



EMN STUDY 2024

Family reunification of third-country nationals: State of play after 20 years of implementation of the Family Reunification Directive - contribution of the Slovak Republic

EMN Study – Questionnaire Form

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EMN activities are focused on topics related to migration of third-country nationals. The activities are implemented through national contact points in the EMN Member (EU Member States except Denmark) and Observer Countries (Norway, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Montenegro, Armenia, Serbia, North Macedonia) in coordination with the European Commission (Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs).

Elaboration of the study was conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Bratislava as the coordinator of the EMN National Contact Point for the Slovak Republic. The Slovak EMN National Contact Point comprises of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Police Force Presidium, the Migration Office, the Department of Foreign and European Affairs of the Office of the Minister of Interior), the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (the Department of International Relations and European Affairs), the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (the Section of Social Statistics and Demography) and IOM.

This study – in the form of questionnaire - was produced with the financial assistance by the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Equally, the opinions presented herein do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Government of the Slovak Republic or of the IOM.

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Except for the questionnaire specification, the text of the study is an unofficial translation prepared by IOM Bratislava as the coordinator of the EMN National Contact Point for the Slovak Republic provided for reference only. In the event of any ambiguity about the meaning of certain translated terms or of any discrepancy between the Slovak version and the translation, the Slovak version shall prevail. Users are advised to consult the original Slovak language version of the study.

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Preface

According to Eurostat data, family reunification has been one of the main routes of legal migration in the European Union in recent decades.¹

Family reunification is essential to ensure family unity and respect for the right to family life in accordance with international and European law, as well as to promote the integration of third-country nationals in their country of residence. In this context, Council Directive 2003/86/EC (the 'Family Reunification Directive')² is a key legislative element on family reunification of third-country nationals in the EU. The Directive recognises the right to family reunification for legally residing third-country nationals and lays down the conditions for the exercise of this right, as well as the rights of the family members concerned. It was adopted on 22 September 2003 as the first EU legislation on legal migration.

In 2017, the European Migration Network published a study on 'Family reunification of third-country nationals in the EU and Norway'. The aim of the study was to compare national policies and practices in the field of family reunification between the 25 EU Member States and Norway and to provide an update on developments since 2011.

Since then, this area has undergone changes both at national and EU level, such as: changes in national legislation, several rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union that have clarified important issues related to the implementation of the Family Reunification Directive, and rulings of the European Court of Human Rights on Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The COVID-19 pandemic and other regional crises have further highlighted the practical challenges associated with family reunification procedures, but have also led to the development of new procedures to address them.

In this context, the aim of the present study is therefore to provide an updated overview of legislative and policy developments in EMN Member Countries in relation to the implementation of the Family Reunification Directive and national legislation on family reunification in countries that do not apply the Directive, since the last EMN study on family reunification in 2017.

Methodologically, the study is prepared on the basis of available information from public sources, such as the websites of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic or the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, based on the analysis of relevant laws, strategic documents and information from experts of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

Based on the questionnaire form of studies from EMN Member and Observer Countries, the European Commission prepares a synthesis report with a summary of the main findings. The questionnaire form of the study for the Slovak Republic, as well as the synthesis report, are available on the website of the Slovak National Contact Point EMN www.emn.sk.

¹ In 2022, nearly 900,000 first residence permits were issued in the EU for family reasons, representing approximately 25% of the total number of first residence permits issued that year. Of these, more than 500,000 first permits were granted to family members of third-country nationals.

² Council Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification of 22 September 2003, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32003L0086>, downloaded on 24/03/2025.

List of abbreviations

BBFP PF P - Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Police Force Presidium

EEA - European Economic Area

EMN – European Migration Network

EU - European Union

IOM – International Organization for Migration

MIC – Migration Information Centre

MO MoI SR – Migration office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

Summary

The study of the European Migration Network (EMN) "Family reunification of third-country nationals: the current state of national legislation and practice twenty years after the implementation of the Family Reunification Directive" has been selected for preparation by the EMN Steering Board as part of the 2024 work programme. The study is prepared for each participating EMN Member and Observer Country on the basis of a common specification – the questions listed in the next part of the text. From the national studies, the European Commission will produce a joint synthesis report with the main findings.

In the Slovak Republic, family reunification is the third most frequent reason for granting temporary residence. As of 30 June 2024, a total of 14,656 third-country nationals held temporary residence permits for family reunification in the Slovak Republic, representing 13% of all third-country nationals with temporary residence and 9.8% of the total number of third-country nationals with any form of residence (excluding those granted temporary protection). While the number of family members has nearly tripled since 2016, their proportion within the overall foreign population has significantly declined—by almost half.

This downward trend may explain why the issue of family reunification has not become a prominent political topic in the Slovak Republic.

Since 2017, only minimal changes have been introduced concerning this group of foreigners. These modifications were not primarily aimed at adjusting their legal status but rather emerged as secondary effects of legislative changes targeting other groups, particularly labour migrants, who were a higher priority for policymakers during the reporting period.

Apart from adjustments required by the transposition of EU directives, the most notable change for family members was the reduction of the period during which they can access the labour market without needing a separate work permit—from 12 months to 9 months. More information is available in the first chapter of the study.

The second chapter of the study describes who is entitled to be a sponsor for family reunification and which family members are entitled to family reunification. Although the Slovak Republic allows family reunification for a relatively broad category of relatives beyond the nuclear family, challenges remain in facilitating reunification for unmarried partners and same-sex couples.

Regarding residency requirements, the Slovak Republic adopts a highly lenient approach, imposing no integration conditions or waiting period before granting residence. More about the conditions, as well as examples of good practice and challenges associated with the conditions for obtaining this status, is presented in the third chapter.

The fourth chapter deals with the process of submitting and assessing an application for family reunification and the related challenges and examples of good practice. In the Slovak Republic, a family member's right to reside is dependent on the residence status of their sponsor. If the sponsor's residence permit ceases, the family member's permit is also terminated. Although the Slovak Republic does not allow family members to retain their temporary residence for family reunification once its purpose no longer exists, it does provide the option to switch to a different type or purpose of residence (subject to meeting the necessary conditions) without restrictions and without the need to leave the country.

The fifth chapter of the study describes the rights arising from family reunification, such as access to employment or education.

The Slovak Republic permits family members to engage in education and economic activities, though certain restrictions apply. In terms of employment rights, a nine-month waiting period is required before family members can access the labour market, with exceptions for family members of Blue Card holders, employees in research and development, and intra-company transferees. Family members of persons granted international protection, including asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification purposes, are entitled to work immediately upon receiving international protection status.

Healthcare services are available to all foreigners based on mandatory health insurance. However, eligibility for public health insurance is determined by the type of residence permit and the individual's economic activity in the Slovak Republic.

Access to social security benefits in the Slovak Republic depends on the residence status. Family members holding permanent residence enjoy nearly the same social security entitlements as Slovak citizens. Third-country nationals with temporary residence for family reunification do not have full access to all social benefits, but they are entitled to most common allowances, particularly those related to family support.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION

1. Does your country distinguish between family formation and family reunification (in the context of the issues described in this study)? Yes/No. If yes, please explain the different rules applied on basis of the distinction between the two.

No.

2. What are the changes to law and policy (since 2017) in the field of family reunification in your country (including in the context of complementary pathways programmes)? For each change, please provide information to the extent possible on the drivers and objectives for such changes.

As part of the transposition of Directive 2014/66/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer,³ the Slovak Republic introduced a significant policy change effective from 1 May 2017. Since then, family members of employees and trainees relocated within a company have been permitted to work in the Slovak Republic from the moment they obtain temporary residence for family reunification, without needing a separate work permit. Additionally, the transposition of the new Directive (EU) 2021/1883 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment⁴ brought about further adjustments, enhancing the status of family members of Blue Card holders. These changes provided them with preferential treatment in obtaining both temporary residence for family reunification and long-term residence.

On 20 July 2022, the Slovak government issued Regulation No. 269/2022 Coll., outlining Slovakia's commitment to granting national visas to relocated third-country nationals and their family members.⁵ Under this regulation, family members of relocated employees who are employed in the Slovak Republic based on national visa —specifically, the spouse of a relocated employee, direct descendants of a relocated employee under 21 years old or who is a dependent person, and such a descendent of his spouse — are eligible for a national visa matching the duration of the relocated employee's visa, up to a maximum of one year, with the possibility of renewal. Holding a national visa grants family members of relocated employees unrestricted access to education and employment in the SR, without the need for a separate work permit.

The main objective behind this measure was to boost investment, attract skilled professionals from abroad, and promote the creation of highly qualified job opportunities also for Slovak employees, particularly in the IT sector. Expanding the regulations to include family members of relocated employees was intended to facilitate smoother transitions and ease their settling into the Slovak Republic.

As of 1 January 2023, an amendment to the Employment Services Act took effect,⁶ reducing the waiting period for family members of third-country nationals holding temporary residence for family reunification to access the labour market. The period was shortened from 12 months to 9 months from the date of residence granting.

