# COUNTRY FACTSHEET: SLOVAKIA 2014
## EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

## 1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in the Slovak Republic during 2014, including latest statistics.

## 2. Common European Asylum System

As of 1st January 2014 a **new provision on detaining asylum seekers** was introduced in compliance with EU legislation. The new provision stipulates reasons for detaining asylum seekers and the total duration changed to "for the time necessary", thus it no longer has to exceed six months. An exception in this respect is detention on the grounds of threats to state security or public order; in this case, detention can be extended by 12 months.

At the same time, **legislative changes** were introduced on **asylum procedures**. Among others, these changes included for instance the acquisition of citizenship of asylum seekers' children born in the Slovak Republic. New provisions state that such children shall not be considered asylum seekers if they acquire Slovak citizenship by birth. Furthermore, the respective **reasons for not granting asylum were modified**. According to the new provision, asylum shall not be granted if the applicant has no well-founded fear of being persecuted in the country of origin or has access to protection against persecution. Asylum, moreover, will not be granted if the applicant can safely and legally travel, gain admittance and settle in the country of origin. In addition, rules regarding **subsidiary protection** have been modified as well and can now be extended to two years instead of one year.

In 2014, the Ministry of Interior continued applying a **control mechanism** on a half-yearly basis. The control focused on the quality and timeliness of the decision-making process, fight against unjustified applications, timeliness of handling applications, credibility and assessment of prosecutions, verification of applicants' documents and risk assessment in the case of return to the country of origin.

On 18th July 2014 the Slovak Government signed a new agreement with UNHCR and IOM on **humanitarian transfer of refugees in need of international protection through the Slovak Republic**. Under this agreement Slovakia provided temporary shelter to 273 new refugees within its territory (270 refugees were evacuated to Slovakia, and three refugees were born in Slovakia). During their stay, which is partly covered by European Refugee Fund, Slovakia provided them with full accommodation, food and basic sanitary products. Healthcare and social care for refugees was provided by the UNHCR, and the IOM was responsible for transfers of refugees to Slovakia and from Slovakia to the country of resettlement, medical checks and cultural orientation courses.

A draft amendment to the Act on Asylum was submitted to the inter-ministerial consultation procedure at the end of 2014 whose main changes are mentioned in sections below.

## 3. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

The previously mentioned **legislative changes with regard to asylum procedures** also concerned unaccompanied minors. The category of persons to be granted asylum for the purpose of family reunification with an unaccompanied minor asylum seeker was extended. Under the new arrangement, the minor must give his/her written consent to family reunification.

In 2014, there was a change with respect to the foster home in which unaccompanied minors are placed. The specialised Foster Home for UAMs was closed, and its function was taken over by the Foster Home and Children's Centre in Medzilaborce.

Slovakia also waived some labour-market test conditions to vulnerable groups of migrants, for example, victims of trafficking in human beings and victims of labour exploitation and reduced the period

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after which asylum seekers will be able to access the labour market, from one year to nine months.

The amendment to the Act on Social Services, which entered into effect on 1st January 2014, introduced a **new system of categorisation of social services** provided also to third-country nationals. The amendment defines new types of social services and professional activities, such as crisis intervention field services and community centres.

At the same date, a new Act on Assistance in Material Need entered into effect. Once the conditions are met, the assistance, provided to adult natural persons capable of work and to members of the household, consists of **benefits in material needs and allowances** (housing allowance, dependent child allowance, etc.). The benefit in material need of 61,60 euro, may only be paid to adults who are capable of working and willing to carry out the offered activities for 32 hours per month, or work 32 hours under a legal relationship establishing income from dependent work.

The planned amendment to the Act on Asylum, to be approved and to enter into effect in 2015, proposes to keep unaccompanied minors in children facilities for social and legal protection during the asylum procedure. This means that they will not be burdened by changing environments or different regimes in the facilities. It also introduces the obligation of a foster home to create conditions for unaccompanied minors to meet representatives of international organisations.

The planned amendment will also introduce the identification of special needs of vulnerable persons (e.g. minors, disabled persons, pregnant women, etc.). Their needs will be taken into account in the creation of appropriate conditions for accommodation and care.

The **Integration Policy,** which entered into effect in 2014, focuses specifically on integration of unaccompanied minors, their education and language training.

