

COUNTRY FACTSHEET: Slovakia 2015

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Slovakia during 2015, including latest statistics.

2. Common European Asylum System

Amendments of the Act on Asylum were approved due to the transposition of Directives 2013/32/EU¹ and 2013/33/EU²:

- ★ Third-country national (TCN) applying for asylum (i.e. international protection) at a police department which is lawfully not competent to receive asylum claims, will still be considered an applicant for up to three days. They are entitled to accommodation, allowances, basic hygiene products and healthcare³.
- ★ A special procedure for asylum seekers who need special procedural guarantees, such as postponement of conducting the interview, was introduced;
- ★ Applications can be refused as inadmissible, in the case of e.g. subsequent applications where a final decision was made on not granting/extending or withdrawal of asylum/subsidiary protection, or when considered as manifestly unfounded;

¹ Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection

² Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection

³ In Slovakia, the competent (police) authority where third-country nationals can legitimately submit their asylum claims differs based on their situation – it can be border crossing police, asylum police department in Humenne, transit police department, police detention centre, relevant police department to medical facility, police department according to place of custody or execution of sentence, relevant police department to Social Protection of Children and Social Guardianship facilities.

- ★ Applicants without a legal representative in the first-instance proceedings can request information concerning their applications from authorised ministry staff members (other than the one who conducted the interview or who assessed the applications). The staff are obliged to enable the applicant's representative to give an opinion on the interview.
- ★ The Ministry of Interior shall ensure, if possible, the conducting of the interview and interpretation by a same-sex person at the asylum seeker's request (not only for reasons recognised as valid, as previously stipulated in the legislation).

Authorities started to use a **new documentation** ('social profile') to register important information about applicants, including level of vulnerability and related special needs, accessible by all stakeholders involved.

Based on an **agreement with Austria** from July 2015, Slovakia provides accommodation capacity and boarding for up to 500 applicants from Austria at the same time. Austria remains responsible for the care and security of the applicants on location and for deciding on their asylum applications. The preliminary term for the agreement is two years.

In December 2015, Slovakia also carried out an **ad-hoc humanitarian admission of 149 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Iraq** (25 families) who were granted asylum in January 2016.

Slovakia **continued to participate in humanitarian transfers** through its territory as part of resettlement processes, providing temporary shelter to 98 refugees and resettling 146 refugees to the USA. Humanitarian transfers are carried out based on the trilateral agreement between the Slovak Government, UNHCR and IOM. The maximum capacity of the Emergency Transit Centre was increased from 150 to 250 persons present at the same time.

3. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

In 2015, Slovakia adopted partial legislative amendments concerning **unaccompanied minors (UAM) under the asylum procedure**. The following legislative changes took effect as from July 2015:

- ★ The stay of UAMs in **Social Protection of Children and Social Guardianship** facilities during the asylum procedures, also if they attain full age during the asylum procedure and apply for it;
- ★ A financial contribution to facilitate the independence of UAM who attain full age while placed in the foster home;
- ★ An obligation of the foster home to create conditions for interviewing UAMs during their asylum procedures well as for their meetings with international organisations' representatives;
- ★ An obligation of the foster home to inform the Ministry of Interior if an UAM applying for asylum left the foster home without consent. If the UAM does not return within 7 days, the procedure is discontinued.

In addition to new provisions listed in the Section 2 above, amendments to national legislation on vulnerable groups brought the following changes:

- ★ Identification of their special needs to create appropriate conditions for accommodation and care;
- ★ Mandatory presence of the minor when his/her asylum/subsidiary protection claim is submitted.

4. European Policy on Legal migration and Integration

A. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

The Government created an **internet portal** with basic information on entry and residence of foreigners, as well as on housing, employment and education, which is available since January 2016.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family was involved in the **transnational project 'Headstart: Fostering Integration before Departure'**, implemented by IOM, which ran until June 2015 and aimed to increase the capacities of countries of origin for the provision of efficient pre-departure integration services to third-country nationals coming to the EU.

B. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Slovakia focuses on carrying out an analysis and prognosis on shortage occupations. In 2015, such prognosis outlined the list of highly-qualified and qualified shortage occupations until 2019.