On 1 April 2024, the Slovak Republic implemented higher fees for temporary residence for family reunification, which increased from €132.50 to €200, while the permanent residence fee rose from €165.50 to €250. Additionally, the fee for issuing a residence permit document was raised from €4.50 to €6, with a further increase to €10, effective from 15 July 2024.

3. Are there planned changes to the law, policy or administrative practice on family reunification which have been announced recently (e.g. in the last two years) in your country (including in the context of complementary pathways programmes)? If so, please describe briefly the main changes planned. For each planned change, please provide information to the extent possible on the drivers and objectives behind them. (changes on access to rights are provided in Q26).

³ Eur-lex, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32014L0066>, downloaded on 24/03/2025.

⁴ Eur-lex, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=oj:JOL_2021_382_R_0001, downloaded on 24/03/2025.

⁵ Slov-lex, <https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/269/>, downloaded on 24/03/2025.

⁶ Act No. 488/2022 amending Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended.

The Slovak Republic (SR) has no plans for legislative changes in this area. Family reunification in the context of international protection proceedings will be assessed based on the definition of family members set forth in Article 3(9) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1347 of the European Parliament and the Council.⁷

"Family members" are - if the family already existed before the applicant's arrival in the Member States - these family members of the person with granted international protection who reside in the same Member State in connection with the application for international protection:

- a) The husband or wife of a person with granted international protection, or their unmarried partner with whom they are in a permanent relationship, provided that the laws or practices of the relevant Member State treat unmarried couples in the same way as married couples;
- b) Children, whether minors or adult dependents, of the couples mentioned in letter (a) or of a person with granted international protection, provided they are unmarried. This applies regardless of whether the children were born within or outside of marriage or were adopted, as defined by national law. A minor is considered unmarried if, after an individual assessment, their marriage would not meet the requirements of the relevant national law if it were to take place in the Member State in question, especially concerning the legal age for marriage;
- c) The father, mother, or another adult, including an adult sibling, who, according to the law or practice of the relevant Member State, is responsible for the person with granted international protection provided that this person is an unmarried minor. A minor is considered unmarried if, based on an individual assessment, their marriage would not comply with the applicable national law if it were to take place in the Member State in question, particularly regarding the legal age for marriage.

4. Has the CJEU/ ECHR case law (e.g. M.A. vs Denmark, C-560/20 CR, GF, TY v Landeshauptmann von Wien, C-230/21 X, Y, Z v Belgische Staat, C-1/23 PPU (Afrin), etc.) led to changes in policy and/ or practice in family reunification in your country since 2017? Yes/No. If yes, please specify and briefly describe the changes brought about by this case law.

No.

5. Has your country introduced any family assistance programme (e.g. comparable or similar to the one implemented in Germany)?⁸ Yes/No. If yes, what are the objectives of these programmes (e.g. to improve access to information and simplify the application process, including through complementary pathways)?

No.

6. Are there any alternative avenues in your country for family members who do not qualify for family reunification under the Family Reunification Directive or national legislation on family reunification to receive valid residence permits (e.g. other complementary pathways such as humanitarian admission programmes or sponsorship pathways, granting refugee status to children born in the host country, granting residence on the basis of article 8 ECHR, etc.)? If so, can you please explain what these avenues are and to whom they apply?

Yes, the legal system of the Slovak Republic permits the granting of tolerated residence based on respect for private and family life. A third-country national may be granted tolerated residence on these grounds if he or she is:

- a) A family member of a third-country national who holds either temporary or permanent residence.
- b) A direct ascendant relative of a person with granted asylum who is under 18 years old.
- c) A dependent person as recognized under an international treaty.
- d) The spouse of a Slovak citizen with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic, or a direct dependent relative of a Slovak citizen with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic.
- e) An unmarried child under 18 years of age placed under the personal guardianship of a third-country national who is married to a Slovak citizen with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic.

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2024/1347 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted, amending Council Directive 2003/109/EC and repealing Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1347>, downloaded on 24/03/2025.

⁸ Family assistance programme, Global Compact on Refugees, [Family Assistance Programme | The Global Compact on Refugees | UNHCR](#), downloaded on 24/10/2024.

f) An unmarried child under 18 of a third-country national with five-year permanent residence, or a child under 18 under the personal guardianship of a third-country national with five-year permanent residence.

g) A dependent child over 18 years of age who, due to a long-term serious health condition, is unable to support themselves and is a family member of a third-country national with permanent residence, if the person does not threaten national security or public order and does not possess a valid travel document but can credibly verify their identity through other means.

The Slovak Republic grants temporary residence for family reunification to children of foreign nationals who hold temporary or long-term residence in Slovakia. For children of foreign nationals with five-year permanent residence or permanent residence for an indefinite period, the Slovak Republic grants the same type of residence as their parent (sponsor).

A child born in Slovakia to a mother who has been granted asylum will receive asylum for family reunification. Such a child is automatically considered a foreigner who has been granted permanent residence.

A child born in Slovakia to a foreign national with subsidiary protection will also be granted subsidiary protection by the Slovak Republic. Such a child is automatically considered a foreigner who has been granted temporary residence; this does not apply if they have been granted permanent residence in the Slovak Republic.

7. Please provide national statistics on the total number of applications for family reunification submitted, authorisations granted, and applications rejected in 2017-2024, and if available, disaggregated by the grounds of residence of the sponsor, including whether the sponsor is a beneficiary of international protection, and sex.

As of 31 December 2024, there were 14,922⁹ valid residence permits issued to third-country nationals for family reunification purposes. The Slovak Republic does not maintain statistical records on the number of international protections granted for family reunification or the number of rejected applications for temporary residence for this purpose.

SECTION 2: DEFINITION OF SPONSOR AND FAMILY MEMBER

This section aims to clarify who is eligible to be a sponsor for family reunification and which family members are entitled to family reunification. If the provisions vary across different categories of third-country nationals (refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, worker, student, etc.), please describe the differences.

8a. Who can be a sponsor¹⁰ to an application for family reunification in your country (e.g. unaccompanied minors, students, workers, including highly qualified etc.)?

In the Slovak Republic, several categories of foreign nationals can serve as sponsors for family reunification purposes:

a) A foreign national with temporary residence in the Slovak Republic, granted for purposes such as business activities, employment, studies, special activities (including lecturing, artistic, sports, or voluntary work), research and development, family reunification, performing professional duties by civilian units of the armed forces, recognized status as a Slovak living abroad, long-term residency in another EU Member State, or possession of an EU Blue Card (however, an EU Blue Card holder cannot act as a sponsor if they have been granted asylum or subsidiary protection in the Slovak Republic).

b) A foreign national with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic, while the Slovak Republic distinguishes three categories of permanent residence: permanent residence for five-year (granted to foreign nationals who are family members of Slovak citizens or in cases of special consideration), permanent residence for an indefinite period (available to those who have held five-year permanent residence for at least four years or to children of foreigners with a permanent residence for an indefinite period), or long-term residence (as specified in EU Council Directive 2003/109/EC).

c) A minor with granted asylum under 18 years of age.

⁹ Data provided by the BBFP PF P.

¹⁰ Article 3 in Chapter I of 2003/86/EC defines who can be a sponsor to an application for family reunification in the EU.

d) A member of the armed forces or civilian units according to an international treaty (such as agreements between NATO member states and other countries involved in the Partnership for Peace regarding the status of their armed forces).

e) A foreign national who has been granted asylum in the Slovak Republic.

f) A foreign national who has been granted subsidiary protection in the Slovak Republic.

g) A relocated employee who holds a national visa.

8b. Does the national law of your country allow beneficiaries of subsidiary protection,¹¹ or holders of similar protection statuses, to apply for family reunification? Yes/No.

Yes.

8c. What is the maximum age for a child to benefit from family reunification and what is the reference point in your country to determine whether a child is a 'minor' for the purpose of family reunification?¹²

For family reunification purposes, the Slovak Republic considers a minor to be only an unmarried child under the age of 18.

9. Does your country extend the definition of family members who can apply for family reunification beyond nuclear/core members?¹³ Yes/No. If yes, which of the following groups beyond the core family are included:

Yes.

¹¹ Currently, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not covered by the Family Reunification Directive.

¹² According to Article 4(6) of the Family Reunification Directive, EU Member States may request that the applications concerning family reunification of minor children have to be submitted before the age of 15.

¹³ In the context of the Family Reunification Directive, as specified in its Article 4, members of the nuclear family are the spouse and the minor children.

Category of family members	Eligible for family reunification in your country? Yes/No	If yes, please provide a definition or description of the family members (if applicable)	Please elaborate if this category is eligible for family reunification for specific categories of sponsors (e.g. beneficiaries of international protection, holders of residence permit for work purposes, etc.)?
Parents	Yes.	<p>A parent of a foreign national or a parent of their spouse who is dependent on their care and does not receive adequate family support in their country of origin.</p> <p>A parent of an unmarried person with granted asylum under the age of 18.</p> <p>A parent of an unmarried foreign national under the age of 18 who has been granted subsidiary protection.</p>	<p>A foreign national with temporary residence for study purposes cannot act as a sponsor.</p> <p>A person with granted asylum under the age of 18 can be a sponsor only in case, they give prior written consent for family reunification.</p> <p>A foreign national under the age of 18 who has been granted subsidiary protection can act as a sponsor, only in case they give prior written consent for family reunification.</p>
Adult children	Yes.	A dependent ¹⁴ unmarried child of a foreign national over the age of 18 or a dependent, unmarried child over the age of 18 of their spouse who is unable to care for themselves due to a long-term adverse health condition.	

