is not yet adequate

The mandate for evaluating Slovakia's ODA is assigned to the Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid Department (DCHAD) of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA). Previously, evaluations were undertaken sporadically but an Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy was developed and approved in 2014, which provides basic guidance on standards and procedures (MFEA, 2014; OECD, 2016). A separate budget line for evaluations was also established in 2014. In 2018 the evaluation budget was significantly increased, from EUR 20 000 per year to EUR 150 000, to ensure that a review of existing activities could feed into the new mid-term strategy (MFEA, 2017b). While the emphasis to date has been on evaluating individual projects, the 2018 evaluation plan includes an evaluation of the 2014-2018 mid-term strategy and a thematic evaluation of development education. As resources are limited, it will be important to ensure that priority is given to areas of high risk or high potential for learning.

There is no specific unit responsible for conducting evaluations within the MFEA or in the SAIDC (Figure 6.1). SAIDC staff are involved in the process of deciding what to evaluate, developing terms of reference and engaging external evaluators. The development co-operation division of MFEA is responsible for preparing an annual evaluation plan, developing terms of reference, initiating evaluations and disseminating evaluation results internally and externally, including on the SlovakAid website. It engages external consultants for contracts under EUR 20 000, while the selection procedure for contracts exceeding EUR 20 000 is managed by the Public Procurement Department (PPD) in the MFEA. One official in the division leads on evaluation, but has a number of other operational roles, blurring the distinction between the official's implementation and evaluation functions, and possibly risking the independence of the evaluation system.

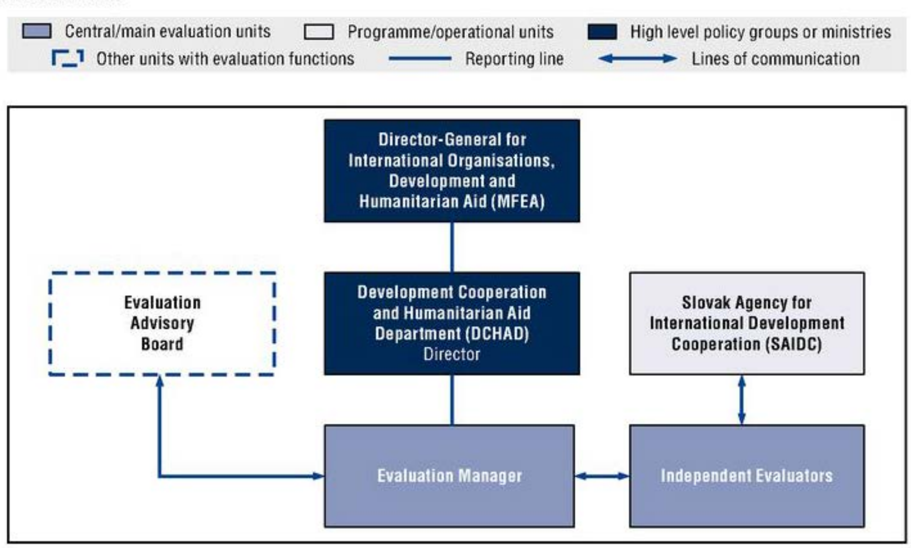
The 2014 Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy introduced an Evaluation Advisory Board – with representatives from SAIDC, Director Generals from MFEA, Slovak diplomatic mission personnel and independent experts (but on an *ad hoc* basis) – to oversee evaluations, assess evaluation reports and findings, and propose a management response. In practice, management responses to evaluations and follow-up actions are not yet a standard part of the Slovak evaluation cycle.

A more strategic role for the board could strengthen the independence of the Slovak evaluation system. This could include deciding what should be evaluated, both in MFEA and in other parts of government, reviewing and approving terms of reference, tracking implementation of management responses and reporting on the uptake of evaluation findings to the minister and parliament. The more consistent inclusion of external experts and representatives from civil society could increase both learning and accountability, as is the case in France and the Czech Republic.

One joint evaluation has been conducted with the Czech Development Agency. No evaluations have yet been conducted in partnership with host governments.

Training in various aspects of evaluation has been provided for MFEA and SAIDC staff by the UNDP and the Slovak Evaluation Society. However, discussions in Bratislava and a review of evaluations suggest that further professional capacity building in evaluation is required at all levels of development co-operation management and implementation. For example, a number of evaluations that were reviewed by the peer review team would typically be classified as reviews – though they were still useful and instructive.

Figure 6.1. Evaluation structures in MFEA



Source: OECD (2016), *Evaluation Systems in Development Co-operation: 2016 Review*, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264262065-en.

Institutional learning

Peer review indicator: Evaluations and appropriate knowledge management systems are used as management tools

The Slovak Republic is open to learning from its own experience and that of other DAC members, and is committed to sharing its knowledge and information. However, other than a few public events and publications, formal systems are not yet in place to facilitate structured learning. While information flows well within the small teams managing development co-operation in the various ministries and embassies, knowledge exchange is less fluid between ministries.

Structured lesson learning and reflection would strengthen grant appraisal

Within the MFEA, the recording and reporting of activities and lessons learned was made mandatory in 2014 (MFEA, 2013). The compact nature of MFEA and SAIDC means that information flows informally between the two teams, as well as with relevant embassies. However, this is undermined by frequent turnover of key staff, particularly at management level (Chapter 4).

The Slovak Republic has invested in data management systems for its development co-operation. There is an opportunity to expand this valuable data resource further to capture results and lessons. Some DAC members, e.g. Korea, have found it beneficial to extend access to this information to implementing partners.

As mentioned above, management responses to evaluations and follow-up actions are not yet a standard part of the Slovak evaluation cycle. This is a concern given the tendency to roll over project grants for several years. When deciding on a new project, learning could be enhanced by asking the following questions, *inter alia,* without burdening existing processes:

- what similar initiatives have been identified?
- what lessons have been taken into account in the design of this project?

It is clear from documentation and discussions in Bratislava that officials are open to learning and keen to use their own experience and that of others to refine their approaches. Development co-operation fora in partner countries are a good example of where this has been formalised. The first such forum was held in Kenya in 2012 when the first country strategy was being developed. This consultative process is intended as a management tool to aid decision making, and each forum considers the country context, the Slovak Republic's contribution to development to date and what shape its future contribution might take.

In April 2018, the MFEA together with Slovak Embassies both in Nairobi and Chisinau organised two development fora. In order to provide grounds for a wider debate between all relevant development actors and stakeholders, the events were attended by representatives of the MFEA, SAIDC, Slovak and local NGOs, entrepreneurs, representatives from other donor countries, as well as Slovak and local media. Forum participants reviewed the experience of the Slovak Republic's development activities in the respective programme countries and raised recommendations for future strategic, effective and sustainable development co-operation.

Lesson learning and information flow would benefit from a more structured approach

The Slovak Republic hosts a number of annual public events to raise awareness and inform debate on development co-operation and humanitarian assistance. These include an annual conference and the international documentary film festival "One World". There is regular dialogue with the NGO platform, and an annual foreign policy review includes a chapter on development co-operation.

There is less evidence, however, of structured reflection and learning on an official level between MFEA and other ministries. For example, as set out in Chapter 4, a number of decisions have been made recently on reforms and funding instruments. Most of these are perceived as MFEA decisions, and even if relevant ministries were consulted, the evidence and rationale for those decisions is not clear to all stakeholders. This undermines ownership of the Slovak development co-operation effort and the potential for drawing on Slovak experience across the system.

The annual ODA report mentioned in Chapter 4 is an invaluable tool for information sharing across government and provides a strong basis for strategic reflection – a useful exercise may be to extract the key lessons from each report for consideration by the Committee for Development Co-operation once that body resumes its functions.

Notes

[1] See the results community platform at: http://www.oecd.org/dac/results-development.

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Chapter 7. The Slovak Republic's humanitarian assistance

Strategic framework

Peer review indicator: Clear political directives and strategies for resilience, response and recovery

The Slovak Republic has ambitions in the humanitarian domain, signalled by its commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit and increased humanitarian budget. However, its humanitarian approach remains complex. It would benefit from an overarching strategy covering all humanitarian and civil defence resources across government to identify when to respond and what assistance to offer. The regional approach currently under consideration could help the Slovak Republic to link its different tools and funding instruments to address the humanitarian needs in the crises in which it chooses to engage.

A strategy for engaging in crises could guide new ambitions

Humanitarian aid is an increasing part of the Slovak Republic's ODA.[1] Its engagement in humanitarian aid is regulated by both the Act No. 392/2015 Coll. on Official Development Aid of the Slovak Republic (GSR, 2015) and the mechanism for providing Slovak humanitarian aid abroad (GSR, 2006). Both documents define humanitarian aid as a solidarity gesture towards people in need, and explain the organisation of relief assistance between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior. However, the Slovak Republic's objective for its humanitarian aid is not clear enough to meet the six commitments it made at the World Humanitarian Summit.[2] The Slovak Republic's humanitarian assistance is historically a civil protection mechanism, and today is based on two pillars. Item-based humanitarian assistance represents the first pillar, and involves the Ministry of the Interior managing emergency stocks to be deployed in the case of crises. This pillar was recently strengthened by legislative modifications to exempt the purchase of humanitarian material from some taxes.[3] The second pillar is managed by the MFEA, and consists of financial support to humanitarian partners.