As for **legislative changes**, the Ministry of Economy proposed:

- ★ **Start-up visas** for TCN as part of the Concept for Supporting Start-ups and Start-up Ecosystems from June 2015. The proposal suggested, among others, that national visas are to be granted to TCNs based on the development of an innovative business idea to be deployed in the territory of Slovakia. It is expected that start-up visa is fully functional by the end of the first quarter of 2016.
- ★ **National training centres** as part of the draft Strategy for National Training Centres, which will be established by self-governing regions for strategic or perspective sectors facing a shortage of qualified labour force. These centres could be also used for re-training courses for migrants.

C. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Legislative amendments to the Act on Residence of Aliens extended the category of persons who can be granted permanent residence. Children (under 18) under the personal care of a TCN with permanent residence for an indefinite period of time, can be granted permanent residence for an indefinite period of time as well.

D. INTEGRATION

As of July 2015 **amendments to the Act on Asylum** became effective and asylum seekers can access the labour market as from nine months instead of one year without the need of a work permit.

In 2015, the first **Integration Programme for Beneficiaries of International Protection** started to be prepared as an interim scheme, and as a systemic solution should run for the integration of beneficiaries of international protection from 2017. The programme will focus on the following priorities: housing, employment and education.

In 2015, the Government decided that Universities of Third Age should ensure functioning of Slovak language courses (including Slovak culture realities) for asylum seekers and persons under international protection as of 2016.

Several plans were approved throughout 2015 to fight discrimination:

- ★ In February 2015, the **National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic**, with a focus on vulnerable groups including migrants was approved;
- ★ Based on the Strategy, the new **Action Plan on Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination 2015-2019** was prepared and approved;
- ★ In October 2015, a new **working group on refugee and migrant rights** was established under the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality.

Local authorities were involved in facilitating the integration of TCNs. Until the end of June 2015, the Association of Slovak Towns and Cities (ZMOS) implemented the project 'BUK: Capacity Building at the Level of Local Territorial Self-Governments in the Field of Integration Policy', providing assistance to local authorities in the integration of TCNs through pilot-measures.

E. MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY⁴

The **National Border Control Management Plan of the Slovak Republic 2015-2018** was approved in March 2015. Minor legislative changes to the Act on Residence of Aliens have been approved in relation to border management.

In terms of **institutional changes**, a mechanism to deal with increased irregular migration flows has been put in place, including:

- ★ Decisions on reinforcement of service in the detection of irregular migration on the Slovak territory, both in terms of forces and funds;
- ★ Constant monitoring and evaluation of irregular migration in Slovakia.

Since January 2015, Slovakia is also outsourcing fingerprinting in Ukraine and the Russian Federation to external companies in these countries.

F. EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY

Slovakia has changed the **development cooperation mechanism**, with the aim to increase the effectiveness, flexibility and transparency of development aid. The new **Act on development cooperation** with effect from 1 January 2016 provides for new:

- ★ Partnerships, involving civil society (including NGOs from abroad), self-governments, private and academic sectors, international organisations and other entities;

- ★ Development tools including contracts awarded directly in the partner country; debt relief; soft export loans; and donation of movable property;
- ★ Humanitarian tools like subsidies and direct contracts.

5. Irregular Migration and Return

In November 2015, the Government adopted a **resolution** for the increase in the number of positions in the Police Force and Ministry of Interior, and also to create a **foreign police unit for the protection of the EU Schengen borders** to be deployed in crisis situations based on bilateral agreements or as part of Frontex activities. The unit can also be deployed in Slovakia.

The new **National Border Control Management Plan 2015-2018** from March 2015 also includes measures to improve control systems and security in the Schengen border with Ukraine.

A new agreement with Hungary to deploy 50 members of Police Force to guard the Hungarian-Serbian border for one month (October 2015) became effective.

In June 2015, the **Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Combatting Irregular Migration** was signed with effect from September 2015.

6. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

The Expert Group on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings adopted a new **National Referral Mechanism** in November 2015, formalising the system of providing assistance and help to victims.

In February 2015, the **National Programme for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2015-2018**, was approved, including a National Action Plan focusing on partnership, prevention, protection of victims and prosecution.