¹⁴ A dependent child is considered a child until the completion of compulsory education, or up to a maximum age of 25, if:

- a) They are continuously preparing for a profession through education, or
- b) They are unable to pursue education or engage in gainful employment due to illness or injury.

A dependent child also includes a child who:

- a) Is exempt from compulsory school attendance.
- b) Is enrolled in a primary school for students with disabilities, or
- c) Is unable to pursue continuous education or engage in gainful employment due to a long-term adverse health condition, up to the age of majority.

Category of family members	Eligible for family reunification in your country? Yes/No	If yes, please provide a definition or description of the family members (if applicable)	Please elaborate if this category is eligible for family reunification for specific categories of sponsors (e.g. beneficiaries of international protection, holders of residence permit for work purposes, etc.)?
		<p>The international treaty referenced in point 8a(d) considers any child of a foreign national (without an age definition) who is dependent on their support as a child.</p> <p>A national visa may be granted to a direct descendant of a relocated employee (or their spouse) who is under the age of 21 or classified as a dependent person.</p>	<p>Only a member of the armed forces or civilian units according to an international treaty can act as a sponsor.</p> <p>Only a relocated employee holding a national visa can act as a sponsor.</p>
Non-married partners (<i>please specify if this applies only to registered partnerships or includes also stable long-term relationships</i>)	No.		
Same-sex partners who are registered	No.		
Dependent persons, i.e. persons receiving legal, financial, emotional or material support by the sponsor or by his/ her spouse/ partner (other than those mentioned above) <i>If yes, please specify how the concept of dependency is defined in the relevant provisions/ practice, and what type of evidence is required to demonstrate dependency.</i>	No.		
Other family members	Yes.	All direct ascendant relatives.	Applies only to a person with granted asylum under the age of 18.
Other family members	Yes.	A child under the age of 18 placed under the personal guardianship of a third-country national.	Applies only to a third-country national with permanent residence for five-years or permanent residence for an indefinite period.

Category of family members	Eligible for family reunification in your country? Yes/No	If yes, please provide a definition or description of the family members (if applicable)	Please elaborate if this category is eligible for family reunification for specific categories of sponsors (e.g. beneficiaries of international protection, holders of residence permit for work purposes, etc.)?
Other family members	Yes.	A person entrusted with the personal guardianship of an unmarried person with granted asylum under the age of 18.	A person with granted asylum under the age of 18 can act as a sponsor, only in case they give prior written consent for family reunification.
Other family members	Yes.	A person entrusted with the personal guardianship of an unmarried third-country national under the age of 18 who has been granted subsidiary protection.	A third-country national under the age of 18 who has been granted subsidiary protection can act as a sponsor, only in case they give prior written consent for family reunification.

SECTION 3: REQUIREMENTS FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHT TO FAMILY REUNIFICATION

This section reports on the requirements for exercising the right to family reunification. If the provisions vary across different categories of third-country nationals (refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, workers, students, etc.), please describe the differences.

10. Does your country apply the following requirements¹⁵ for exercising the right to family reunification (please also indicate if exemptions can be made in individual cases):

- Accommodation suitable for the size of the family, as well as meeting health and safety standards? Yes/No. If yes, please describe how this requirement is regulated and checked in practice.

Yes. Proof of secured accommodation is not required in cases where a family member of a person with granted asylum applies for temporary residence for family reunification within three months of the asylum being granted. It is also waived if a family member of a person with granted asylum or granted subsidiary protection is applying for asylum or subsidiary protection in the Slovak Republic. A third-country national applying for temporary residence for family reunification must provide evidence of shared/common accommodation with the third-country national they intend to reunite with. The accommodation document must confirm housing is secured for at least six months of temporary residence. If the residence is requested for a shorter period, accommodation must be secured for the entire duration of the stay.

The accommodation must comply with minimum standards established by the Slovak Ministry of Health regulation on requirements for indoor environments of buildings and on minimal requirements for lower-standard housing and accommodation facilities as amended. The BBFP PF P assesses compliance with these conditions as part of the temporary residence permit approval process.

- Sickness insurance? Yes/No. If yes, please describe how this requirement is checked in practice.

Yes. In the Slovak Republic, health insurance is not a requirement for granting temporary residence for family reunification. However, a foreigner must submit proof of health insurance in the Slovak Republic to the police department within 30 days after taking over the document on residence.

Additionally, health insurance is not required if a family member of a person with granted asylum or subsidiary protection applies for asylum or subsidiary protection in the Slovak Republic.

In the specific case of a child under 18 who is either a third-country national with permanent residence for an indefinite period or a child under 18 placed under the personal guardianship of a third-country national holding permanent residence for an indefinite period, proof of health insurance must be provided at the time of application for permanent residence for an indefinite period.

- Stable and regular financial resources? Y/ N.

Yes. It is not required if the family member of a person with granted asylum or granted subsidiary protection applies for asylum or subsidiary protection in the Slovak Republic.

If evidence of stable and sufficient financial resources is required, please specify:

- If applicable, the amount of the minimum income requirement in the relevant currency and year.

The applicant must provide proof of financial means equivalent to at least the minimum subsistence level for each month of their stay. If the residence period is to exceed one year, the required financial resources must cover up to 12 times the minimum subsistence level.

The minimum subsistence level is revised annually to 1 July. As of 1 July 2024, it has been set at €273.99, which is also the required amount per month of residence for an adult.

- If your country sets a different income requirement depending on the type and numbers of family member being reunited (e.g. minor children).

¹⁵ Article 7(1) of the Family Reunification Directive lays down that EU Member States may require the person who has submitted the application to provide evidence that the sponsor has: accommodation suitable for the size of the family, as well as meeting health and safety standards; sickness insurance; and sufficient resources to provide for himself or herself and his or her family.

In the case of a minor applicant, the required financial security amount is half of the minimum subsistence level.

- The reference period over which this requirement is considered.

Financial security must be demonstrated for each month of residence. If the intended stay exceeds one year, the required financial resources must cover 12 times the minimum subsistence level.

- How any past / future income of the sponsor is evaluated in practice.

The Slovak Republic allows financial security to be demonstrated based on either past income or future income of the sponsor. Past income can be proven by a bank statement from the sponsor's account covering the last three months, with the account registered in their name. Future income can be demonstrated through a work contract or an employer's confirmation stating the sponsor's salary amount. When assessing future income, it is evaluated whether the sponsor's monthly income is sufficient to meet the required financial security for one month of residence for both them and their family members.

- Whether any exemption grounds (e.g. for severe health issues and vulnerabilities) apply and what are their conditions.

No.

- To what extent failure to meet the requirement has consequences for the right to family reunification.

Failure to meet the conditions for granting temporary or permanent residence is grounds for the rejection of the application.

- At what stage(s) of the examination procedure are the above requirements verified?

The police department assesses compliance with the conditions during the temporary or permanent residence permit application process.

- Are the (potential) resources of the family member(s) taken into consideration?

No. The sponsor is required to demonstrate compliance with the financial security requirement for the family member.

11a. Does the national law of your country require family members **specifically** applying for family reunification to comply with any **integration measures** before and/or after admission¹⁶?
Y/ N

No.

If yes, are third-country nationals required to comply with the following integration measures:

(A) Civic integration exams? Y/ N

If yes, please specify:

- When the civic integration exam(s) takes place (i.e. before admission, after admission, before and after admission).
- What knowledge and skills are required from applicants to pass the exam(s).
- If any support is provided to them during preparation (e.g. preparatory classes, easily accessible information on the exam for the applicants, etc.).
- If costs are incurred by applicants (if yes, indicate the amount).

(B) Language tests? Y/ N

No.

If yes, please specify:

- When the language test(s) takes place (i.e. before admission, after admission, before and after admission).
- What knowledge and skills are required from applicants to pass the test(s).

¹⁶ Article 7(2) of the Family Reunification Directive established that EU Member States may require third-country nationals to comply with integration measures, in accordance with national law.

- If any support is provided to them during preparation (e.g. preparatory classes, easily accessible information on the exam for the applicants, etc.).
- If costs are incurred by applicants (if yes, please indicate the amount).

(C) Other integration measures (please specify)? Y/ N

No.

If yes, please specify what these measures entail and when they take place:

11 b. Please specify what exemption grounds apply and to what extent non-compliance has consequences for the right to family reunification.

N/A

12. Does your country set a **waiting period**¹⁷ before a sponsor's family members can reunite with him/ her? Y/ N

No.

If yes, how long is the waiting period? Can an application be submitted before the period has expired?

13. Are there any requirements contained in national law to incorporate the consideration of the reasonable prospect of obtaining permanent residence as laid down in Article 3(1), or otherwise? What are the parameters taken into account to assess such prospects?

No. The Slovak Republic enables family reunification to all third-country nationals holding or applying for temporary or permanent residence, regardless of the length of their granted residence or the duration for which they are applying.