The MFEA's role is changing in response to complex crises such as those in the Middle East (see below). The Slovak Republic could increase the coherence of its aid by developing a unified vision that reflects the evolution of humanitarian policies and practice, and gives the MFEA a clear role to co-ordinate international co-operation, other government ministries and multiple partners during humanitarian responses.

The Slovak Republic could standardise its new regional approach to crises

As noted in Chapter 5, the crisis in Syria and the ensuing migration flows were a turning point for the Slovak Republic in 2015. These events forced it to mobilise its development co-operation alongside the two pillars of its humanitarian aid portfolio to support countries receiving migrants, as well as to support the health system in Syria. This new regional approach has allowed for a more coherent response, including participation in the EU financial instruments, support to its humanitarian partners' financial appeals and bilateral support to affected governments. In finalising its new humanitarian strategy, the Slovak Republic could learn from this experience in the Middle East to standardise its regional approach to programming aid in crises.

The Slovak Republic has increased its budget for crisis response

The Slovak Republic has been increasing its humanitarian budget since joining the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2013. Budget increases are in line with its commitments at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit to "launch efforts to double the volume of funds provided for humanitarian aid and continually raise public funds for development and humanitarian projects, with the goal of facilitating the greatest possible synergy between development cooperation and humanitarian aid" (AFH, 2016). The most substantial increase was registered in 2015, with USD 2.4 million allocated to humanitarian aid, reflecting the Slovak Republic's participation in the global crisis response in the Middle East. Unlike some other DAC members, it does not label its contribution to the EU facility for refugees in Turkey as humanitarian aid.[4] As for many DAC members, the crisis in the Middle East has blurred the distinction between short-term humanitarian assistance and the Slovak Republic's more structural response to crises and migration. With 7.8% of its ODA allocated to humanitarian aid in 2015-16, however, the Slovak Republic remains below the 11.8% DAC average for the period.

Effective programme design

Peer review indicator: Programmes target the highest risk to life and livelihood

Guided by its own information sources, co-ordinated with the EU humanitarian system, the Slovak Republic's humanitarian aid focuses its limited budget on just a few crises. As it manages large relief stocks, the Slovak Republic contributes meaningfully to the EU Civil Protection mechanism, but the value for money and the relevance of sending material relief outside such a co-ordinated response should be carefully analysed case by case.

The Slovak Republic makes the best of the EU's humanitarian system

Guided by information from its embassy network, its partners and the EU, the Slovak Republic focuses its humanitarian aid on a limited number of crises, making the best of a small budget. The Slovak Republic makes good use of the EU systems – such as the EU information networks (the European Council working party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid - COHAFA - and the EU mechanisms for crisis response) – to programme and co-ordinate its crisis responses. Contributions to EU emergency trust funds represented up to 27% of the Slovak Republic's overall ODA in 2016,[5] strengthening the coherence of the EU's emergency and long-term response in crisis contexts.

The civil protection mechanism is efficient, but item-based aid requires extra care

The Slovak Republic's contribution to international disaster relief operations is mainly provided through the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism.[6] Material humanitarian aid is provided by the Division of the Integrated Rescue System and Civil Protection, of the Ministry of the Interior. Managing a large stock of emergency items allows the Slovak Republic to make a meaningful and co-ordinated contribution to disaster response. However, reliance on material-based humanitarian aid does not always allow for the best use of humanitarian resources in response to protracted and man-made crises where the economy is functioning and the items sent by the Slovak Republic are available in local markets. The Slovak Republic should make sure it conducts a careful value-for-money analysis before launching a material-based response abroad, especially when it is not part of a consolidated EU response.

Effective delivery, partnerships and instruments

Peer review indicator: Delivery modalities and partnerships help deliver quality assistance

As its humanitarian budget grows, the Slovak Republic is increasing its support to multilateral organisations. However, it uses a multi-bi type of aid, which does not make the most of the multilateral organisations' potential. As Slovak NGOs will remain strategic partners for delivering aid and raising public awareness, the Slovak Republic could increase its efficiency and reduce its bureaucracy by developing specific partnership framework with these NGOs.

Support to multilateral organisations is prudent, but increasing

In response to the Syria crisis, the Slovak Republic has increased the share of its financial humanitarian aid to those multilateral organisations[7] with whom it has developed a partnership. Support to multilateral organisations now represents the biggest share of the Slovak Republic's humanitarian assistance. The Slovak Republic does not provide core funding to these multilateral partners. Instead it softly earmarks its funds to the specific crisis and sector, thus responding to its partners' appeals, which is good practice. Going forward and with an increased budget, the Slovak Republic could consider making its funds even more flexible, for example by contributing to specific UN pooled funds such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Country-Based Pooled Funds (UN CBPF).

A stronger partnership with NGOs can increase humanitarian cost efficiency

The Slovak Republic has developed a solid relationship with its civil society. In the most challenging contexts, such as South Sudan, NGOs are the only providers of Slovak aid, and NGO presence has proven to be instrumental in selecting partner countries. Slovak NGOs are also a great vector for public awareness of development co-operation and humanitarian aid. However, NGOs can only access the Slovak Republic's funds after an open call for proposal. Although this increases transparency, it prevents predictability, which can put humanitarian NGOs at financial and operational risk in the most difficult places. The Slovak Republic could develop a stronger partnership with Slovak NGOs, for example through developing framework partnership agreements, and taking advantage of its ability to support multiyear funding to increase the cost efficiency of its humanitarian response.

Organisation fit for purpose

Peer review indicator: Systems, structures, processes and people work together effectively and efficiently

The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for co-ordinating the humanitarian response, managing the physical stock of relief items, and co-ordinating with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and the Slovak Ministry of Defence. However, with the Slovak Republic increasingly engaged in complex crises, such as in the Middle East, where a broad range of political actors and operational partners are involved, the MFEA will need to take a more prominent role in co-ordinating the whole-of-government response in such contexts.

The MFEA is well placed to take on whole-of-government humanitarian co-ordination

When a crisis strikes, the Ministry of the Interior is in charge of convening a co-ordination meeting with the MFEA and other relevant ministry or institutions. This allows the Slovak Republic to decide its response to the crisis: i.e. a material response provided through the civil protection mechanism or the Slovak Republic's defence forces; or a financial response through its humanitarian partners. However, as the Slovak Republic responds mainly to protracted crises, such as the Syria crisis, the material part of its aid represents a lower share, limited to some very specific actions or responding to a natural disaster through the EU Crises Response mechanism. To reflect this trend, the Slovak Republic could consider devolving the responsibility for whole-of-government humanitarian co-ordination to the MFEA, which is by nature more able to link its aid with its development action in complex crises, and to liaise with other international donors.

Specific attention should be paid to the use of the armed forces in delivering humanitarian aid

The Slovak Republic engages its armed forces in many multilateral operations under the UN, EU or NATO umbrella (Chapter 1). It systematically trains its units in international humanitarian law and human rights before deployment, which is good practice (SRMD, 2018). The Slovak Republic's armed forces are also required to be prepared to provide humanitarian aid,[8] while the Ecumenical Pastoral Service of the Armed Forces distributes the material assistance released by the Ministry of the Interior. Using military logistical capacity can be an efficient way to bring relief assistance to disaster areas or to hand over material aid to an affected country's government. However, care should be taken to respect humanitarian principles in those conflict areas where using the armed forces to provide direct assistance or to monitor humanitarian projects is not in line with the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles (GHD, 2003) or the Oslo Guidelines (UNOCHA, 2007), as in Afghanistan.

Results, learning and accountability

Peer review indicator: Results are measured and communicated, and lessons learnt

The Slovak Republic lacks a specific humanitarian monitoring system, and its humanitarian system cannot be evaluated effectively without a strategy stating what it wants to achieve in responding to crises. As the Slovak Republic increases it ODA spending in challenging environments, it will become important to deepen political leaders' awareness and clarify in the upcoming strategy how risks are assessed and results measured. If staff in the field are to become more involved in conflict-sensitive programming, they will also need proper training.

Further engagement in fragile contexts will require specific training

As noted in Chapter 6, project monitoring is a normal part of the Slovak Republic's management process. However, the Slovak Republic cannot monitor all its humanitarian projects due to the shorter cycles, different ministries in charge and a sometimes difficult security environment. In countries where it has no monitoring capacities, such as Afghanistan or South Sudan, it could introduce a proper risk analysis before engaging in complex crises in order to put mitigation measures in place where the risks are particularly high.[9] If the Slovak Republic strengthens its engagement in conflict prevention in fragile contexts, this will require the development diplomats in the relevant countries to be trained in assessing the conflict sensitivity of all programmes.