Partial transposition of Directive 2012/29/EU started in 2015, which will be finished in second half of 2016.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

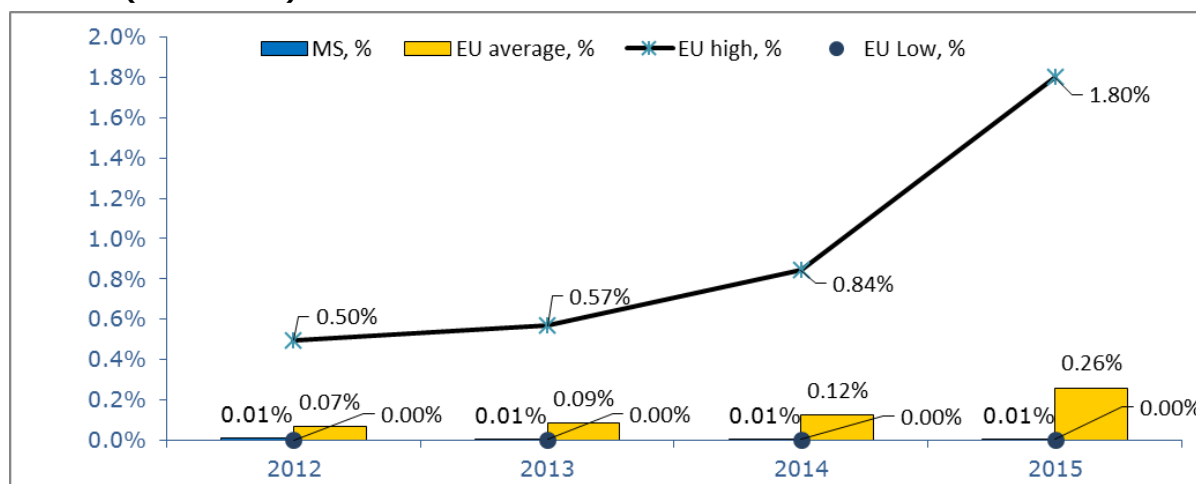
The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Slovakia on aspects of migration and international protection (2013-2015), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return, visas and allocation of EU funds. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

⁴ "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Slovakia (2012-2015)

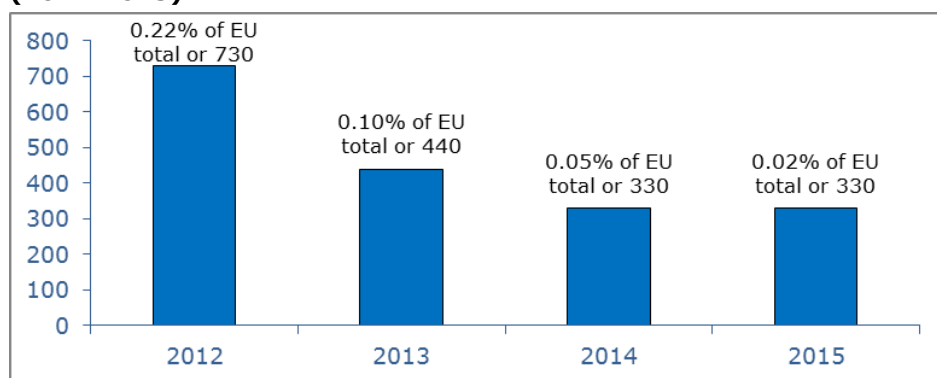
1. COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Slovakia, EU average and EU high and low (2012-2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2012-2015)