14. If the above conditions are not (completely) fulfilled (accommodation, financial resources, insurance, integration and/or waiting period), how does your country guarantee that individual circumstances and the best interests of the child are taken into account (e.g. nature and solidity of the person's family relationship)?¹⁸

Residence in the Slovak Republic is granted only if the conditions outlined in the Act on Residence of Foreigners are met; otherwise, the residence will be not granted. In exceptional cases, decisions are made on an individual basis. The protection of family unity remains a primary consideration in the residence permit decision-making process in the Slovak Republic.¹⁹

When it comes to family reunification through the asylum process with a person who has been granted asylum or subsidiary protection, no similar conditions are required. For a minor child, the initial assessment determines whether they qualify for international protection. If they do not meet the criteria, they are granted asylum for family reunification or subsidiary protection for family reunification, depending on the type of international protection their parent holds.

The only requirement is that the applicant must be present in the territory of the Slovak Republic.²⁰

15. In addition to any information you have already provided above, does your country apply the following provisions concerning the **more favourable family reunification rules for refugees**?²¹

¹⁷ Article 8 of the Family Reunification Directive established that EU Member States may require the sponsor to have stayed lawfully on the territory for a period not exceeding two years (or three years by derogation in specific circumstances) before having his or her family members join him or her.

¹⁸ This is laid down in Article 5(5) and Article 17 of the Family Reunification Directive and in the case law of the CJEU.

¹⁹ Source: BBFP PF P.

²⁰ Source: MO MoI SR.

²¹ Article 9-12 in Chapter V of the Family Reunification Directive set out more favourable conditions for family reunification of refugees.

- Application and possible extension of the grace period of (minimum) three months before the requirements for exercising the right to family reunification apply?²² Y/ N

Yes.

If yes, is this grace period of (minimum) three months extended and if so, for how long?²³ Y/ N

No.

- Restriction to relationships established before entry into the country?²⁴ Y/ N

Yes

If yes, please specify:

In the proceedings for granting international protection is asylum or subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification granted to the husband or wife exclusively if the marriage exists and existed at the time when the person with granted asylum left the country of origin.

- Application of a wider definition of family members (going beyond parents) when it comes to UAMs?²⁵ Y/ N

If yes, please specify:

Yes. The Slovak Republic enables to receive temporary residence to any direct ascendant relative of an unaccompanied minor with asylum status, regardless of the level of kinship, including grandparents, great-grandparents, and other ancestors.

- How do you take into consideration the best interests of the child when it comes to UAMs?

In the international protection proceeding for family reunification, protection is granted for this purpose to the parents of an unmarried person under 18 years of age or to a person entrusted with their personal guardianship, provided that the minor gives prior written consent.²⁶

16. If applicable, does your country apply similar rules for the family reunification of beneficiaries of subsidiary protection or other protection statuses, as for refugees, i.e. in relation to eligible family members, waiting period and requirements for family reunification? Y/ N

If no, please explain how the rules differ for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection or holders of similar protection statuses referring to the different topics covered previously (e.g. eligible family members, waiting period and requirements for family reunification).

Family members of persons with temporary protection are subject to the same rules as those of other third-country nationals with temporary residence in the Slovak Republic. They do not benefit from the special conditions available to family members of asylum holders who apply for family reunification within three months of the sponsor receiving asylum.

17. Are the requirements for family reunification in your country more favourable for the family reunification of EU Blue Card holders, researchers and intra-corporate transferees?²⁷ Y/N
If yes, please provide details on how these requirements are more favourable for each category.

Yes.

A family member of an EU Blue Card holder.

The required five-year residency period for long-term residence includes time spent in another EU Member State. To qualify for long-term residence in the Slovak Republic, a family member must have resided in the country for at least two consecutive years immediately before applying.

A family member can begin employment immediately upon receiving temporary residence, with no need for a separate work permit.

²² Article 7(1) of the Family Reunification Directive.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Article 9(2) of the Family Reunification Directive.

²⁵ Article 10(3)(b) of the Family Reunification Directive.

²⁶ Source: MO MoI SR.

²⁷ Article 17 and Article 22 of the revised Blue Card Directive; Article 26, Article 27(3) and Article 30 of the Students and Researchers Directive; Article 19 of the Intra-Corporate Transferees Directive.

A family member of an EU Blue Card holder applying for temporary residence for family reunification, who has previously resided in another EU Member State where their family unit was established, must submit their application to the police within 30 days of entering the Slovak Republic.

An EU Blue Card holder has the right to apply for temporary residence for family reunification for their family member.

If a family member's residence permit in another EU Member State expires while their temporary residence application is being processed, their stay in the Slovak Republic is considered permitted until a decision is issued on their application.

If a family member of an EU Blue Card holder already holds a valid residence permit in another EU Member State, which issued the Blue Card to the sponsor before the Slovak Republic, their application will be processed within an expedited period of 30 days from the date of submission of a complete application.

If the temporary residence application is submitted together with the sponsor's EU Blue Card application, both applications will be processed simultaneously.

A family member of an employee in science or researcher can start working immediately upon receiving temporary residence, without needing a separate work permit, and has the right to mobility.

A family member of an intra-company transferee is likewise permitted to begin employment immediately after being granted temporary residence, without requiring a work permit, and is also entitled to mobility rights.

18a. Please indicate any **challenges** experienced by

- i) sponsors and/or family members associated with accessing the right to family reunification,
- ii) your national authorities implementing any of the above requirements for family reunification.

Please indicate according to whom this is a challenge (e.g. through studies/evaluations/expert opinions).

The IOM Migration Information Centre, which offers free legal, employment, and social counselling to third-country nationals, has identified several practical challenges in the family reunification process for third-country nationals:

- a) Limited availability of appointments for submitting residence applications at the Foreigners' Police, which can result in the expiration of required documents (such as criminal record extracts and bank statements), as these must be no older than 90 days at the time of submission of application.
- b) The requirement for the sponsor and the family member to share the same registered address, creating difficulties, particularly when the sponsor is temporarily housed in a dormitory or collective accommodation facility at the time of application.
- c) Strict regulations on the possibilities for family reunification, particularly concerning sponsors' parents, making the process more restrictive.
- d) Challenges in obtaining necessary documentation, such as criminal record extracts from all countries where the family has lived for at least 90 days within six consecutive months over the past three years, which is especially problematic for families who move frequently, due to the requirement for apostilles or superlegalization.
- e) Providing proof of financial security through a bank statement can be challenging, especially for larger families, as the required amount is often significant and difficult to demonstrate.²⁸

State institutions have not recorded any challenges in this area.

18b. Have there been any **good practices** put in place to overcome the above-mentioned challenges or to facilitate the family reunification procedure, including innovative practices, work with the diaspora or facilitation of the access to information? Y/N

Please indicate according to whom this is a good practice (e.g. through studies/evaluations/expert opinions).

²⁸ Source: MIC IOM.

The IOM Migration Information Centre, which offers free legal, employment, and social counselling to third-country nationals, has identified several best practices in the family reunification process for third-country nationals:

- a) Allocating specific appointment slots in the Foreigners' Police reservation system exclusively for submitting applications to grant or renew temporary residence for family reunification purpose.
- b) Allowing the sponsor to submit their residence application and their family member residence applications for family reunification during the same appointment.

State institutions do not report any recognized best practices in this area.

SECTION 4: SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION

This section reports on the process for submitting and examining an application for family reunification in the host country or abroad covered by Chapter III of the Family Reunification Directive, including the procedures for verifying the fulfilment of the requirements/ measures listed in Section 3 above. **If the provisions vary across different categories of third-country nationals (refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, worker, student, etc.), please describe the variations.**

19. Please describe where sponsors and family members can find available information on the family reunification procedure.

The Slovak Republic does not have a centralized information portal for foreigners. However, comprehensive and up-to-date information can be accessed through the IOM Migration Information Centre (MIC), which has been supporting foreign nationals in their integration process in Slovakia since 2006. MIC is to the date the first and only centre of its kind in the country, offering foreigners complex services in the area of legal, social, and employment counselling, further education, labour market integration, and support to community life of foreigners all in one place. Information is available via www.mic.iom.sk, in person, by phone, or via email, and can be provided in Slovak, English, Russian, and Ukrainian.

Information for foreigners can also be found on the websites of the Ministry of the Interior at www.minv.sk, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs at www.mzv.sk, and Slovak embassies and consulates abroad. Additional ministries, such as the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family and the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth, also provide partial information for foreign nationals.

From early 2025, the Ministry of the Interior plans to establish three fully functional one-stop-shop centres designed to provide comprehensive services to facilitate the settlement of foreign nationals in the Slovak Republic.

Furthermore, information for foreigners is also available on the websites of various cities, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations.

20. Please describe the **procedure(s)** that apply to the sponsor or his or her family members when an application for the purpose of family reunification is submitted, as follows:

20a. Who can lodge the application for family reunification in your country: the sponsor or his or her family members?²⁹

The residence permit application must be submitted by the third-country national applying for residence. If the applicant is a minor, their legal representative or court-appointed guardian must submit the application on their behalf. A sponsor may only apply on behalf of their family member if the applicant is unable to submit the application in person due to incapacity. A sponsor who holds an EU Blue Card in another EU Member State is entitled to submit the application for their family member, provided the family member has legal residence in another EU Member State where their family unit was originally established.