Political awareness could be deepened

As noted in Chapter 6, the Slovak Republic raises awareness of development co-operation and humanitarian assistance through public events. As the Slovak Republic increases its engagement in complex crises, it could build more robust communication with political leaders and decision makers. This communication could help build a deeper understanding of the humanitarian challenges in complex situations, such as migration crises, and prompt stronger support for the institutional changes required for the Slovak Republic to better address those challenges.

Notes

[1] Creditor Reporting System, accessed 30 April 2018, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1.

[2] See https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/explore-commitments/indv-commitments/?combine=Slovakia

[3] Notably the Act No. 595/2003 Coll. on Income Tax, the Act No. 222/2004 Coll. on Value Added Tax, as amended, amending Act No. 331/2011 Coll., amending Act No. 563/2009 Coll. on Tax Administration (Fiscal Code) and on Amendment to Certain Acts.

[4] The USD 3.3 million Slovak contribution to the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey in 2016 is reported to the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) using the purpose code 99810 "sector not specified". The same applies to the Slovak Republic's contribution to all EU multi donor trust funds.

[5] The Slovak Republic's contribution to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, the EU Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (MADAD), the EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia, and the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey amounted to USD 7.37 million in 2016, out of a total of USD 27.15 million of ODA (Creditor Reporting System, accessed 30 April 2018, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1.

[6] The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was established in 2001 to enable co-ordinated assistance by the participating states to victims of natural and man-made disasters in Europe and elsewhere. The mechanism currently includes all 28 EU Member States, in addition to Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/mechanism_en).

[7] Creditor Reporting System, accessed 4 May 2018, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1.

[8] The 2013 White Paper on Defence of the Slovak Republic states (para 80) :"The international crisis response operations, as the most probable future form of deployment of the AF SR, will be mainly carrying out the following tasks of: peace enforcement, peacekeeping, post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction, providing of humanitarian aid, support for the security and defence sector reforms and development of local security forces" (SRMD, 2013)

[9] For example, the DANIDA Guidelines to Risk Management Contextual Risk categorise three main risks in fragile and crisis contexts: **Contextual Risk** covers the range of overall potential adverse outcomes that may arise in a particular context and hence could impact a broader range of risks at programmatic and institutional level. The context will usually be a country or region but could for certain programmes also be a global thematic or political frame. External actors usually have very limited control over contextual risk. **Programmatic Risk** includes two kinds of risk: (1) the potential for a development programme to fail to achieve its objectives; and (2) the potential for the programme to cause harm in the external environment. **Institutional Risk** is sometimes also called political risk and includes "internal" risk from the perspective of the donor or it's implementing partners. It includes the range of ways in which an organisation and its staff or stakeholders may be adversely affected by interventions (Danida, 2013).

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Annex A. OECD/DAC standard suite of tables

Figure A.1. Total financial flows

USD million at current prices and exchange rates

Slovak Republic	2002-06	2007-11	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
							Net disbursements
Total official flows	**32**	**79**	**80**	**86**	**83**	**85**	**106**
Official development assistance	**32**	**79**	**80**	**86**	**83**	**85**	**106**
Bilateral	16	26	19	16	16	17	26
Grants	16	26	19	16	16	17	26
Non-grants	-	-	-	-	- 0	- 0	- 0
Multilateral	17	53	61	70	67	68	80
Other official flows	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bilateral: *of which*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment-related transactions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Multilateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Officially guaranteed export credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Private Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Private flows at market terms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bilateral: *of which*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct investment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Multilateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total flows	**32**	**79**	**80**	**86**	**83**	**85**	**106**
for reference:							
ODA (at constant 2015 USD million)	*42*	*67*	*69*	*72*	*69*	*85*	*107*
ODA (as a % of GNI)	*0.11*	*0.09*	*0.09*	*0.09*	*0.09*	*0.10*	*0.12*
ODA grant equivalent	-	-	-	-	-	*86*	*106*
Total flows (as a % of GNI) (a)	*0.11*	*0.09*	*0.09*	*0.09*	*0.09*	*0.10*	*0.12*
ODA to and channelled through NGOs							
- In USD million	-	-	0	5	3	4	7
ODA to and channelled through multilaterals							
- In USD million	17	53	61	70	70	71	89

a. To countries eligible for ODA.

ODA net disbursements
At constant 2015 prices and exchange rates and as a share of GNI

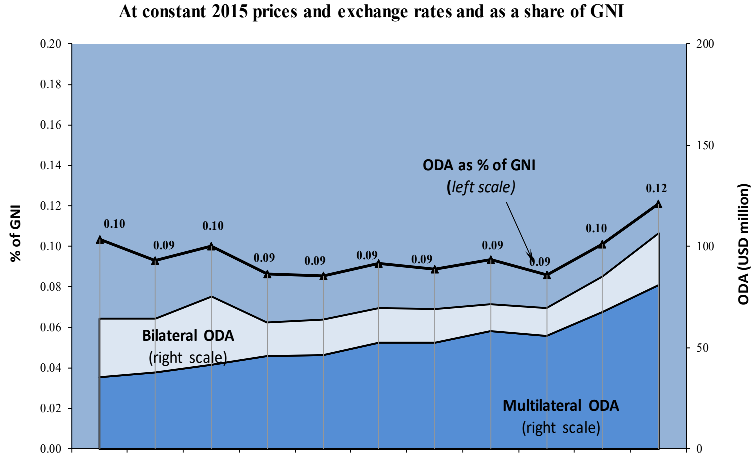
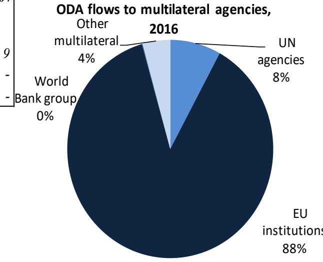


Figure A.2. ODA by main categories

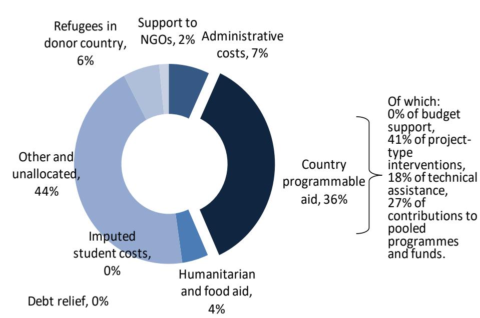
Disbursements

Slovak Republic	Constant 2015 USD million					Per cent share of gross disbursements					Total DAC 2016 %
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Gross Bilateral ODA	**16**	**13**	**14**	**17**	**26**	**24**	**19**	**20**	**20**	**24**	**2**
Budget support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
of which: General budget support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
Core contributions & pooled prog.& funds	-	2	3	2	9	-	3	4	3	8	2
of which: Core support to national NGOs	-	-	0	-	0	-	-	0	-	0	1
Core support to international NGOs	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Core support to PPPs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
Project-type interventions	-	5	4	7	9	-	6	5	8	9	17
of which: Investment projects	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Experts and other technical assistance	-	2	2	2	2	-	3	3	3	2	2
Scholarships and student costs in donor countries	-	2	2	2	2	-	3	3	2	2	2
of which: Imputed student costs	-	1	0	0	-	-	1	1	1	-	2
Debt relief grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Administrative costs	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	14
Other in-donor expenditures	-	1	1	2	2	-	1	1	2	2	14
of which: refugees in donor countries	-	1	1	2	2	-	1	1	2	2	37
Gross Multilateral ODA	**52**	**58**	**56**	**68**	**81**	**76**	**81**	**80**	**80**	**76**	**5**
UN agencies	3	3	3	4	6	4	5	4	5	6	12
EU institutions	47	49	51	53	71	68	69	73	62	66	7
World Bank group	1	1	1	10	0	1	1	2	11	0	4
Regional development banks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Other multilateral	2	4	1	1	3	3	6	1	1	3	144
Total gross ODA	**69**	**72**	**69**	**85**	**107**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
of which: Gross ODA loans	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Bilateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Multilateral	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Repayments and debt cancellation	**-**	**-**	**- 0**	**- 0**	**- 0**						
Total net ODA	**69**	**72**	**69**	**85**	**107**						
For reference:											
Country programmable aid	*9*	*9*	*7*	*8*	*9*						
Free standing technical co-operation	*1*	*6*	*5*	*5*	*-*						
Net debt relief	*159*	-	-	-	-						