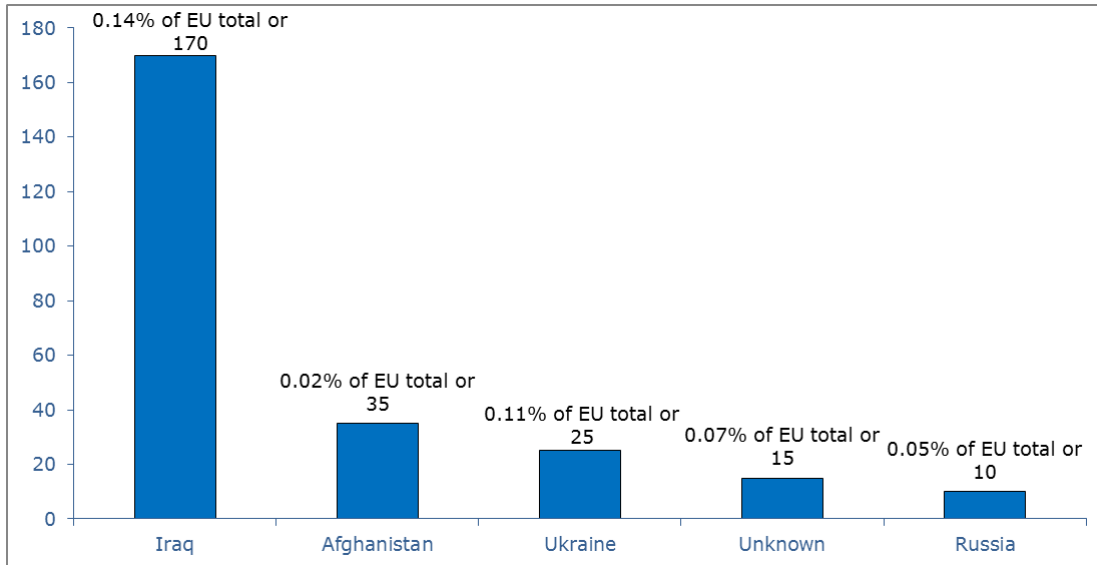
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2012-2015)

2012			2013			2014			2015		
Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total
Somalia	225	31%	Afghanistan	110	25%	Afghanistan	95	29%	Iraq	170	52%
Afghanistan	90	12%	Somalia	55	13%	Syria	40	12%	Afghanistan	35	11%
Georgia	55	8%	Georgia	35	8%	Ukraine, Vietnam	25	8%	Ukraine	25	8%
Congo	45	6%	Eritrea	30	7%	Somalia	20	6%	Unknown	15	5%
Armenia	35	5%	Armenia	25	6%	Georgia, Unknown	15	5%	Russia, India, Syria	10	3%

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 04/07/2016

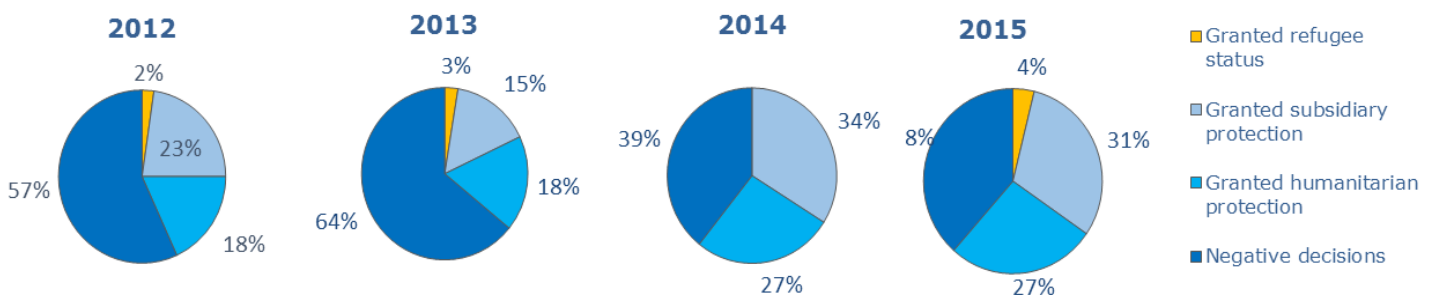
Note: the figure reads as: Slovakia received 170 asylum applications from Iraq or 0.14% of all asylum applications lodged by Iraq in EU in 2015

Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2012-2015)

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:		Humanitarian reasons	Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection		
2012	440	190	10	100	80	250
2013	190	70	5	30	35	125
2014	280	170	0	95	75	110
2015	130	80	5	40	35	50