20b. If the sponsor must submit an application for family reunification, where and how can this application be submitted (e.g. in person, online, etc.)? Please also indicate whether a different

²⁹ Article 5 of the Family Reunification Directive specifies that EU Member States determine whether, in order to exercise the right to family reunification, an application for entry and residence must be submitted to the competent authorities by the sponsor or his or her family members.

procedure applies to sponsor who are unaccompanied children (e.g. submission via legal representative).

N/A

20c. If the sponsor's family members must submit an application for family reunification, where can this application be submitted (e.g. consulate of the country abroad, possibility to submit the application in the host country, online submission, etc.)?

A third-country national must submit a temporary residence application in person at a Slovak diplomatic mission abroad, either at the embassy accredited for the country that issued their travel document or at the embassy accredited for the country of their residence.

A permanent residence for five years application must be submitted in person either at a diplomatic mission abroad or directly at the Police department in the Slovak Republic.

A third-country national may also submit a temporary residence application for family reunification or a permanent residence for five years application in person at the Foreigners' Police department in the Slovak Republic, if:

- a) They are legally staying in the Slovak Republic based on a valid permit in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/399,
- b) They are staying in the Slovak Republic based on granted tolerated residence,³⁰
- c) They are in the Slovak Republic based on a granted national visa,
- d) They are in the Slovak Republic based on a Schengen visa issued by another EU/EAA Member State or Switzerland under a representation agreement with the Slovak Republic for issuing Schengen visas,³¹
- e) They are a third-country national who does not require a visa,
- f) They are a holder of a Certificate of a Slovak Living Abroad or,
- g) They are a third-country national who has been granted temporary protection in the Slovak Republic.

A third-country national applying for temporary residence for family reunification as a family member of an EU Blue Card holder, who has legal residence in another EU Member State where their family unit existed, must submit the application in person or through the sponsor at the Foreigners' Police department within 30 days of entering the Slovak Republic.

An application for permanent residence for an indefinite period must be submitted in person at the Foreigners' Police department or via the electronic service established for this purpose.

An application for asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification can only be submitted within the territory of the Slovak Republic. The process begins when the foreign national formally declares at the relevant Foreigners' Police department that they are applying for asylum or subsidiary protection in the Slovak Republic.

20d. What documentary evidence is required from the applicant to confirm i) his or her identity and ii) the family relationship? Please describe separately for each category of family members. Please also indicate if apostille, legalisation or other practices related to the validation of the documents are requested and their associated cost.

- i. A valid travel document is considered proof of the applicant's identity. A travel document includes a passport, diplomatic passport, service passport, emergency travel document, foreigner's travel document, EU emergency travel document, and other similar documents. Other similar document is any document recognized as a travel document under an international treaty.
- ii. These are the following documents for each family member:
 - a) Minor child – Civil registry document.
 - b) Unmarried child under 18 years – Civil registry document and an affidavit confirming the child is unmarried.
 - c) Child under 18 placed under the personal guardianship of the sponsor – Civil registry document and a document confirming legal guardianship.

³⁰ This applies only to specific types of tolerated residence as defined in Article 58(1)(a) to (c) or Article 58(2) of the Act on Residence of Foreigners .

³¹ It is applicable only to applicants for permanent residence for five years.

- d) Dependent child over 18 unable to care for themselves due to a long-term adverse health condition – Civil registry document, proof of dependency, and medical certificate.
- e) Parent dependent on the sponsor's care – Civil registry document and proof of dependency, confirmation that they lack proper support in their country of origin (are alone)
- f) Dependent person under an international treaty – Civil registry document and the relevant international treaty.

In cases of family reunification with an asylum holder, if the application is submitted within three months of asylum being granted, the family relationship can be proven with any document confirming the relationship or any other evidence of its existence.

All documents required for the residence permit application that are issued in a foreign language must be submitted with an official translation into Slovak or Czech, either as the original document or a certified copy.

Signatures on affidavits must be officially certified.

Documents required for the residence permit application, issued by foreign authorities, must be authenticated with higher-level verification (superlegalization) or an apostille, unless an international treaty or Regulation (EU) 2016/119 waives this requirement.

Consular fees: Certification of a signature on a document and its duplicate costs €14 per signature. Certification of foreign documents for use in the Slovak Republic costs €30. The fee for an apostille is €30. The cost for issuing a copy (photocopy) of a document, including certification, is €14 per (even commenced) page.

Translation fees for official translators: The official fee for translating documents between Slovak and other European languages is €19.92 per page (1,800 characters), while translation between Slovak and non-European languages costs €23.24 per page. If the foreign language does not use the Latin alphabet, an additional fee of €1.66 per (even commenced) page applies.

20e. What alternative evidence or methods of investigation are employed by the competent authorities in your country in the absence of documentation (DNA testing, interviews, or alternative means to prove identity and/or family relationships, etc.)?

Please indicate whether any of these elements require in-person presence in the country of departure and how do you operate or what kind of cooperation agreements with other EU Member States or partners you have when you do not have an embassy in the country of departure.

For a residence permit application, a foreign national is required to submit an identity document as specified in question 20d, and this requirement cannot be substituted by any alternative.³²

In the case of asylum proceedings, individuals always can present their claims during a personal interview, and written documents are not required.

Legislation also allows the use of DNA tests, provided there is consent from all involved parties. However, these tests have not been commonly used in practice in recent times.³³

20f. Is the applicant (be it either the sponsor or the family member) required to pay a fee to apply for family reunification? If yes, what is the level of this fee and are there exceptions to the payment of this fee?

Please also indicate whether there are any additional costs linked to the procedure which must be borne by the applicant, such as DNA testing, participation in tests or exam, legalisation of documents, exit and travel costs (including visa), etc.

The administrative fee for a temporary residence application for family reunification is €200.

Applicants seeking family reunification with an asylum holder or a person with granted subsidiary protection in the Slovak Republic, as well as those under 18 years of age, are exempt from this fee.

The administrative fee for a permanent residence application (for both five-year residence and indefinite residence) is €250.

Applicants under 18 years of age are exempt from this fee.

³² Source: BBFP PF P.

³³ Source: MO MoI SR.

20g. Does your national law provide for a rejection of an application for entry and residence, the withdrawal or non-renewal of the residence permit of family members on grounds of public policy, public security or public health?³⁴ Y/ N

Yes.

If yes, what is the procedure in place to verify whether or not the family member(s) constitute a threat to public policy, public security or public health?

Every applicant for temporary residence for family reunification or permanent residence who is over 14 years old must provide proof of clear criminal record during the application process. This is demonstrated through a criminal record extract from both the applicant's country of citizenship and any country where they have resided for more than 90 days within six consecutive months in the past three years.

A criminal record extract is not required if it comes from an EU Member State that allows the electronic exchange of conviction records. In such cases, the police department will obtain the record directly in the electronic form. If a country does not issue a criminal record extract, it may be replaced by an equivalent document from the relevant judicial or administrative authority in the applicant's home country. Alternatively, an affidavit may be submitted that is signed before a competent judicial or administrative authority or a notary in the applicant's country of origin. The document must confirm clear criminal record across the entire territory of the issuing country.

Asylum holders and persons with granted subsidiary protection are not required to provide a criminal record extract from the country they fled due to persecution or severe injustice. Instead, they must submit an affidavit confirming their clear criminal record in that country.

Public health risks are assessed after the granting of temporary or permanent residence based on a medical report issued by an infectious disease specialist. The report must confirm that the third-country national does not suffer from a disease that poses a public health risk. This medical report must be submitted within 30 days of receiving the residence permit. Failure to submit the report within the specified period will result in cancellation of the temporary or permanent residence permit.

20h. How are the best interests of the child considered during the examination of the application?³⁵

Please indicate how is the assessment performed and what kind of coordination mechanisms you have put in place with the relevant authorities in the departure countries.

A minor cannot be granted residence in the Slovak Republic if a parent who has not been granted personal custody and has the right to visitation with the child does not consent to the family reunification in the Slovak Republic. For granting asylum or subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification with a minor, the written consent of the minor is always required in advance.

21. Taking the different steps above into account, what is the **duration** of the procedure deciding on an application for family reunification in your country – both according to law and in practice:

- Legal time limit for deciding upon an application? Please also indicate what is the period under which an appeal of the decision can be lodged.

In general, the Foreigners' Police department decides on temporary residence for family reunification within 90 days. However, a decision is made within 30 days from the date of submission of a complete application if the applicant is a spouse or a child under 18 of a third-country national who: a) Represents or works for a foreign investor in the Slovak Republic and is also a citizen of an OECD Member State, b) Represents or works for a significant foreign investor in the Slovak Republic, or c) Represents or works for a business services centre or a technology centre. The same 30-day timeframe applies to a third-country national applying for family reunification with an EU Blue Card holder, provided they apply within 30 days of entering the Slovak Republic and have valid residence in the EU Member State that originally issued the Blue Card to the sponsor before they obtained their Blue Card in the Slovak Republic. This shortened processing period also applies when a family member of an EU Blue Card applicant submits their application simultaneously with the sponsor.