ODA flows to multilateral agencies, 2016



Composition of bilateral ODA, 2016, gross bilateral disbursements



Share of ODA channelled to and through the multilateral system, two year average

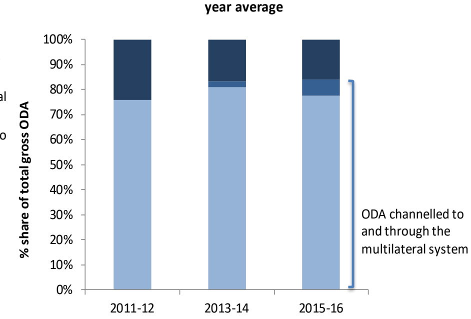


Figure A.3. Bilateral ODA allocable by region and income group

Gross disbursements

Slovak Republic	Constant 2015 USD million					% share					Total DAC
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2015%
Africa	3	2	2	2	2	31	25	21	15	23	**39**
Sub-Saharan Africa	2	2	2	2	2	26	22	20	15	23	**33**
North Africa	0	0	0	-	0	4	3	1	-	0	**4**
Asia	2	3	1	1	1	19	31	16	11	10	**29**
South and Central Asia	1	3	1	1	1	17	29	12	9	8	**17**
Far East	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	2	2	**11**
America	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	3	5	**12**
North and Central America	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	4	**7**
South America	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	**4**
Middle East	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	4	3	7	**13**
Oceania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**2**
Europe	4	4	5	7	6	45	39	58	68	54	**5**
Total bilateral allocable by region	**9**	**10**	**8**	**10**	**11**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Least developed	1	3	1	1	1	17	30	14	10	11	**37**
Other low-income	2	1	1	1	2	18	15	15	15	22	**3**
Lower middle-income	2	3	3	4	4	26	28	35	47	36	**34**
Upper middle-income	3	3	3	3	3	38	27	37	28	32	**26**
More advanced developing countries	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Total bilateral allocable by income	**8**	**9**	**7**	**9**	**10**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
For reference [2] ***:***											
Total bilateral	16	13	14	17	26	*100*	*100*	*100*	*100*	*100*	***100***
of which: Unallocated by region	*8*	*4*	*6*	*7*	*15*	*48*	*28*	*43*	*40*	*59*	***34***
of which: Unallocated by income	*8*	*4*	*6*	*8*	*16*	*48*	*30*	*47*	*45*	*62*	***41***
Fragile and conflict-affected states (as per DCR of each year)	*3*	*5*	*2*	*2*	*4*	*20*	*34*	*17*	*14*	*14*	***33***
SIDS (as per data provided to UN)	*0*	-	-	*0*	*0*	*0*	-	-	*2*	*2*	***4***
Landlocked developing countries (as per data provided to UI	*2*	*4*	*2*	*2*	*1*	*13*	*26*	*13*	*11*	*5*	***13***

1. Each region includes regional amounts which cannot be allocated by sub-region. The sum of the sub-regional amounts may therefore fall short of the regional total.
2. 'Fragile and conflict-affected states' group has overlaps with SIDS and Landlocked developing countries and can therefore not be added. For the same reason, these three groups cannot be added to any income group.

Gross bilateral ODA by income group, 2015-16

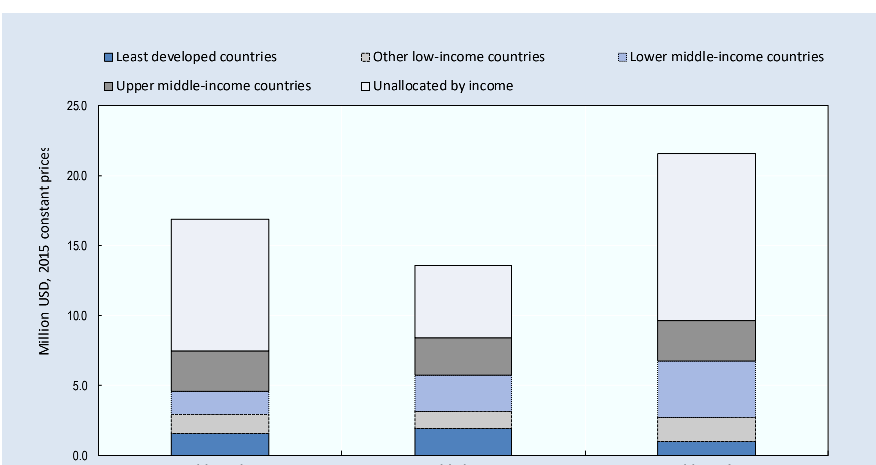


Figure A 3b.

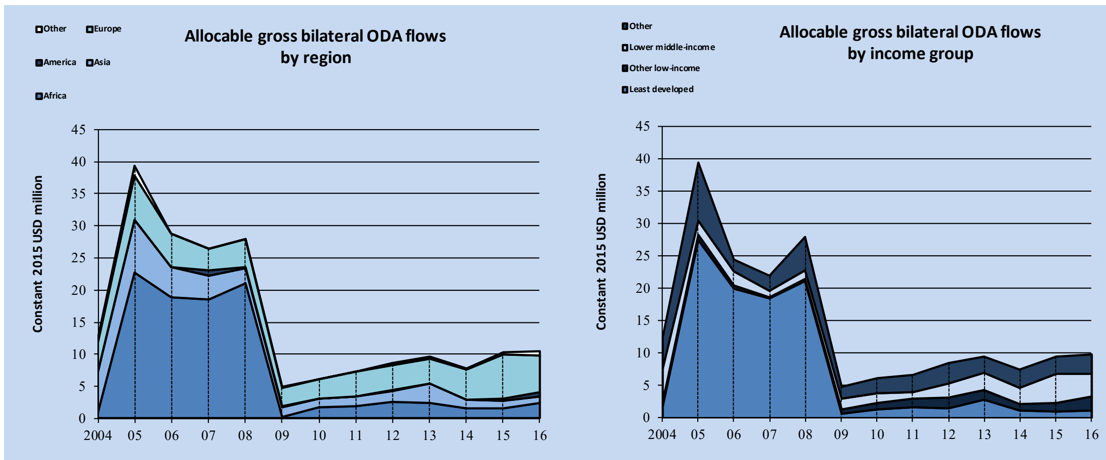

Allocable gross bilateral ODA flows by region
Other
Europe
America
Asia
Africa
Constant 2015 USD million
2004 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
Allocable gross bilateral ODA flows by income group
Other
Lower middle-income
Other low-income
Least developed

Figure A.4. Main recipients of bilateral ODA

Slovak Republic	2011-12 average			Memo:
	Current USD million	Constant 2015 USD mln	% share	*DAC countries' average %*
Kenya	1.6	1.4	8	
Serbia	1.2	1.0	6	
Afghanistan	1.0	0.9	5	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.8	0.6	4	
Ukraine	0.7	0.6	4	
Top 5 recipients	**5.4**	**4.5**	**27**	**30**
South Sudan	0.7	0.6	4	
Montenegro	0.5	0.4	3	
Georgia	0.5	0.4	3	
Moldova	0.3	0.3	2	
Belarus	0.3	0.2	1	
Top 10 recipients	**7.8**	**6.5**	**38**	**40**
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0.2	0.2	1	
Tunisia	0.2	0.2	1	
West Bank and Gaza Strip	0.1	0.1	0	
Egypt	0.1	0.1	0	
Armenia	0.1	0.1	0	
Top 15 recipients	**8.4**	**7.0**	**41**	**45**
Kosovo	0.1	0.0	0	
Jordan	0.0	0.0	0	
Syrian Arab Republic	0.0	0.0	0	
Mongolia	0.0	0.0	0	
Kyrgyzstan	0.0	0.0	0	
Top 20 recipients	**8.6**	**7.2**	**43**	**49**
Total (42 recipients)	**8.9**	**7.5**	**44**	
Unallocated	11.3	9.4	56	37
Total bilateral gross	**20.2**	**16.9**	**100**	**100**

	2013-14 average			Memo:
	Current USD million	Constant 2015 USD mln	% share	*DAC countries' average %*
Afghanistan	1.5	1.2	9	
Kenya	1.4	1.2	9	
Serbia	1.4	1.1	8	
Ukraine	1.1	0.9	7	
Moldova	0.6	0.5	3	
Top 5 recipients	**5.9**	**4.9**	**36**	**27**
South Sudan	0.5	0.5	3	
Georgia	0.5	0.4	3	
Kosovo	0.4	0.4	3	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.4	0.3	2	
Belarus	0.3	0.2	2	
Top 10 recipients	**8.0**	**6.7**	**49**	**39**
Montenegro	0.3	0.2	2	
Tunisia	0.3	0.2	2	
West Bank and Gaza Strip	0.2	0.2	1	
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0.2	0.2	1	
Syrian Arab Republic	0.1	0.1	1	
Top 15 recipients	**9.0**	**7.5**	**55**	**46**
China (People's Republic of)	0.1	0.1	1	
Kyrgyzstan	0.1	0.1	1	
Mongolia	0.1	0.1	0	
Kazakhstan	0.1	0.0	0	
Albania	0.1	0.0	0	
Top 20 recipients	**9.4**	**7.9**	**58**	**52**
Total (52 recipients)	**10.0**	**8.4**	**62**	
Unallocated	6.3	5.2	38	37
Total bilateral gross	**16.3**	**13.6**	**100**	**100**

	2015-16 average			Memo:
	Current USD million	Constant 2015 USD mln	% share	*DAC countries' average %*
Ukraine	2.0	2.1	10	
Kenya	1.7	1.7	8	
Serbia	1.3	1.3	6	
Moldova	0.7	0.7	3	
Georgia	0.4	0.4	2	
Top 5 recipients	**6.1**	**6.2**	**29**	**21**
Kosovo	0.4	0.4	2	
Albania	0.3	0.3	2	
Montenegro	0.3	0.3	2	
Haiti	0.3	0.3	1	
Afghanistan	0.3	0.3	1	
Top 10 recipients	**7.8**	**7.8**	**36**	**33**
South Sudan	0.2	0.2	1	
Syrian Arab Republic	0.2	0.2	1	
Belarus	0.2	0.2	1	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.2	0.2	1	
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0.1	0.1	1	
Top 15 recipients	**8.7**	**8.7**	**40**	**41**
West Bank and Gaza Strip	0.1	0.1	1	
Lebanon	0.1	0.1	0	
China (People's Republic of)	0.1	0.1	0	
Iraq	0.1	0.1	0	
Nepal	0.1	0.1	0	
Top 20 recipients	**9.1**	**9.1**	**42**	**47**
Total (47 recipients)	**9.6**	**9.6**	**45**	
Unallocated	11.9	11.9	55	47
Total bilateral gross	**21.5**	**21.5**	**100**	**100**

Figure A.5. Bilateral ODA by major purposes

At constant prices and exchange rates

Commitments - Two-year average

Slovak Republic	2013-14 average 2015 USD million	2013-14 average %	2015-16 average 2015 USD million	2015-16 average %	DAC 2015-16 %
Social infrastructure & services	**7**	**62**	**11**	**59**	**34**
Education	4	33	4	24	7
of which: basic education	0	1	0	2	2
Health	0	2	1	5	5
of which: basic health	0	1	1	4	4
Population & reproductive health	0	0	0	0	7
Water supply & sanitation	0	1	1	3	4
Government & civil society	3	24	5	25	10
of which: Conflict, peace & security	1	11	1	8	2
Other social infrastructure & services	0	1	0	2	2
Economic infrastructure & services	**0**	**2**	**0**	**1**	**18**
Transport & storage	0	0	-	-	8
Communications	0	0	0	0	0
Energy	0	1	0	1	7
Banking & financial services	-	-	-	-	2
Business & other services	0	0	0	0	1
Production sectors	**1**	**6**	**1**	**3**	**6**
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	1	5	1	3	4
Industry, mining & construction	0	0	0	0	1
Trade & tourism	0	0	0	0	1
Multisector	**0**	**2**	**1**	**7**	**10**
Commodity and programme aid	**0**	**0**	-	-	**2**
Action relating to debt	-	-	-	-	**1**
Humanitarian aid	**1**	**5**	**2**	**10**	**12**
Administrative costs of donors	**2**	**16**	**2**	**10**	**5**
Refugees in donor countries	**1**	**7**	**2**	**9**	**12**
Total bilateral allocable	**12**	**100**	**18**	**100**	**100**
For reference:					
Total bilateral	*13*	*18*	*23*	*22*	*87*
of which: Unallocated	*2*	*2*	*5*	*5*	*1*
Total multilateral	*60*	*82*	*81*	*78*	*13*
Total ODA	***73***	***100***	***104***	***100***	***100***

Commitments

	2013-2014 USD Million	2013-2014 % Bilateral Allocable	2015-2016 USD Million	2015-2016 % Bilateral Allocable
Gender equality	1	*5*	4	*21*
Environment	1	*12*	2	*10*
Rio markers				
Biodiversity	0	*2*	0	*0*
Desertification	0	*0*	0	*0*
Climate change Mitigation only	0	*3*	0	*0*
Climate change Adaptation only	0	*1*	0	*1*
Both climate adaptation and mitigation	0	*0*	0	*0*

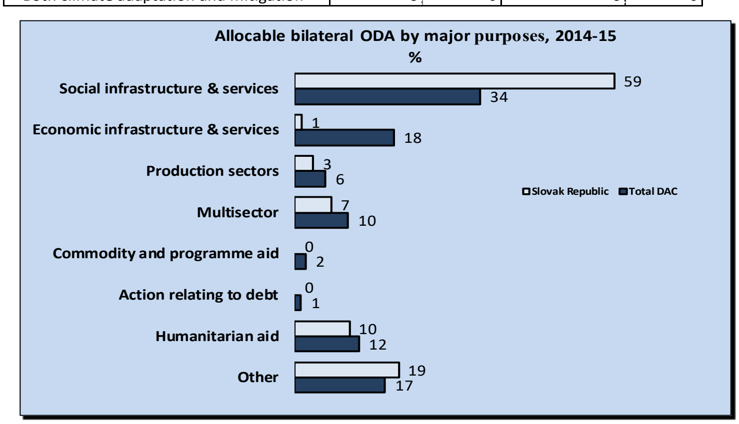


Figure A.6. Comparative aid performance of DAC members

	Official development assistance			Share of multilateral aid				Grant element of ODA commitments	Untied aid % of bilateral commitments
	Net disbursements								*Commitments*
	2016		2009-10 to 2014-15 Average annual % change in real terms	2016				2016	2015
				% of ODA		% of GNI			
	USD million	% of GNI		(b)	(c)	(b)	(c)	% (a)	(d)
Australia	3 278	0.27	-0.4	30.1		0.08		100.0	100.0
Austria	1 635	0.42	7.4	39.7	19.5	0.17	0.08	100.0	51.8
Belgium	2 300	0.55	-3.7	38.0	13.8	0.21	0.08	99.8	95.8
Canada	3 930	0.26	-1.3	32.3		0.08		97.8	95.6
Czech Republic	260	0.14	3.7	72.6	9.8	0.10	0.01	100.0	45.9
Denmark	2 369	0.75	-0.2	30.2	19.1	0.23	0.14	100.0	99.0
Finland	1 060	0.44	-1.1	39.8	19.4	0.17	0.09	100.0	95.3
France	9 622	0.38	-3.2	41.4	15.8	0.16	0.06	83.4	96.3
Germany	24 736	0.70	12.2	20.6	9.6	0.14	0.07	89.3	86.2
Greece	369	0.19	-3.4	56.8	4.9	0.11	0.01	100.0	90.3
Hungary	199	0.17	11.1	72.5	14.9	0.12	0.02	100.0	..
Iceland	59	0.28	9.7	18.8		0.05		100.0	100.0
Ireland	803	0.32	-1.3	46.8	21.7	0.15	0.07	100.0	100.0
Italy	5 087	0.27	7.7	52.4	17.6	0.14	0.05	99.9	95.0
Japan	10 417	0.20	3.6	32.3		0.07		85.7	77.4
Korea	2 246	0.16	9.7	31.1		0.05		93.4	56.0
Luxembourg	391	1.00	1.1	29.7	20.5	0.30	0.20	100.0	98.9
Netherlands	4 966	0.65	-0.1	36.4	25.2	0.24	0.16	100.0	98.8
New Zealand	438	0.25	3.1	18.3		0.05		100.0	84.7
Norway	4 380	1.12	4.8	21.2		0.24		100.0	100.0
Poland	663	0.15	11.3	77.5	17.0	0.11	0.02	97.6	34.5
Portugal	343	0.17	-11.0	63.6	10.0	0.11	0.02	95.2	59.1
Slovak Republic	106	0.12	7.5	75.8	9.4	0.09	0.01	100.0	64.3
Slovenia	81	0.19	7.0	65.7	14.5	0.12	0.03	100.0	53.4
Spain	4 278	0.35	-7.5	39.3	12.6	0.14	0.04	100.0	82.1
Sweden	4 894	0.94	6.6	29.5	23.4	0.28	0.22	100.0	96.3
Switzerland	3 582	0.53	6.6	22.6		0.12		100.0	94.3
United Kingdom	18 053	0.70	6.8	36.2	25.0	0.25	0.17	96.2	100.0
United States	34 412	0.19	-0.1	17.1		0.03		100.0	64.7
Total DAC	**144 956**	**0.32**	**2.9**	**28.8**		**0.09**		**94.2**	**81.3**

Notes:

a. Excluding debt reorganisation.

b. Including EU institutions.

c. Excluding EU institutions.

d. Excluding administrative costs and in-donor refugee costs.

.. Data not available.