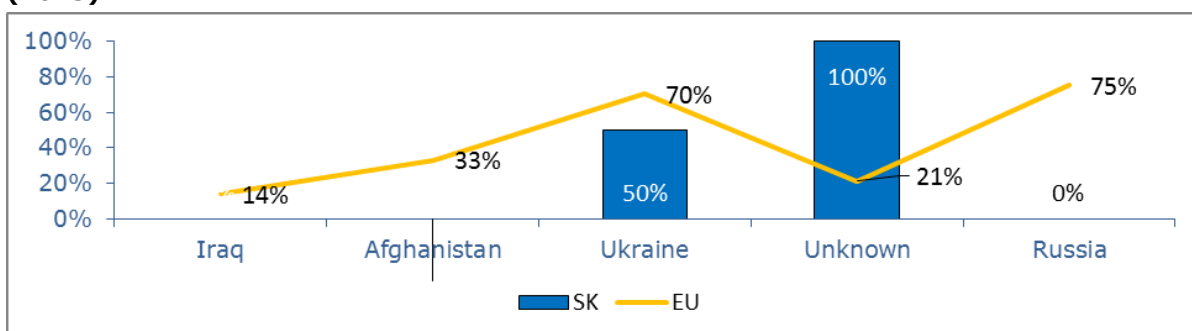
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figures 4-7: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2012-2015)



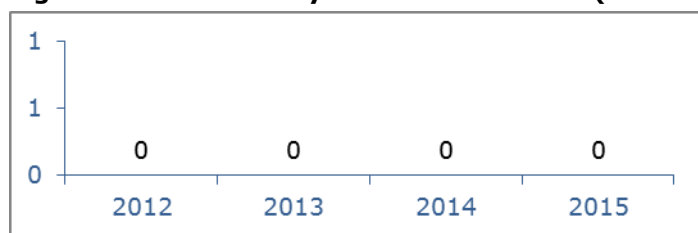
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 8: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 04/07/2016

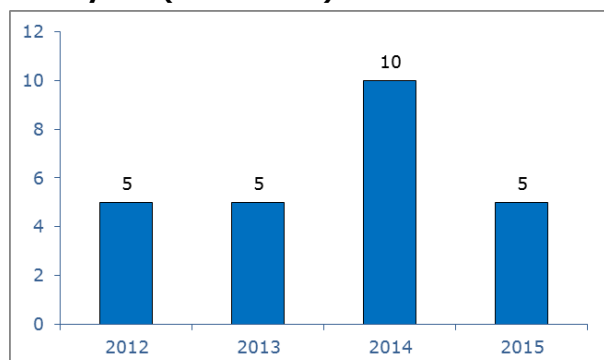
Figure 9: Third-country nationals resettled (2012-2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyresa), data extracted 04/07/2016

2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Figure 10: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2012-2015)



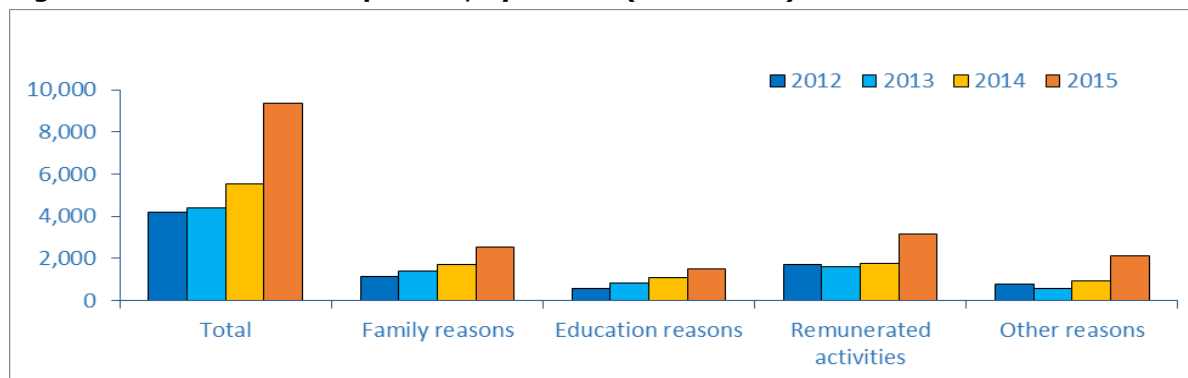
Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) [migr_asyunaa], data extracted 04/07/2016; EMN NCPs

Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2012-2015)

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Unaccompanied minors (total)	NA	NA	NA	26
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	5	5	10	5

3. EUROPEAN POLICY ON LEGAL MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

Figure 11: First residence permits, by reason (2012-2015)