³⁴ Article 6 of the Family Reunification Directive establishes that EU Member States may reject an application for entry and residence of family members on grounds of public policy, public security or public health.

³⁵ Article 5(5) of the Family Reunification Directive establishes that when examining an application, the EU Member States shall have due regard to the best interests of minor children.

The Police Department decides on an application for permanent residence for five years within 90 days of receiving the application. However, a decision is made within 30 days of receiving the complete application if the applicant is a child of a third-country national who represents or works for a significant foreign investor in the Slovak Republic and who has already been granted five-year permanent residence in the interest of the Slovak Republic.

The Police Department decides on applications for permanent residence for an indefinite period within 90 days of receiving the application. However, if the application concerns a spouse or child of a third-country national who represents or works for a significant foreign investor in the Slovak Republic, the decision is made within 30 days from the reception of a complete application.

The Ministry of the Interior decides on granting asylum or subsidiary protection within six months of the start of the proceeding.

- Average duration of the procedure in practice, including the notification of the decision? (e.g. in days/months from the date of application until date of notification of the decision)

State authorities make decisions within the legally prescribed time limits during the proceeding. However, statistics on the average duration of proceedings are not recorded.

- Have any specific measures been taken by your country to shorten processing times? If so, what measures?

State authorities of the Slovak Republic do not currently consider it necessary to implement measures to shorten the legally prescribed time limits.

22. Is a visa required for family members to enter the territory of your country or is the residence permit delivered abroad?³⁶

The residence permit card is not delivered abroad.

If a visa is required:

22a. What is the procedure applicable to the visa?

A third-country national must submit a national visa application using the official form at the diplomatic mission accredited for the country of residence or through an external service provider designated by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs for that country. If no such diplomatic mission or external service provider is available, or in cases of special circumstances, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, in agreement with the Ministry of the Interior, will designate an alternative diplomatic mission or external service provider where the third-country national can submit the national visa application.

The following documents must be submitted with the national visa application:

- a) A valid travel document
- b) A colour photograph (3 × 3.5 cm) reflecting the applicant's current appearance
- c) A document confirming the purpose of residence and
- d) Proof of health insurance

If the submitted documents are insufficient for deciding on the national visa application, the diplomatic mission may request additional supporting documents from the applicant. Upon request, the third-country national is required to appear in person for an interview.

If the applicant fails to submit all required documents, the diplomatic mission will not accept the application and will provide a written list of missing documents that must be submitted for the application to be processed.

A family member of an asylum holder or a third-country national with granted subsidiary protection must submit: a valid travel document, a document proving the family relationship, a proof of dependency if required, if all documents are not provided, the application will not be accepted.

22b. What is the legal time limit for deciding upon a visa application?

³⁶ Article 13 of the Family Reunification Directive requires EU Member States to facilitate the entry of family members by authorising their entry and providing assistance in obtaining the necessary visas once their application for family reunification is accepted.

The diplomatic mission will decide on the national visa application within 30 days from the date of submission.

22c. What is the average duration of the procedure in practice, including the notification of the decision? (e.g. number of days/months)

The length of the procedure for granting a D (national) visa at the diplomatic mission depends in practice directly on how quickly the central visa authority delivers its opinion on the granting of a D visa. This is usually on the 30th day.

22d. Have any specific measures been taken by your country to shorten processing times for the visa and to facilitate the visa procedure?

Please also indicate if there are any limitations to the number of visas that can be issued in a given period of time.

The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs uses also external service providers for submitting D visas related to residence applications or D visas in the interest of the Slovak Republic to increase capacity for handling visa applications, thereby expediting the overall process on the ministry's side.

The only limiting factor regarding the number of visas issued is the processing capacity of diplomatic missions. Otherwise, there are no set quotas for issuing visas related to family reunification.

23. Does your national law provide for a **rejection of an application** for entry and residence, or the **withdrawal or non-renewal** of the residence permit of family members:

23a. where the conditions laid down by the Family Reunification Directive are not or are no longer satisfied (sufficient resources, accommodation, insurance, etc.) Y/N

Yes.

23b. where the sponsor and his/her family member(s) do not or no longer live in a real marital or family relationship; Y/N

Yes.

23c. where it is found that the sponsor or the unmarried partner is married or is in a stable long-term relationship with another person. Y/N

No. This fact alone is not a reason for residence permit cancellation, unless it is proven to be a marriage of convenience. However, the Slovak Republic allows family reunification with only one spouse of the sponsor, even in cases of countries where polygamy is legally recognized.

The lack of a shared family life between spouses is a valid reason for not renewing temporary residence.

23d. where false or misleading information, false or falsified documents were used, fraud was otherwise committed, or other unlawful means were used. Y/N

Yes.

23e. where the marriage, partnership or adoption was contracted for the sole purpose of enabling the person concerned to enter or reside in the host country. When making an assessment with respect to this point, national authorities may have regard in particular to the fact that the marriage, partnership or adoption was contracted after the sponsor had been issued his or her residence permit. Y/N

Yes. However, the Slovak Republic only defines marriages of convenience, not adoptions of convenience or fraudulent custody arrangements for minors.

24. Does the national law of your country provide for the **withdrawal or non-renewal** of the residence permit of family members where the sponsor's residence comes to an end and the family member does not yet enjoy an autonomous right of residence? Y/N If yes, please describe.

No. Temporary residence for family reunification is directly linked to the residence status of the sponsor and is granted for the same period as the sponsor's residence permit. When the sponsor's residence permit expires, the residence of their family members also ends.

If a reason for revoking the sponsor's temporary residence arises, which would also terminate the family members' residence, the Foreigners' Police must assess whether the consequences of cancellation would be disproportionate to the reason for revocation, particularly in relation to their private and family life.

If a family member was granted permanent residence and a circumstance occurs that would normally lead to its revocation, the Police Department will not cancel the permanent residence if:

- a) The consequences of revocation of the permanent residence would be disproportionate to the reason for its cancellation, especially considering the private and family life of the third-country national.
- b) The person has held permanent residence for at least three years, and the person to whom they were reunified for permanent residence has passed away.
- c) A minor who obtained permanent residence but has since turned 18 years old and is working, studying, conducting research, or engaged in a special activity in Slovakia.

Legislation also allows an applicant to apply for a change in the type or purpose of residence while from the territory of the Slovak Republic.

25a. Please indicate any **challenges** experienced by:

- i) sponsors and/or family members throughout the above-mentioned procedure(s) (lengthy procedures, difficulty in gathering documents, accessing consular posts, etc.);
- ii) your national authorities in the implementation of the examination procedure (such as limited administrative capacities, division of competences between relevant national authorities, difficulty in the assessment of the family relationship, etc.). Please indicate according to whom this is a challenge. (e.g. through studies/ evaluations/expert opinions)

When both the sponsor and their family member submit their residence applications simultaneously, the family member's application process depends on the sponsor's residence application process. If a decision on the sponsor's residence cannot be made, it leads to delays in processing the family member's application as well.

Foreign nationals must submit civil registry documents from their home country, without verification of whether that country issues such documents. In certain cases, the Police Department may request verification of the authenticity of the document, whether the issuing country officially provides such civil registry records, which can sometimes be challenging.³⁷

From the perspective of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, one of the main challenges is the availability of Slovak diplomatic missions abroad for submitting visa or residence applications. To address this, efforts are underway to expand the network of external service providers, ensuring that visa applications in third countries become more accessible.³⁸

The Migration Office of the Ministry of the Interior does not report any specific challenges in this area.

25b. Please provide any examples of identified **good practices** that might help to overcome the above-mentioned challenges or otherwise. Please indicate according to whom this is a good practice (e.g. through studies/ evaluations/expert opinions).

The Slovak Republic does not have documented examples of best practices in this area.

SECTION 5: ACCESS TO RIGHTS FOLLOWING FAMILY REUNIFICATION

This section provides a comparative overview of the rights that follow on from family reunification in the EMN Member and Observer Countries, notably access to education, employment, vocational guidance and training, and right to apply for autonomous right of residence.

If the provisions vary across different categories of third-country nationals (refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, worker, student, etc.), please describe the variations.

³⁷ Source: BBFP PF P.

³⁸ Source: Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

26. Are family members entitled (in the same way as the sponsor) to access the following rights³⁹ in your country:

26a. Access to education? Y/ N

If yes, please indicate whether any special measures to support access to education are available specifically to family members, e.g. language assistance, guidance regarding the national education system, validation of existing studies and recognition of diplomas and qualifications as well as any support measure for this purpose, etc. Please also mention whether there are any announced planned changes in the national legislation/policy/practice.

Yes. To help children – foreign nationals to overcome language barriers, basic and advanced Slovak language courses are organized. The Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth and Research and Innovation Authority provide grants aimed at expanding free Slovak language courses for adults and covering fees for existing courses at A1, A2, and B1 levels according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Additionally, language education support is part of the Action Plan of the National Strategy for Research, Development, and Innovation. However, the Slovak Republic does not offer educational programs specifically for family members of foreigners, nor does it have special programs to help foreigners overcome language barriers in accessing education.

Family members of asylum holders and persons granted subsidiary protection, who have been granted asylum or subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification, are offered language courses, but not because of their residence status—rather, because they have been granted asylum or subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification.

The Migration Information Centre (MIC) of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides free, low-threshold Slovak language courses for third-country nationals as part of a project funded by the state budget and the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF). MIC also offers legal and social counselling, including financial support for the recognition of education and qualifications.

As part of the Recovery and Resilience Plan, the Ministry of the Interior will establish three fully operational one-stop-shop centres by 30 December 2024, offering comprehensive services to facilitate the settlement of foreign nationals in the Slovak Republic.

26b. Access to employment and self-employed activity?⁴⁰ Y/ N

If yes, please specify if there are specific conditions and if it can be limited during the first 12 months, as well as whether a labour market test is foreseen? Please also specify how access to employment and self-employed activity is granted to family members of intra-corporate transferees, researchers and EU Blue Card holders. Please also mention whether there are any announced planned changes in the national legislation/policy/practice.

Access to employment is unrestricted after nine months from the date of granting temporary residence for family reunification. Until the end of this nine-month period, a family member is only allowed to work in the Slovak Republic with a special work permit. When issuing a work permit, the Office of Labor, Social Affairs, and Family generally considers the labour market situation, meaning that the foreign national must undergo a labour market test. However, from the moment temporary residence for family reunification is granted, the following family members are exempt from these restrictions and may work without limitations: family members of an EU Blue Card holder, family members of employees and interns under an intra-corporate transfer, family members of third-country nationals holding temporary residence for research and development. Additionally, family members of employees in research and development who are exercising mobility from another EU Member State to the Slovak Republic are also allowed to start working immediately upon their arrival.

Self-employment is only restricted for certain family members whose temporary residence for family reunification was granted due to their inability to support themselves in their home country. This includes dependent unmarried children of the sponsor or their spouse over 18 years old, who cannot support themselves due to a long-term adverse health condition, or a parent of the sponsor or their spouse who is

³⁹ Article 14 of the Family Reunification Directive establishes that family members are entitled (the same way as the sponsor) to access education, employment and self-employed activity, as well as vocational guidance and training. Article 15 of the Family Reunification Directive additionally specifies that family members are entitled to apply for autonomous right of residence after no later than five years, independent of that of the sponsor (also in case of dissolution of family ties).

⁴⁰ In addition to the Family Reunification Directive, there are further Legal Migration Directives containing specific provisions on access to employment of family members of certain sponsors, for example, family members of Blue Card holders or ICTs. Please elaborate on such specificities in the above answer.

dependent on their care and does not receive adequate family support in their home country. All other family members have the right to engage in self-employment immediately after being granted temporary residence.

Family members who have been granted permanent residence gain the right to work and engage in self-employment immediately upon receiving their permanent residence permit.

Family members with granted asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification purpose are allowed to work and engage in self-employment without restrictions from the moment asylum or subsidiary protection is granted.

26c. Access to vocational guidance and training? Y/ N

If yes, please describe what the access to vocational guidance and training entails, for example, whether special guidance and training programmes are provided to family members or whether they have access to the general measures. Please also mention whether there are any announced planned changes in the national legislation/policy/practice.

No. The Slovak Republic does not have state programmes exclusively focused on family members of third-country nationals. The only exceptions are programmes for persons who have been granted asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification purpose. However, these programmes are not linked to the residence status of a foreign national but rather to their asylum or subsidiary protection status for family reunification purpose.

Apart from asylum and subsidiary protection holders, family members of British nationals are also guaranteed access to employment services under the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community.

In general, specialized courses and training programmes for third-country nationals are primarily provided by non-governmental organizations. The Migration Information Centre of the International Organization for Migration (MIC IOM), funded by the state budget and the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), offers free employment counselling for third-country nationals and provides financial support for language courses, professional training, and retraining courses.

27. After how many years of residence and under which conditions (if any) family members are entitled to an **autonomous residence permit** independent of that of the sponsor?

A family member gains the right to independent residence after meeting the requirements for long-term residence, which includes: a) Lawful and continuous residence in the Slovak Republic for five years immediately before submitting the application, or b) Five years of lawful and continuous residence in the Slovak Republic or another EU Member State as a holder of an EU Blue Card, another residence permits for highly qualified employment, a research and development residence permit, a study permit, international protection status, or a residence permit for family reunification with an EU Blue Card holder, while the applicant must have resided in the Slovak Republic as an EU Blue Card holder or as a family member of an EU Blue Card holder for at least two years immediately before submitting the application.

The Slovak Republic does not impose any restrictions on the change of residence type or purpose. A family member may apply for such a change immediately after obtaining temporary residence for family reunification purpose, including from within the Slovak Republic. Until a decision is made on the application, their stay is considered lawful.

28. Is an autonomous residence permit granted in case of exceptional circumstances such as widowhood, divorce, separation or death? Please detail what qualifies as exceptional circumstances in your national law.

No. In case of temporary residence for family reunification purpose this is not possible without changing the purpose of residence. The BBFP PF P will also not revoke temporary residence for family reunification if the consequences of revocation would be disproportionate, particularly in relation to the private and family life of the third-country national.

Yes. If a family member has been granted permanent residence, and a situation arises that would normally lead to its revocation, the Police Department will not revoke the residence permit if:

- a) The consequences of revocation would be disproportionate to the reason for cancellation, especially considering the private and family life of the third-country national,
- b) the person has been granted permanent residence for at least three years, and the person they were reunited with for permanent residence has passed away, or

c) a minor who obtained permanent residence and later turned 18 is now self-employed, employed, studying, engages in special activities or is conducting research and development or in the Slovak Republic.

29. What other rights are granted to family members in your country, for example, healthcare, social benefits, housing and social housing, possibility for family members to apply for long-term residence status or naturalisation, etc.?

For each right granted, please specify what access entails in practice, and under what conditions?

Healthcare

The Slovak Republic guarantees access to healthcare for all foreign nationals based on their health insurance coverage. Every third-country national residing in the Slovak Republic is required to have health insurance valid in the Slovak Republic or have coverage for medical expenses in the Slovak Republic for the entire duration of their stay. If a third-country national does not qualify for public health insurance, they must purchase an appropriate private health insurance plan from a commercial insurance provider. Family members granted permanent residence in the Slovak Republic are generally entitled to public health insurance and are obligated to be publicly insured. Family members with temporary residence are included in the public health insurance system only if they engage in economic activity in the Slovak Republic. In such cases, their dependent children under 18 years old are also covered by the public health insurance system. Additionally, family members granted asylum for family reunification are automatically included in the public health insurance system. Persons with granted subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification are also included in the health insurance system. The provided healthcare is covered by the health insurance company with the highest number of policyholders (General Health Insurance Company – Všeobecná zdravotná poisťovňa -VŠZP) to the extent covered under public health insurance. They prove their entitlement with an eligibility card.

Social Benefits

Family members have access to most state social benefits, particularly family-related benefits.

Family members with granted asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification are eligible for special one-time or recurring financial support aimed at facilitating their initial integration in Slovakia.

Housing

Family members with asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification may be provided temporary accommodation in an accommodation centre or integration facility by the Ministry of the Interior, based on a written request and for a necessary period. They are required to contribute proportionally to their living expenses.

Foreign nationals with permanent or temporary residence in the Slovak Republic may also qualify for state-supported rental housing, provided they meet the legal requirements.

Long-Term Residence

A family member is eligible to apply for long-term residence after five years of continuous residence in the Slovak Republic. For family members granted international protection, long-term residence is granted after five years of lawful and uninterrupted residence in the Slovak Republic or EU Member States. For family members of an EU Blue Card holder, long-term residence is granted after five years of lawful and uninterrupted residence in the Slovak Republic or EU Member States, provided they have lived in the Slovak Republic as a Blue Card holder's family member for at least two years immediately before applying.

Citizenship

The Slovak Republic generally grants citizenship after eight years of continuous permanent residence in the Slovak Republic. Family members may also obtain Slovak citizenship after ten years of continuous residence, if at the time of application: they already hold permanent residence in the Slovak Republic, they have had continuous permanent residence for at least three years before turning 18, or they were born in the Slovak Republic and have had permanent residence for at least three years immediately before applying.

Family members granted asylum for family reunification may apply for Slovak citizenship after four years of continuous residence in the Slovak Republic.

30. Are family members of refugees and/or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection or holders of similar protection statuses granted refugee/subsidiary protection status or similar protection statuses in their own right or on a 'derived' permit (from that of the sponsor)?

Please clarify how the type of permit issued differs in terms of its validity and rights attached to it.

Family members of asylum and subsidiary protection holders in the Slovak Republic have two options for obtaining residence in the country. The first option is obtaining asylum or subsidiary protection for the purpose of family reunification. The Slovak Republic grants asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification without additional assessments to eligible family members, including: spouses,⁴¹ children under 18 years old and parents, or other persons who have been granted custody of a minor asylum holder or a foreign national with subsidiary protection.⁴² In terms of residence status: Asylum granted for family reunification is considered equivalent to permanent residence in the Slovak Republic. Subsidiary protection granted for family reunification is equivalent to temporary residence in the Slovak Republic.

The second option (apart from being granted asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification) is to apply for temporary residence for family reunification purpose with the sponsor. This process is administratively more demanding, as the family member must provide all required documents, including proof of purpose of residence, criminal record clearance, financial means to support their stay, and accommodation in the Slovak Republic. Exception is if a third-country national applies for temporary residence for family reunification with an asylum holder within three months of being granted asylum. In such a case, they only need to submit a valid travel document and a document proving the family relationship, or other evidence of the relationship's existence.

Unlike asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification, temporary residence for family reunification purpose is not a legal entitlement, meaning that if a foreign national does not meet the conditions, the residence permit will not be granted. However, a broader range of family members may apply for temporary residence for this purpose.

In both cases, the family member's residence is dependent on the sponsor's status. If the sponsor's international protection is revoked or terminated, the family member's asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification will also be revoked. Similarly, temporary residence for family reunification will be cancelled unless the consequences of such cancellation are deemed disproportionate, particularly considering the private and family life of the third-country national. A family member of an asylum holder or a person granted subsidiary protection whose marriage has ended and who has held uninterrupted temporary residence for at least three years, or has reached adulthood, may apply for the change of the purpose of residence at the Police Department within 30 days of the issuance of a death certificate, the finalization of a divorce decree, or reaching adulthood. In such cases, their residence in the Slovak Republic will be considered lawful until a decision on their application is made.

From a legal rights perspective, asylum for family reunification is equivalent to permanent residence, granting more extensive rights compared to temporary residence, whether obtained through subsidiary protection for family reunification or temporary residence for family reunification with an asylum holder or a person granted subsidiary protection.

In cases where the Slovak Republic grants rights based on international protection status, there is no distinction in majority of cases between asylum holders and persons with granted subsidiary protection, as they are generally afforded the same rights.

Obtaining temporary residence for family reunification requires submitting multiple supporting documents, making it financially more demanding compared to obtaining asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification. However, the application itself is exempt from administrative fees. The only cost involved is the issuance of a residence permit, which is €10 if the document is issued and delivered within 30 days, or €39 if issued and delivered within 2 days. Persons granted asylum or subsidiary protection for family reunification are also exempt from paying this residence permit fee.

31a. Please indicate any **challenges** experienced by family members in your country with regard to accessing the above-mentioned rights (e.g. based on existing studies/evaluations or information received from relevant authorities and stakeholders/expert opinions) and solutions put in place to tackle them.

State authorities have not identified any challenges in this area.⁴³

⁴¹ It is required that the marriage existed at the time when the asylum holder or the person granted subsidiary protection left their country of origin, and a written consent from the sponsor is also necessary.

⁴² A written consent from the minor sponsor is required.

⁴³ Source: BBFP PF P and MO MoI SR.

32b. Please provide any examples of identified (e.g. through studies/evaluations/expert opinions) **good practices** with regard to the provision of education/access to the labour market and vocational guidance and training/right to autonomous residence for family members in your country/ etc., including support before departure to ensure better access once in the host country.

Please indicate according to whom this is a good practice.

The provision of information services in foreign languages through the Migration Information Centre of IOM is a highly valued model, both by foreign nationals and state authorities. Authorities particularly appreciate that foreign nationals approach police departments better prepared, which reduces the overall processing time required for handling their applications.⁴⁴

CONCLUSIONS

The Slovak Republic has fully transposed Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification into its legal system, along with other directives regulating the rights of family members of third-country nationals in different ways. These include Directive 2014/66/EU on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer, Directive 2016/801/EU on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing, and Directive 2021/1883/EU on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment and repealing Council Directive 2009/50/EC. As a result, the legal status of family members of third-country nationals is not a major topic in political discussions, and the Slovak Republic is not planning any legislative changes in this area.

Since 2017, the Slovak Republic has not implemented any significant amendments specifically aimed at changing the legal status of family members. The two main adjustments that have been introduced are the introduction of national visas for family members of relocated employees, based on Slovakia's interests and the reduction of the waiting period for family members to enter the labour market without needing a work permit, from 12 months to 9 months after being granted temporary residence for family reunification. However, both changes were primarily driven by labour market needs and the necessity to ensure enough skilled workers, rather than by a direct intention to improve the situation of family members.

The Slovak Republic generally allows access to the right to family reunification to a wide range of family members, even beyond the nuclear family. However, it does not consider persons living outside of marriage or same-sex marriages to be family.

When assessing an application for residence for the purpose of family reunification, the Slovak Republic only requires that the minimum conditions in the areas of security, public order and public health, the interests of minor children and proof of accommodation, health insurance and minimum resources for financial support for the stay are met. The Slovak Republic does not require any other integration conditions or knowledge of the state language.

The right to family reunification is not limited by any waiting period and a family member (except for family members of foreigners granted international protection) is always entitled to apply for residence in the Slovak Republic together with a sponsor.

The same conditions apply to family members of persons with granted subsidiary protection as to family members of other third-country nationals with temporary residence in the Slovak Republic. The special conditions that apply to family members of asylum holders applying for family reunification within 3 months of the granting of asylum to the sponsor do not apply to them.

More favourable conditions, consisting mainly of faster decision-making on the application and faster access to the labour market, are granted by the Slovak Republic to family members of Blue Card holders and, to a more limited extent, to family members of employees in science and research and family members of employees in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer.

Access to information on the conditions for granting residence in the Slovak Republic for family members remains a challenge. There is no comprehensive state portal that would provide such information, and partial information is often not available in foreign languages.

⁴⁴ Source: MIC IOM.

The Slovak Republic does not have an electronic system in place for submitting initial applications for temporary residence or permanent residence for five years. Applications must be submitted in person, in most cases at a police department, after previously being granted a national visa of the type "D" at a Slovak diplomatic mission abroad. Family members, except for minors, apply in person. The sponsor is entitled to apply only if his family member cannot submit the application in person due to incapacity and in special situations if it concerns a family member of a Blue Card holder.

Documents attached to the application must be certified or contain an apostille and officially translated into Slovak.

The decision on granting temporary residence for the purpose of family reunification takes a maximum of 90 days. In special cases, the police department decides within a shortened period of 30 days. In cases where a family member files an application together with a sponsor, the police department decides on both applications within the same period. A minor cannot be granted residence in the Slovak Republic if the parent to whom the minor was not entrusted with personal care and who has the right to visitation with the child does not agree with family reunification in the Slovak Republic.

The Slovak Republic does not deliver residence permit cards abroad. If a family member does not have another authorization to enter the Slovak Republic, he or she is obliged to apply for a national visa. The Slovak diplomatic mission decides on the granting of a national visa within 30 days of submitting the application.

Although the residence of a family member in the Slovak Republic is directly dependent on the residence of the sponsor, i.e. if the sponsor's residence ends, the residence of his or her family members also ends, the Slovak Republic is very flexible in this area. It allows family members to change the type and purpose of their residence without having to travel to their country of origin, regardless of whether the sponsor's residence has expired due to the expiration of the residence, his or her death, or his or her residence has been cancelled, for legal reasons, before its expiration.

The Slovak Republic provides family members of third-country nationals a relatively extensive catalogue of rights, although not without restrictions.

The right to access employment is limited for the first 9 months after the temporary residence has been granted, due to labour market protection. This period was shortened from the original 12 months in 2023.

The right to run a business in the Slovak Republic is restricted only to family members outside the nuclear family, adult children and parents of the sponsor who have obtained the right to reside on the grounds that they are unable to take care of themselves in their country of origin due to dependency or poor health.

The possibility to study in the Slovak Republic is not restricted in any way for family members. However, access to free courses providing retraining or increasing qualifications within state programmes is very limited. Only family members with international protection have the same access to these courses as citizens of the Slovak Republic. State support in this area is replaced by projects of international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

The Slovak Republic has made significant progress in supporting language education. Since 2024, it has started providing subsidies to accredited language schools with the aim of expanding the offer of free Slovak language courses for adults.

Access to healthcare is guaranteed by the Slovak Republic to every family member based on health insurance. Every foreigner must be covered by health insurance during their stay in the Slovak Republic. The difference lies in the form of health insurance. Access to public health insurance is available only to family members with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic, or family members carrying out economic activity in the Slovak Republic, their dependent minor children and asylum holders.

Access to social security benefits in the Slovak Republic depends on the type of residence, while family members with permanent residence have in principle the same access to these benefits as citizens of the Slovak Republic. Access to benefits based on temporary residence is more limited, but the most common benefits, especially family benefits, are also available to family members with temporary residence.

The Slovak Republic grants long-term residence to family members through a standard procedure, pursuant to Directive 2003/109/EC and other directives that regulate more favourable granting of long-term residence to certain groups of foreigners (family members of the Blue Card holder).

Family members can generally obtain Slovak citizenship after 8 years of continuous permanent residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic, or 10 years of any continuous residence. Asylum holders and some groups of minor children can obtain citizenship in a shorter time frame.