Figure A.7. Comparative performance of aid to LDCs

	Bilateral ODA to LDCs 2016			Total ODA to LDCs (Bilateral and through multilateral agencies) 2016			Grant element of bilateral ODA commitments[a] to LDCs (two alternative norms)		
				Net disbursements					*Commitments*
							Annually for all LDCs Norm: 90%		3-year average for each LDC Norm: 86%
	USD million	% bilateral ODA	% of GNI	USD million	% total ODA	% of GNI	2015	2016	2014-2016
Australia	534	23.3	0.04	839	25.6	0.07	100.0	100.0	c
Austria	43	4.4	0.01	250	15.3	0.06	100.0	100.0	c
Belgium	398	27.9	0.10	638	27.7	0.15	99.3	99.3	n
Canada	830	31.2	0.06	1 343	34.2	0.09	100.0	100.0	c
Czech Republic	10	14.6	0.01	55	21.2	0.03	100.0	100.0	c
Denmark	405	24.5	0.13	652	27.5	0.21	100.0	100.0	c
Finland	195	30.6	0.08	323	30.5	0.13	100.0	100.0	c
France	886	15.7	0.04	2 103	21.9	0.08	79.8	80.9	n
Germany	2 093	10.7	0.06	3 582	14.5	0.10	98.5	95.9	n
Greece	0	0.1	0.00	47	12.8	0.02	100.0	100.0	c
Hungary	5	8.9	0.00	40	20.1	0.03	100.0	100.0	..
Iceland	14	28.7	0.07	18	29.8	0.08	100.0	100.0	c
Ireland	239	55.9	0.09	359	44.7	0.14	100.0	100.0	c
Italy	296	12.2	0.02	981	19.3	0.05	98.9	98.8	c
Japan	2 568	36.4	0.05	3 978	38.2	0.08	91.3	91.5	c
Korea	578	37.3	0.04	758	33.7	0.05	94.5	93.0	c
Luxembourg	127	46.0	0.32	164	42.0	0.42	100.0	100.0	c
Netherlands	507	16.0	0.07	1 185	23.9	0.15	100.0	100.0	c
New Zealand	113	31.7	0.06	136	31.1	0.08	100.0	100.0	c
Norway	659	19.1	0.17	1 035	23.6	0.27	100.0	100.0	c
Poland	72	48.1	0.02	184	27.7	0.04	83.9	80.4	n
Portugal	46	36.8	0.02	100	29.0	0.05	92.0	92.2	n
Slovak Republic	1	4.1	0.00	19	17.9	0.02	100.0	100.0	c
Slovenia	0	1.5	0.00	13	16.4	0.03	100.0	100.0	c
Spain	81	3.1	0.01	567	13.2	0.05	100.0	100.0	c
Sweden	838	24.3	0.16	1 406	28.7	0.27	100.0	100.0	c
Switzerland	574	20.7	0.08	896	25.0	0.13	100.0	100.0	c
United Kingdom	3 176	27.6	0.12	5 625	31.2	0.22	100.0	100.0	c
United States	9 346	32.8	0.05	11 870	34.5	0.06	100.0	100.0	c
Total DAC	**24 634**	**23.9**	**0.05**	**39 165**	**27.0**	**0.09**	**96.9**	**97.0**	**..**

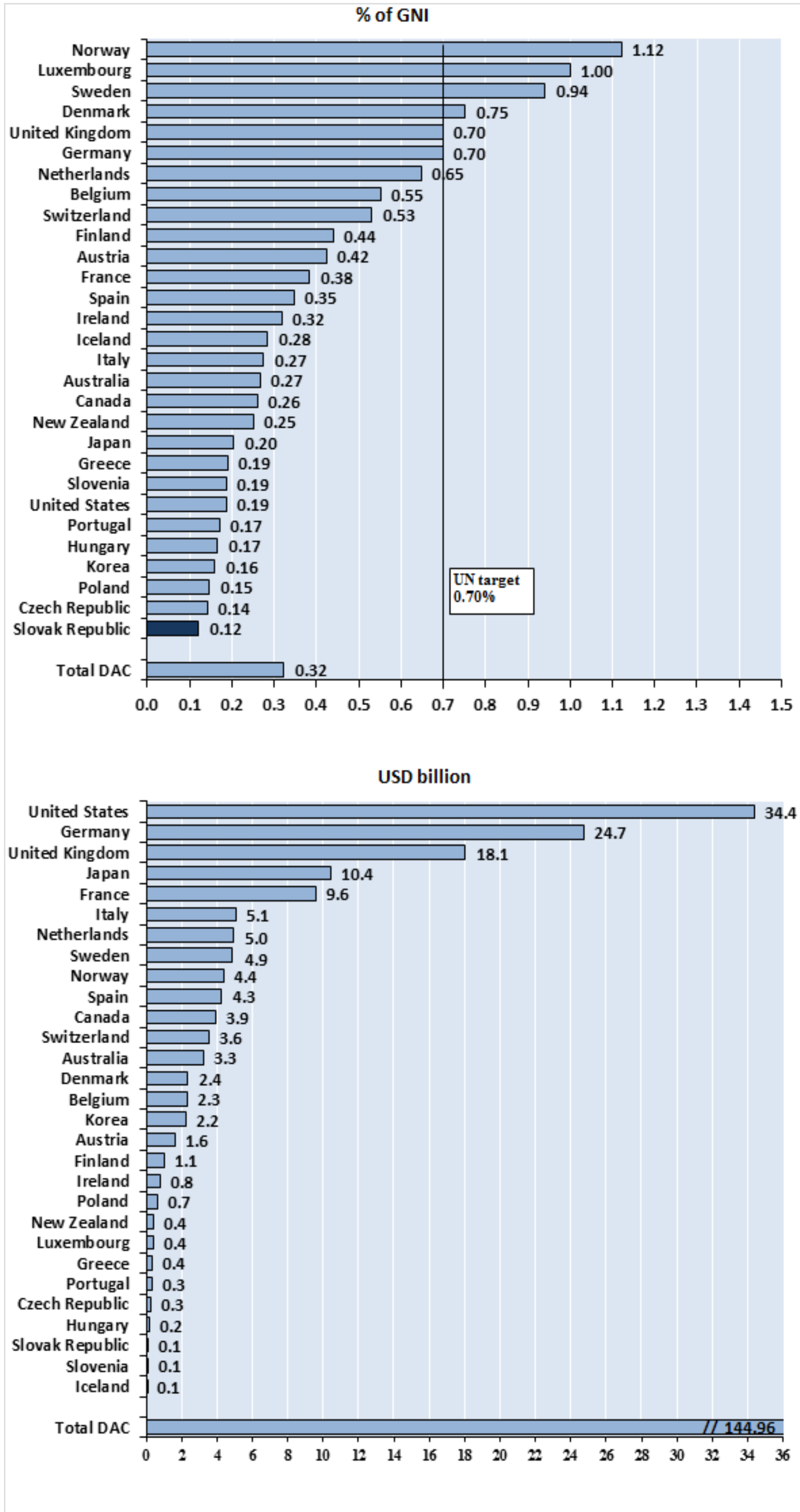
Notes:

a. Excluding debt reorganisation. Equities are treated as having 100% grant element, but are not treated as loans.

b. c = compliance, n = non compliance.

.. Data not available.

Figure A.8. Net ODA from DAC countries in 2016



Annex B. Perspectives from Kenya and Moldova on Slovak development co-operation

As part of the peer review of the Slovak Republic, a team of examiners from Finland and Iceland held a skype call with Nairobi which included governmental officials, Embassy Head of Mission and a development diplomat, representatives of the EU delegation, and implementing partners. A meeting with the development diplomat in Moldova and government, NGO and academic implementing partners was also held during the headquarters mission to Bratislava in March 2018.

B.1 Towards a comprehensive Slovak development effort

Slovak Republic – Kenya development co-operation

The Republic of Kenya received USD 2 189 million in net ODA in 2016, representing 3.1% of GNI and making it the 4th top recipient of ODA in Africa (OECD, 2018a).

The Slovak Republic has been co-operating with Kenya since the mid-1990s. The first activities of Slovak NGOs in Kenya date back to 1995. In 2004, Kenya became one of the territorial priorities of SlovakAid and was selected as a "programme country" in 2009. Three years later, the first Slovak Development Co-operation Forum took place in Nairobi to shape the country programme. In 2012, the Slovak Republic became a member of the Donor Co-ordination Group (DCG), which is composed of the major development partners in Kenya. A first inter-governmental agreement on development co-operation with Kenya was signed in 2013 for a three-year period; in 2017, a second agreement was signed with an automatic renewal clause.

At the political level, co-operation between the Slovak Republic and Kenya is mainly through the Slovak Embassy in Nairobi. During the 32nd session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, that took place on 19-21 December 2016 in Nairobi, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) of the Slovak Republic, Lukáš Parízek, represented the Council of the European Union. On 12-15 February 2017, the President of the Slovak Republic Andrej Kiska and State Secretary of MFEA made their first official visit to Kenya to discuss the development and economic co-operation between the two countries, resulting in plans to further strengthen their bilateral development co-operation.

Slovak Republic – Moldova development co-operation

The Republic of Moldova received USD 328.4 million in 2016 as net ODA, which represented 4.6% of GNI (OECD, 2018b). Its main donors are EU Institutions, followed by the United States and Romania. Diplomatic relations between Moldova and the Slovak Republic date back to 1993. Slovak support to Moldova was limited to a few *ad hoc* projects until 2009, after which Moldova became a key partner for the Slovak development co-operation. From 2009 to 2013, Moldova was supported as one of the Eastern Partnership project countries; in July 2013 the Slovak Republic opened its Embassy in Chisinau; and an inter-governmental agreement on development co-operation with Moldova was signed in October 2013. A year later, Moldova became a "programme country" of SlovakAid. So far, the Slovak Republic and Moldova signed 21 agreements in different areas (political, commercial, economic, financial, transport, social security, etc.) (MFEA, 2014b). In April 2018, a Slovak Development Forum was held in Chisinau in order to discuss the new development co-operation strategy for 2019-2023.

The Slovak Republic bases its political dialogue with Moldova on its own transformation experience in order to help the democratic transition and the EU integration of Moldova. The first official high-level visit took place in June 2007, when the Slovak Republic's president, Ivan Gašparovič visited Moldova. Several ministerial level visits also took place since 2008.

B.2 Slovak Republic's policies, strategies and aid allocation

Activities don't fully align with Kenyan new national priorities

Kenya has been the second largest beneficiary of SlovakAid since 2013. The Slovak Republic disbursed on average USD 1.4 million annually to Kenya between 2010 and 2015, increasing to USD 2.1 million in 2016 (Figure C.1), which represents 8% of Slovak bilateral ODA in 2016. This is equivalent to about 0.10% of total net ODA to Kenya in 2016.

The Slovak Republic's intervention in Kenya is built on its civil society's work in the country, spread across several projects in different sectors: healthcare, agriculture, education, the rule of law, security, peace building and conflict management (MFEA, 2014). According to the DAC Creditor Reporting System, the Slovak Republic reported 20 bilateral activities in Kenya in 2016. The majority of those activities consisted of: (i) donor country personnel interventions;[1] (ii) project-type interventions supported by the Slovak Agency for International Development Co-operation (SAIDC) and implemented by Slovak NGOs and civil society and the public sector; and, (iii) the Slovak governmental scholarship programme managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports (MSSVVS) of the Slovak Republic. The largest annual commitment in 2016 amounted to USD 276 460, provided to an agricultural development project. Three projects committed about USD 250 000, while the scholarship programme committed around USD 117 000. The remaining average commitment was below USD 10 000. The Government of Kenya has reviewed its national priorities outlined in the national development agenda for 2018-2022, known as the "Big Four".[2] Slovak Republic activities don't fully align with Kenya's new national priorities. This should be corrected to ensure the Slovak Republic keeps up with its commitments to development effectiveness.

Slovak support to Moldova is focussed and aligned with local priorities

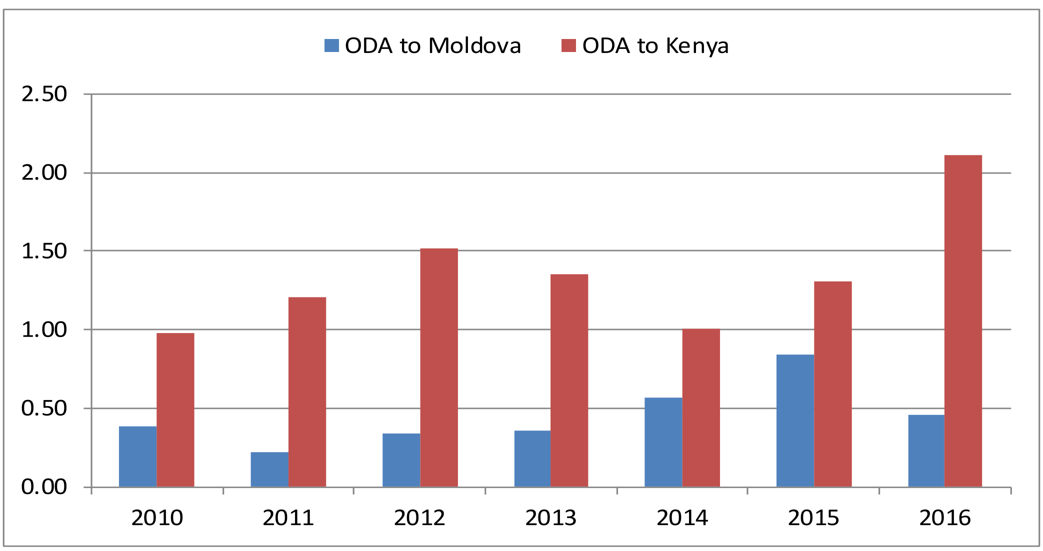
Slovak bilateral co-operation with Moldova is much more focussed than with Kenya, through the prioritisation of two sectors: good governance, and water and sanitation (MFEA, 2014b), which are aligned with local priorities.

Moldova has been among the top five recipients of Slovak bilateral aid since 2013. According to the most recent DAC data, the Slovak Republic disbursed USD 0.46 million to Moldova in 2016, a decrease from USD 0.85 million in 2015 (Figure C.1). 2016 disbursements were equivalent to about 2% of the 2016 Slovak bilateral ODA budget, and to about 0.14% of total net ODA to Moldova in 2016.

In Moldova, the Slovak Republic reported 17 bilateral activities in 2016: mostly project-type interventions (12) managed by the Agency and implemented by the public sector and Slovak NGOs and civil society organisations; a few donor country personnel projects (4), concerning experience exchange, travel of Slovak Experts and the promotion of civic activism of youth in Moldova, mainly implemented by the public sector and NGO and civil society; and the Slovak governmental scholarship programme. The largest commitment was about USD 110 600 (water and sanitation and waste management project), another project committed around USD 100 000, the scholarship programme committed around USD 68 000, but the majority of them, as for Kenya, were under USD 10 000.

Figure B.8. Slovak ODA disbursements to Kenya and Moldova, 2010-2016

Net disbursements, constant prices (USD 2016), USD million



Source: OECD (2018), "Geographical distribution of financial flows: Flows to developing countries", OECD International Development Statistics (database), DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00566-en.

B.3 Organisation and management

Embassies in Nairobi and Chisinau are core contact points for the Slovak government

The Slovak Republic has embassies in both countries, in Nairobi and in Chisinau, each hosting a Slovak development diplomat appointed from the agency staff. Although small, embassies are considered as the core contact points for the Slovak government. For instance, the Embassy in Chisinau participates in the Slovak-Moldovan Consulting Group for the EU, which is a working group composed of representatives of both Slovak and Moldovan ministries to discuss the EU agenda and identify areas of intervention for the Slovak Republic in order to support the partner country.

An overall programmatic approach is missing

There is a clear division of labour between embassy and agency staff: the embassies can provide small financial contributions which are in high demand and are mainly used for stand-alone ongoing projects. Embassy staff also collaborate with the SAIDC in managing the call for proposals as well as monitoring implemented projects. Ministries consult the embassies on their plans and exchange information on their work. However, an overall programmatic approach is missing: the projects are managed through Slovak-based entities with local partners, with no apparent links to each other. The teams managing calls for proposals in Bratislava have very limited travel budgets, and therefore may rely on embassies for first-hand knowledge of the local context.

B.4 Partnerships, results and accountability

The Slovak Republic works mainly with the EU in Kenya and with few other partners in Moldova

The Slovak Republic emphasises the importance of partnering with international, national and local actors. In Kenya, the Slovak Republic participates in EU joint programming, donor co-ordination meetings, such as the "Development Effectiveness Group" (previously called "Aid Effectiveness Group"). This group is formed by the Government of Kenya and its development partners and meets once a month, and supports and engages with the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. The Slovak Republic also participates in the EU joint programming in Moldova, participates in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the Eastern Partnership programme, the Friends of Moldova (formally known as the European Action Group for the Republic of Moldova), and the Task Force on Moldova which was inaugurated in 2011. It also implements joint-activities with the V4 group, in particular with the Czech Republic in the field of water and sanitation and waste management, and co-operates with the UNDP through the programme for Strengthening Public Finance Capacities in the Western Balkans and Commonwealth of Independent States – Public Finance for Development, implemented by the UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and CIS.

In Kenya, the projects are led by the SAIDC, the MFEA and, for the scholarships programme, by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports (MŠVVŠ). In Moldova the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic is also a major partner through its collaboration with the UNDP on the Public Finance Management programme.

Notes

[1] Donor country personal activity consisted of: Training of nurses (health sector), Travel of Slovak experts (government and civil society), Promotion of environmental protection in Kenya (general environment protection), Sustainable development and responsible agriculture in Kenya (agriculture), Volunteering activities in social work regarding social rehabilitation of street children through scouting and sports, Help former street children with basic education (basic education), Education project in St. Cecilia Orphanage (education), Sending volunteers in Malindi and Nairobi, ICT - Development of start-ups in Kenya (communication). Creditor Reporting System, consulted 5 may 2018, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=CRS1

[2] The "Big Four" Agenda identifies four sectoral priorities: universal healthcare, food security, manufacturing, and housing. https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001270097/the-big-four-are-rightly-pegged-on-kenya-vision-2030

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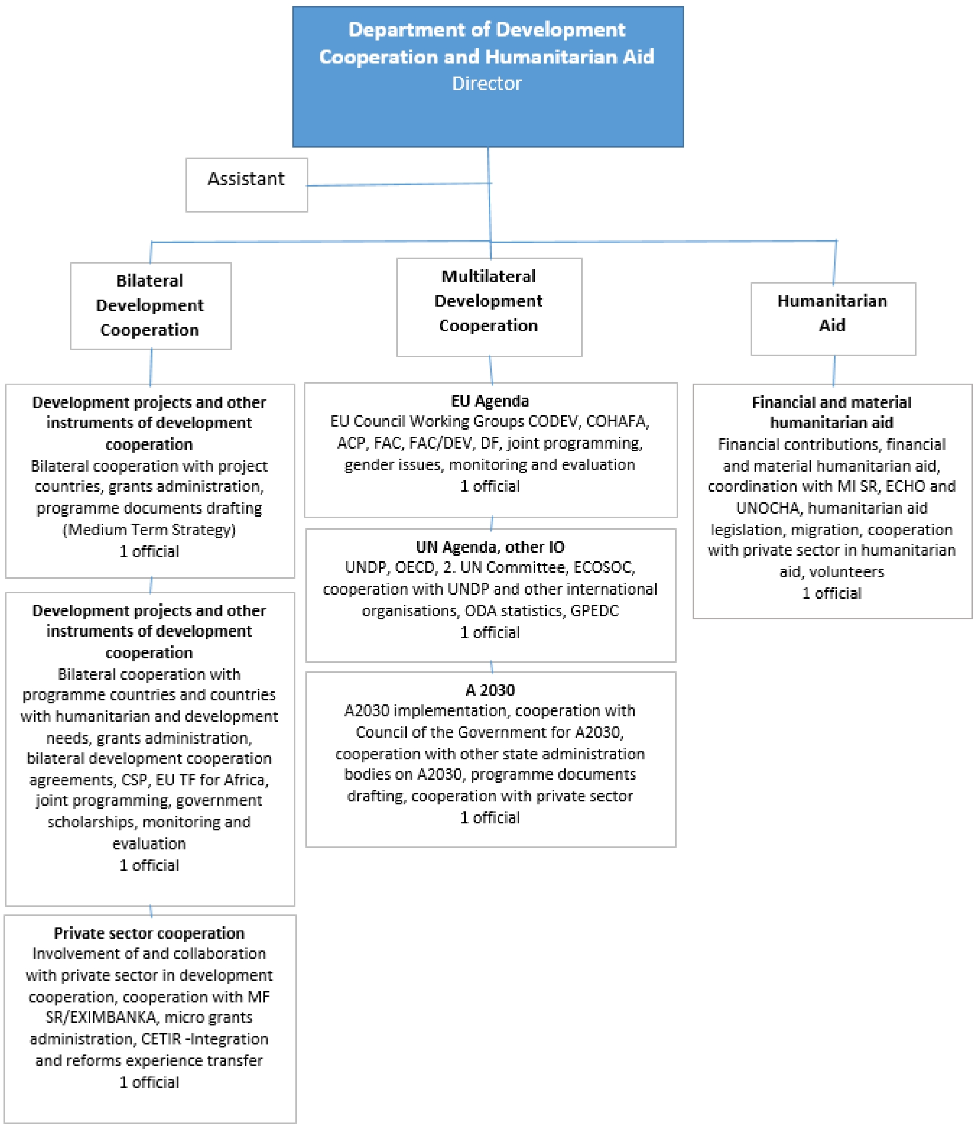
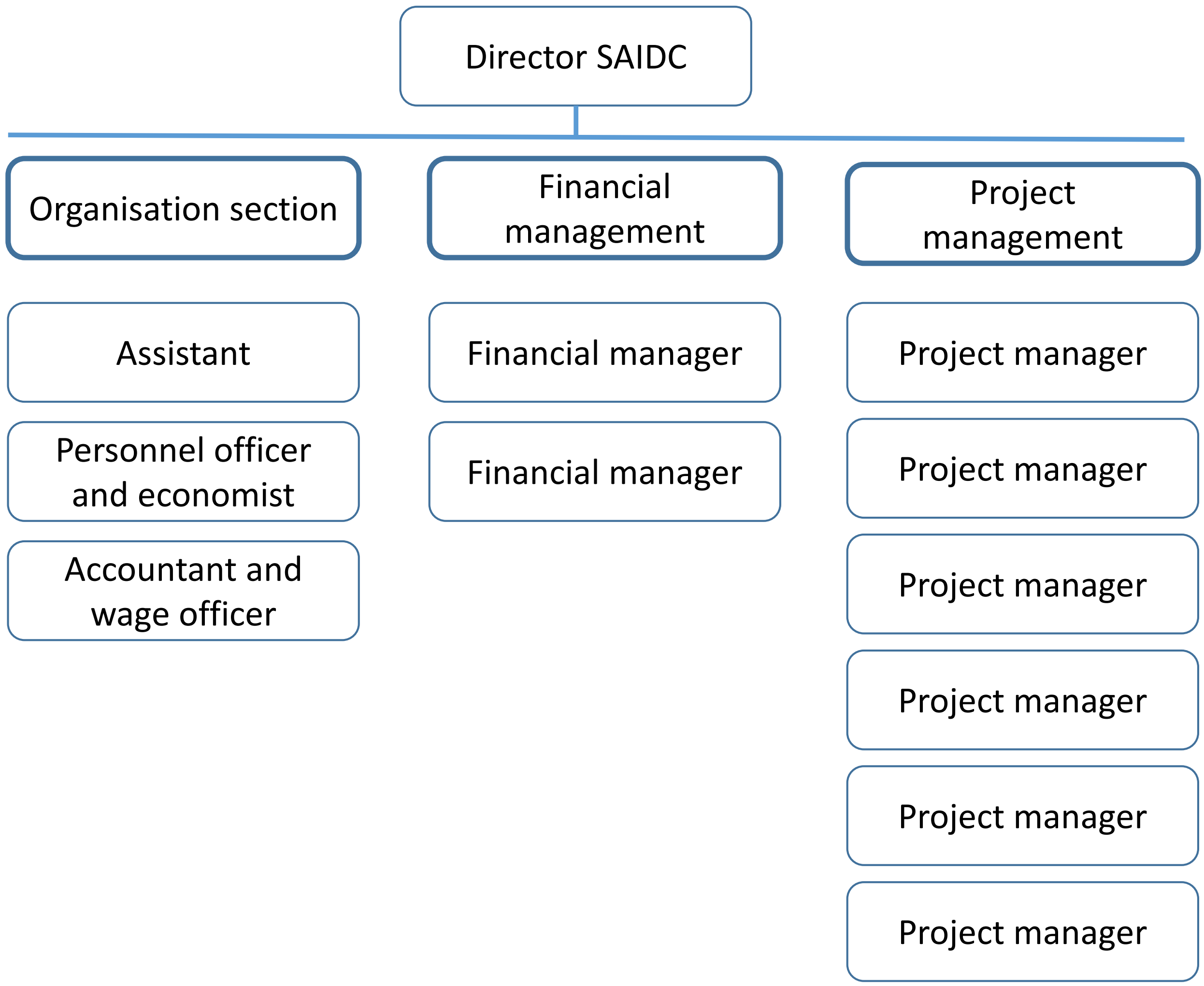
Annex C. Organisational charts

Figure C.1. The organisational structure of the Department of Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid



Source: Memorandum of the Slovak Republic.

Figure C.2. The organisational structure of the SAIDC



Source: Memorandum of the Slovak Republic

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SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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This peer review of the Slovak Republic, the first since it joined the DAC in 2013, shows how the country successfully raised its voice and influence in global fora, and documents its efforts to align with the 2030 Agenda. The report recommends that the Slovak Republic continue to build its policy framework, sharpen its focus, and embed the management systems needed for an effective development co-operation programme.

Consult this publication on line at ***https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264312326-en***.

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