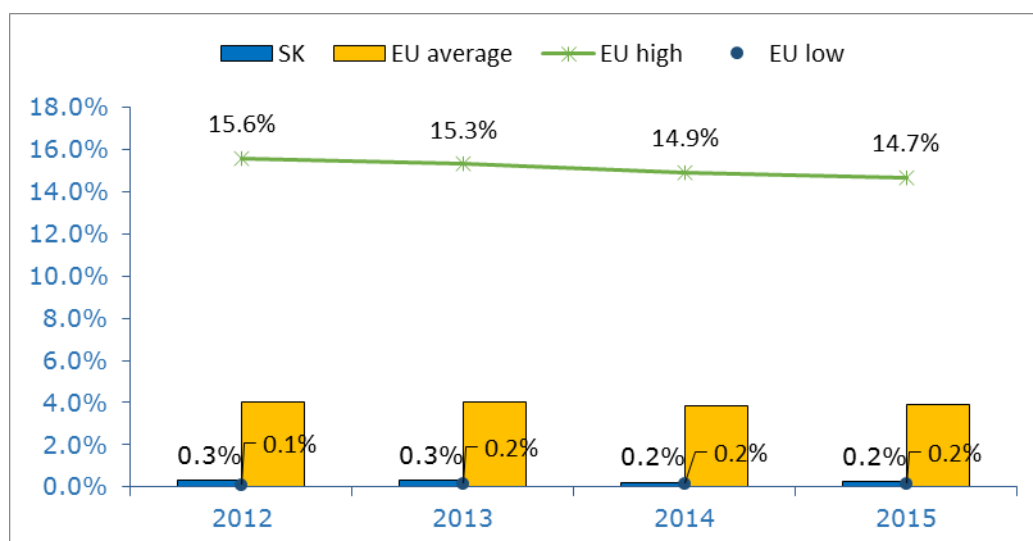
Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst), data extracted 04/07/2016

Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2012-2014)

2012		2013		2014		2015	
Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number
Ukraine	782	Ukraine	1,040	Ukraine	1,592	Ukraine	3,340
Serbia	548	Serbia	603	Serbia	830	Serbia	1,394
South Korea	373	South Korea	389	Russia	494	Syria	899
Russia	345	Russia	377	South Korea	365	Russia	739
United States	211	China (including Hong Kong)	228	China (including Hong Kong)	226	South Korea	359

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst), data extracted 04/07/2016

Figure 12: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Slovakia, EU average, EU high and low (2012-2015)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz), data extracted 04/07/2016

4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2012-2015)

Third country nationals:	2012	2013	2014	2015
Refused entry at external borders	595	435	455	465
Found to be illegally present	1,395	1,025	1,155	1,985
Ordered to leave	490	545	925	1,575
Returned following an order to leave	320	375	695	1,230

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs)(migr_eipre)(migr_eiord), data extracted 04/07/2016

Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2012-2015)

	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2012	273	72	54
2013	325	64	50
2014*	275	418	57
2015**	560	668	92

Source: EMN Country Factsheet 2013, *EMN Annual Policy Report on Immigration and Asylum 2014, Statistic Annex, and **EMN Annual Policy Report on Immigration and Asylum 2015, Statistic Annex

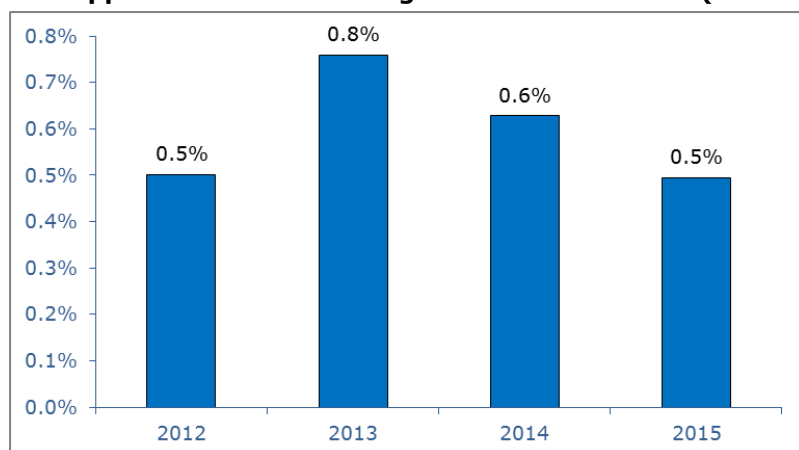
5. SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