On 1st December 2014, the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equity approved and recommended to adopt the draft **National Strategy of Human Rights Protection and Support** which deals among others with migrants including unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups.

## 4. European Policy on Legal migration and Integration

### 4.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

The Migration Policy from 2011 and the **Integration Policy from 2014** envisage the setting up of information and consultation centres in the countries of origin as one of the measures to improve the pre-departure provision of information to migrants.

Furthermore, the 2014 **Integration Policy** (see also 4.4.) supports the use of different communication channels targeting the general public, including social networks and other new media with the aim to raise public awareness about integration. The Policy also supports the adoption and implementation of measures targeting the suppression of racism, xenophobia, discrimination and other forms of hatred and intolerance towards foreigners.

Since January 2014, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family has contributed to the preparation of a sustainable **Communication Strategy on the Benefits and Positive Elements of Migration and Integration of Foreigners in Slovakia.** The main reason for the preparation of this document was the lack of proactive and positive communication on this topic. It aims for free and non-commercial use by individuals, organisations and institutions willing to participate in creating a positive image about the life of foreigners in the everyday society.

### 4.2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Legislation concerning **employment of third-country nationals** has been modified on 1st January 2014. Amongst others, a **single application procedure** for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State has been introduced. Conditions for granting work permits to third-country nationals have also been modified. The legislation furthermore lays down employers' obligation with regard to recruiting third-country nationals.

Access to employment was facilitated by increasing working hours for students who successfully completed their studies at a secondary school (10 hours a week) or higher education institution (20 hours a week) in Slovakia and hold a residence permit for the purpose of study.

Additionally, the amendment of the Act on Illegal Work and Illegal Employment, which became effective on 1st January 2014, **re-defined the illegal employment and illegal work** of third-country nationals.

### 4.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

As mentioned under Section 3, the category of persons to be granted asylum for the purpose of family reunification with an unaccompanied minor asylum seeker was extended. Under the new arrangement, the minor must give his/her written consent to family reunification.

### 4.4. INTEGRATION

On 29th January 2014, the Government approved the first Slovak **Integration Policy** representing the fundamental programme document on foreigners' integration in Slovakia and replacing the Concept of Foreigners´ Integration of 2009. The Policy supports the economic and social integration of all foreigners

living in Slovakia. The objectives, principles and indicators of the Integration Policy were defined on the basis of several recommendations and also entailed the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU.

## 4.5. MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY[1]

On 10th October 2014, the three-year transition period during which it was possible to search the **Visa Information System (VIS)** during border controls terminated. Since the following day, the police is obliged to check the VIS in combination with fingerprints, if the controlled person holds a **biometric visa**. This measure has a large impact on the procedures at border crossing points, in particular at land borders where persons holding biometric visas must get off from means of transport to have their fingerprints taken.

In 2014, the **National Plan of Border Control Management 2015–2018** was prepared, drafted and discussed during an inter-ministerial consultation. The document was approved by the Slovak Government in early 2015. The Plan aims to ensure continuity in the process of building integrated border management in Slovakia including completion of static control systems in the northern part of the Schengen border with Ukraine (i.e. the building of a 20km detection monitoring system).

## 4.6. EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY

The Middle-Term Strategy of Development Cooperation in Slovak Republic 2014 – 2018 was adopted in the reference period and serves as a basis for the annual National Programme of Official Development Aid. The Strategy recognises the principle of coherence of development policies and will seek to map other development flows from ODA, including remittances.

# 5. Irregular Migration and Return

## 5.1. THE FIGHT AGAINST FACILITATION OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION

No specific activities and developments with regard to smuggling were reported for 2014.

# 6. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

A new regulation of the Ministry of Interior implementing the **Support and Protection Programme of Trafficking Victims** entered into effect on 1st January 2014. The Regulation introduced a new measure targeting victims of trafficking during the asylum procedure. In such a case the person is now provided care through the Ministry of Interior and

not service providers (or cooperating NGOs and IOs) as previously.

A **National Programme of Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2015–2018** was also subject to inter-ministerial consultation procedure at the end of 2014. This document will replace the National Programme for 2011 – 2014.

On 1st December 2014 the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equity recommended the Slovak Government to adopt the **National Strategy of Human Rights Protection and Support** which addresses migrant rights including victims of trafficking in human beings.

## STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for the Slovak Republic on aspects of migration and asylum (2011-2014), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "*N/I*" and when statistics are not applicable, this is indicated as "*N/A*".

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

# Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Slovakia (2011-2014)

## 1. COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

**Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Slovakia, EU average and EU high and low (2011-2014)**
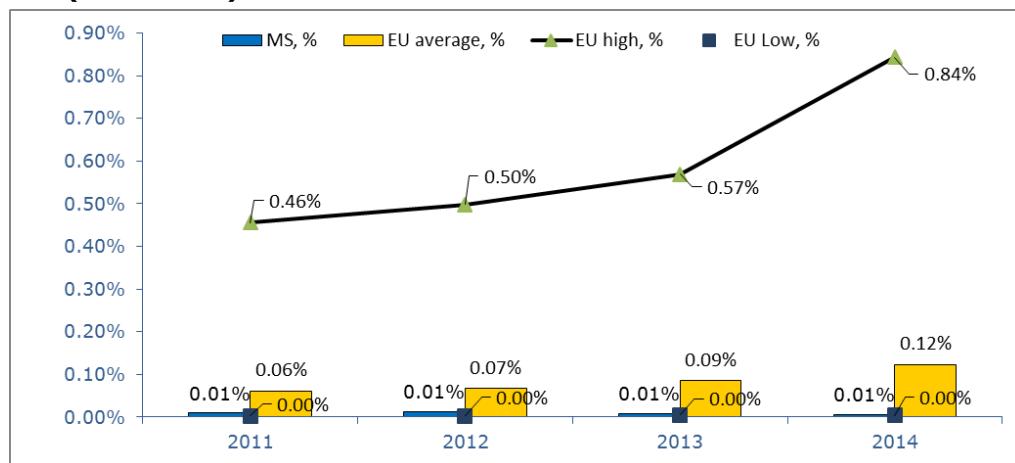


*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 20/07/2015*

**Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2011-2014)**
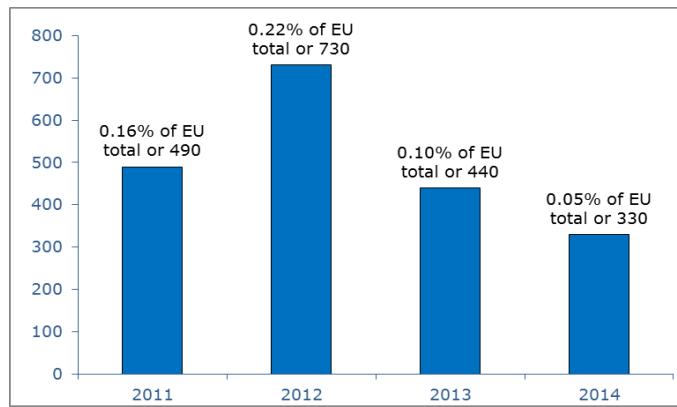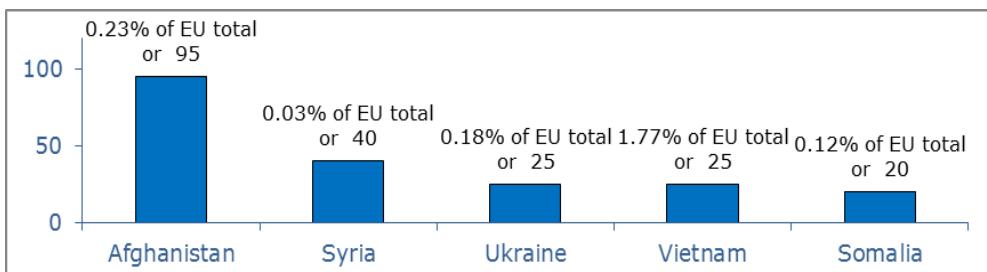


*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 21/07/2015*

**Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2011–2014)**

| 2011 | | | 2012 | | | 2013 | | | 2014 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Nationality** | **Nr** | **% of total** | **Nationality** | **Nr** | **% of total** | **Nationality** | **Nr** | **% of total** | **Nationality** | **Nr** | **% of total** |
| **Somalia** | 80 | 16% | **Somalia** | 225 | 31% | **Afghanistan** | 110 | 25% | **Afghanistan** | 95 | 29% |
| **Afghanistan** | 75 | 15% | **Afghanistan** | 90 | 12% | **Somalia** | 55 | 13% | **Syria** | 40 | 12% |
| **Georgia** | 65 | 13% | **Georgia** | 55 | 8% | **Georgia** | 35 | 8% | **Ukraine,** | 25 | 8% |
| | | | | | | | | | **Vietnam** | 25 | 8% |
| **Moldova** | 40 | 8% | **Congo** | 45 | 6% | **Eritrea** | 30 | 7% | **Somalia** | 20 | 6% |
| **Russia** | 35 | 7% | **Armenia** | 35 | 5% | **Armenia** | 25 | 6% | **Georgia** | 15 | 5% |
| | | | | | | | | | **Unknown** | 15 | 5% |

*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 21/07/2015*

**Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2014)**
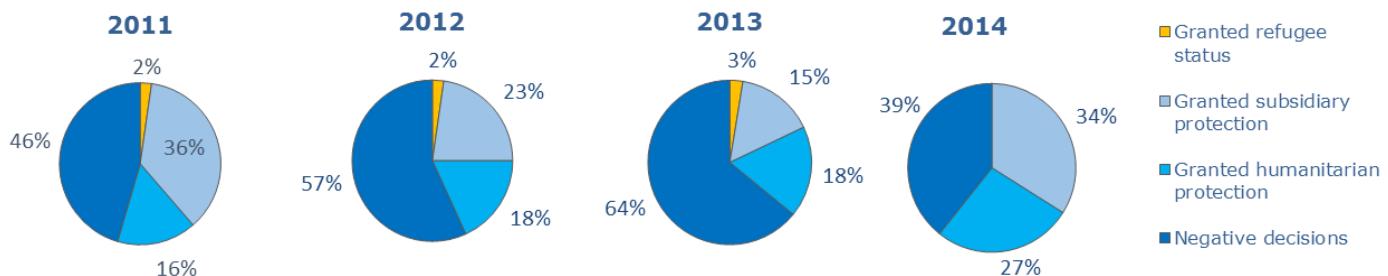


*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza), data extracted 21/07/2015*

**Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2011-2014)**

| | Total decisions | Positive decisions | Of which: | | Humanitarian reasons | Negative decisions |
| | | | Refugee status | Subsidiary protection | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2011** | 215 | 115 | 5 | 80 | 35 | 100 |
| **2012** | 440 | 190 | 10 | 100 | 80 | 250 |
| **2013** | 190 | 70 | 5 | 30 | 35 | 125 |
| **2014** | 280 | 170 | 0 | 95 | 75 | 110 |

*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 22/07/2015.*

**Figures 4-7: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2011-2014)**

Legend:
- Granted refugee status
- Granted subsidiary protection
- Granted humanitarian protection
- Negative decisions

*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 22/07/2015-*

**Figure 8: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2014)**
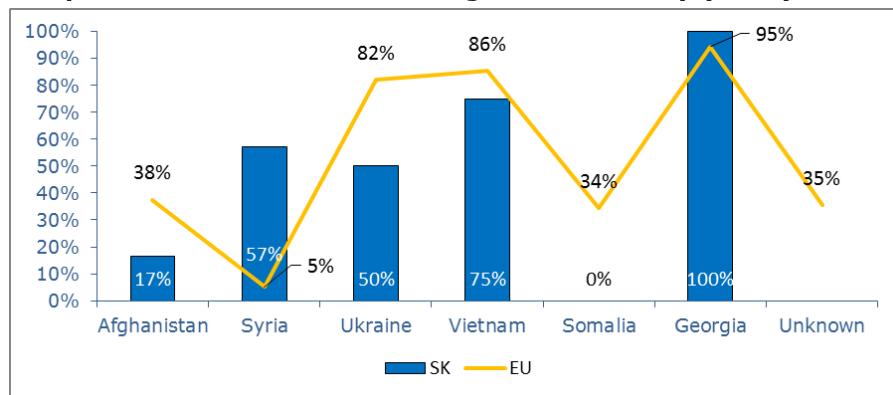
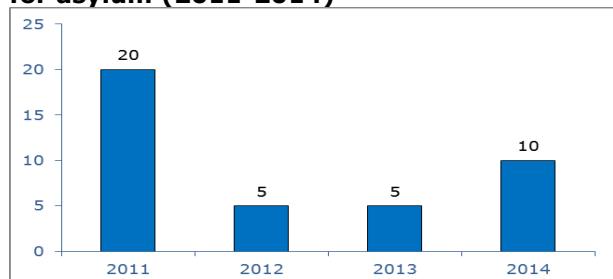*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta), data extracted 23/07/2015*

**Figure 9: Third-country nationals resettled**

*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyresa), data extracted 23/07/2015*

## 2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

**Figure 10: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2011-2014)**

**Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2011-2014)**

| | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Unaccompanied minors (total)** | *169** | *151** | *75*** | *21*** |
| **Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants** | 20 | 5 | 5 | 10 |

*Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) [migr_asyunaa], data extracted 23/07/2015, *Descriptive Analysis of the impacts of the Stockholm Programme (for 2011 and 2012 data) and **EMN Annual Policy Report on Immigration and Asylum 2014 and 2013, Statistic Annex*

# 3. EUROPEAN POLICY ON LEGAL MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

**Figure 11: First residence permits, by reason (2011-2014)**
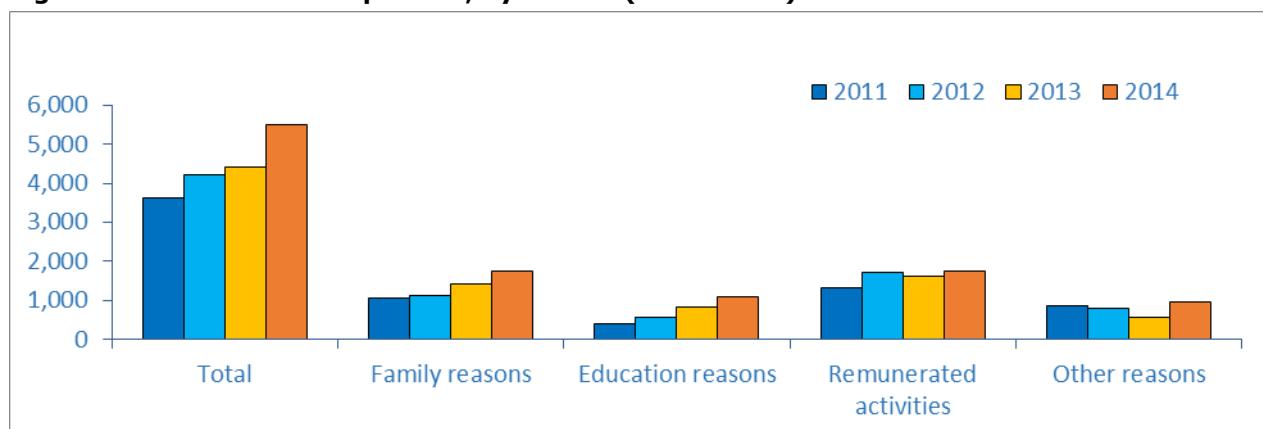


*Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst), data extracted 24/08/2015*

**Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2011 – 2014)**

| 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Ukraine** – 686 | **1. Ukraine** – 782 | **1. Ukraine** – 1,040 | **1. Ukraine** – 1,592 |
| **2. Serbia –** 568 | **2. Serbia –** 548 | **2. Serbia –** 603 | **2. Serbia –** 830 |
| **3. South Korea –** 369 | **3. South Korea –** 373 | **3. South Korea –** 389 | **3. Russia –** 494 |
| **4. Russia –** 298 | **4. Russia –** 345 | **4. Russia –** 377 | **4. South Korea –** 365 |
| **5. United States –** 195 | **5. United States –** 211 | **5. China –** 228 | **5. China –** 226 |

*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst), data extracted 24/08/2015*

**Figure 12: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Slovakia, EU average, EU high and low (2011-2014)**
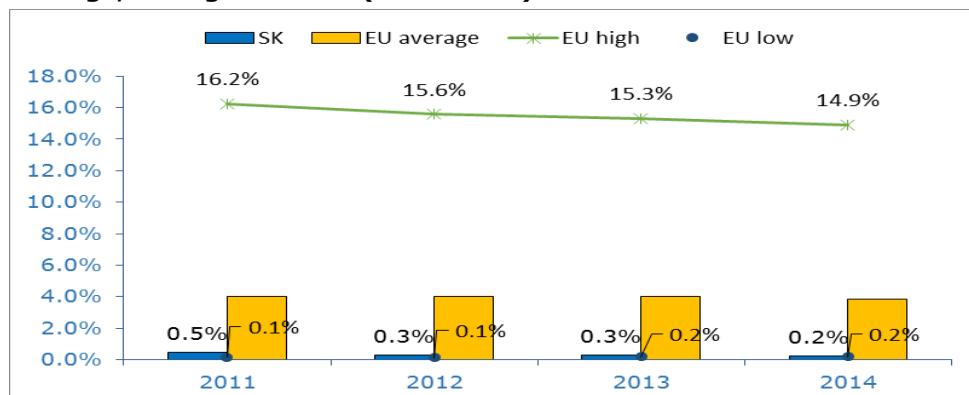


*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz), data extracted 23/07/2015*

# 4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

**Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2011 – 2014)**

| Third country nationals: | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Refused entry at external borders** | 595 | 595 | 435 | 455 |
| **Found to be illegally present** | 1,145 | 1,395 | 1,025 | 1,155 |
| **Ordered to leave** | 580 | 490 | 545 | 925 |
| **Returned following an order to leave** | 445 | 320 | 375 | 695 |

*Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs)(migr_eipre)(migr_eiord)(migr_eirtn), data extracted 24/07/2015*

**Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2011-2014)**

|  | Returned as part of forced return measures | Returned voluntarily | Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2011** | 390 | 95 | 95 |
| **2012** | 273 | 72 | 54 |
| **2013** | 325 | 64 | 50 |
| **2014\*** | 275 | 418 | 57 |

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

## 5. SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

**Table 7: Number of Schengen visas applications (2011 – 2014)**

|  | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Uniform visas (short-stay visas)** | 71,313 | 75,720 | 131,194 | 104,988 |

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

**Figure 13: Uniform visa applications received in Slovakia as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2011-2014)**
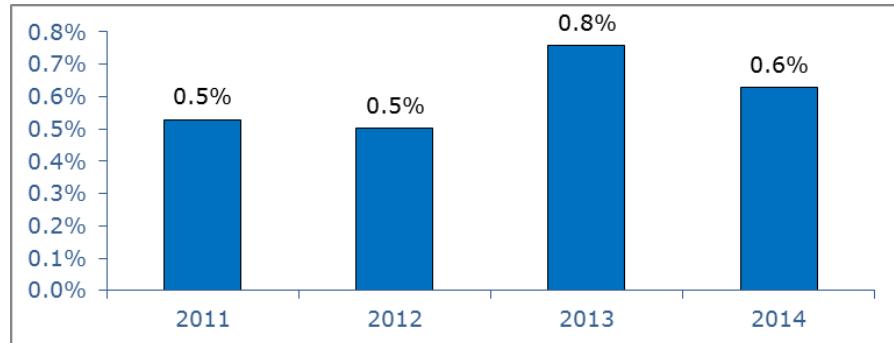


*Source: DG Migration and Home affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States*

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

| 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Country** | **Number** | **Country** | **Number** | **Country** | **Number** | **Country** | **Number** |
| **Ukraine** | 41,155 | **Ukraine** | 44,602 | **Ukraine** | 88,144 | **Ukraine** | 49,466 |
| **Russia** | 18,082 | **Russia** | 17,621 | **Russia** | 27,722 | **Belarus** | 27,393 |
| **Belarus** | 3,958 | **Belarus** | 4,291 | **Belarus** | 6,242 | **Russia** | 18,429 |
| **Turkey** | 1,148 | **Turkey** | 1,287 | **China** | 1,317 | **China** | 1,317 |
| **Kuwait** | 1,129 | **China** | 1,182 | **Turkey** | 1,180 | **Iraq** | 1,213 |

*Source: DG Migration and Home affairs*

## 6. ACTIONS AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

**Table 9: Number of traffickers arrested as suspects and traffickers convicted**

|  | 2011 | 2012 | 2013\* | 2014\* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Convictions** | *N/I* | *N/I* | 4 | 23 |
| **Arrested / otherwise involved in a criminal proceeding** | *N/I* | *N/I* | 6 | 39 |

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

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

**Table 10: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)  allocation to Slovakia in euro per area**

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

*Source: DG Migration and Home affairs*

**Table 11: Internal Security Fund (ISF) allocation to Slovakia in euro per area**

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

*Source: DG Migration and Home affairs*

**Table 12: SOLID funds allocation in euro and share of total funds allocated to Slovakia (2007-2013)**

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

*Source: DG Migration and Home affairs*