Table 7: Number of Schengen visas applications (2012-2015)

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Uniform visas (short-stay visas)	75,720	131,194	104,988	76,491

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Figure 13: Uniform visa applications received in Slovakia as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2012-2015)



Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Table 8: Top five countries in which the highest number of visa applications for Slovakia was lodged

2012		2013		2014		2015	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number
Ukraine	44,602	Ukraine	88,144	Ukraine	49,466	Ukraine	45,727
Russia	17,621	Russia	27,722	Belarus	27,393	Russia	11,268
Belarus	4,291	Belarus	6,242	Russia	18,429	Belarus	8,811
Turkey	1,287	China	1,317	China	1,317	China	1,944
China	1,182	Turkey	1,180	Iraq	1,213	Kuwait	1,186

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs

6. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION EU FUNDING SOURCES (2007-2013 AND 2014-2020)

Table 9: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) allocation in euro per area

Areas	AMIF 2014-2020
Asylum	4,292,095
Legal Migration and Integration	3,960,670
Return	3,104,505
Technical Assistance	1,719,206
Special cases (resettlement/transfer)	NA
TOTAL	13,076,477

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs

Table 10: Internal Security Fund (ISF) allocation in euro per area

Areas	ISF 2014-2020
ISF Borders	10,092,525
ISF SA Frontex	NA
ISF SA Consular cooperation	NA
ISF Borders Emergency Assistance	NA
ISF Police	13,891,478
TOTAL	23,984,003

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs

Table 11: SOLID funds allocation in euro and share of total funds allocated to the Slovakia (2007-2013)

SOLID FUNDS	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL
European Refugee Fund (ERF)	NA	1,360,233 (1.8%)	1,088,214 (1.1%)	986,924 (1.1%)	831,784 (0.8%)	668,081 (0.6%)	625,356 (0.6%)	5,560,594 (1%)
European Return Fund (RF)	NA	808,547 (1.5%)	889,875 (1.4%)	980,728 (1.2%)	1,051,961 (1%)	961,521 (0.6%)	902,673 (0.5%)	5,595,305 (0.9%)
European Fund for the Integration of TCN (EIF)	581,409 (0.9%)	601,959 (0.8%)	804,797 (0.8%)	658,697 (0.6%)	701,730 (0.5%)	788,886 (0.5%)	802,883 € (0.4%)	4,940,363 (0.6%)
External Borders Fund (EBF)	1,288,004 (0.9%)	998,712 (0.7%)	1,120,717 (0.7%)	1,060,778 (0.6%)	1,080,589 (0.5%)	1,418,484 (0.4%)	1,708,625 (0.4%)	8,675,910 (0.5%)

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs

7. INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT TO DETECT EMPLOYMENT OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

Table 12: Number of Inspections carried out to detect employment of irregular migrants and share of inspections as a percentage of the employers in sector (in %)

Risk sector	2014		2015	
	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	474	NA	533	15,52
Mining and quarrying	NA	NA	10	8,2
Manufacturing	3,146	NA	3,010	23,3
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	NA	NA	39	14,55
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	NA	NA	98	15,83
Construction	3,533	NA	4,022	38
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	7,790	NA	7,006	20,68
Transportation and storage	NA	NA	1,942	33,07
Accommodation and food service activities	2,920	NA	3,206	43,34
Information and communication	NA	NA	155	3,3
Financial and insurance activities	NA	NA	84	13,4
Real estate activities	NA	NA	275	5,73
Professional, scientific and technical activities	NA	NA	788	4
Administrative and support service activities	NA	NA	988	12,19
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	NA	NA	493	15,38
Education	NA	NA	528	10,94
Human health and social work activities	NA	NA	190	2,73
Arts, entertainment and recreation	NA	NA	335	19,72
Other service activities	NA	NA	676	17,84

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs

Table 13: Number of inspections in which irregular migrant workers were detected (I) and number of irregular migrant workers detected (IWD) – 2015

Risk sector	2014		2015	
	Number of inspections in which irregular migrant workers were detected	Number of irregular migrant workers detected	Number of inspections in which irregular migrant workers were detected	Number of irregular migrant workers detected
Construction	0	0	1	5

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs