



THE OFFICE OF THE PLENIPOTENTIARY
OF THE SLOVAK GOVERNMENT
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY

Open Government Partnership National Action Plan of the Slovak Republic 2024 - 2026

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition of open governance and the context of open governance in the Slovak Republic

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines open governance as "a governance culture that supports the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability and the participation of interested participants to support democracy and inclusive growth."¹ The concept of open governance reflects good governance of the society, which supports transparent, understandable communication between the government and its citizens, cooperation at all levels of governance with relevant actors, including civil society, and supports tools to strengthen the accountability of governments to their citizens. The goal of open governance and its principles is to promote citizens' trust in their own state and its institutions.

The Slovak Republic declares its commitment to open governance through its membership in the international Open Government Partnership (OGP), contributing to the fulfillment of the OECD Council Recommendations on open government. The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society (Slovak: „Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti“ / ÚSV ROS) has been tasked with coordinating the Open Government Partnership initiatives. One of the conditions for a country's membership in the Open Government Partnership is the participatory development of two-year national action plans in co-creation between the government and the civil society, containing specific, achievable, and measurable commitments in priority areas. OGP National Action Plans are adopted by government resolutions, and the relevant ministries and other central bodies of state administration are bound by the implementation of milestones specified in these action plans.

The OGP National Action Plan for years 2024 - 2026 builds upon previous national action plans with commitments supporting the beneficial ownership transparency, protection of whistleblowers engaged in anti-social activities, and the measurement and enhancement of the impact of open data.

Active participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders, including the academic sector, is a condition of membership and a unique tool of the Open Government Partnership. In accordance with the membership conditions of the Slovak Republic in the Open Government Partnership, a minimum degree of involvement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders is required at the level of discussion, with a preferred level of co-creation.²

An overview of the co-creation of the action plan, in line with the conditions of the international Open Government Partnership and the document "Principles and Rules for Public Participation in the Creation of Public Policies,"³ is detailed in the Appendix of this document.

1.2 Connection between the Open Government Partnership in Slovakia to the Summit for Democracy initiative

The Summit for Democracy is an international initiative introduced by U.S. President Joe Biden in 2021. As a part of its thematic focus on supporting democracy, Slovakia identified following three key areas: media freedom, fight against corruption, and cooperation between civil society and the government. At the same time, the Summit for Democracy has created a system of international thematic groups composed of various relevant

¹ The Recommendation of the Council on Open Government, adopted on 14 December 2017, available at: <https://bit.ly/3O7Qw2T>, accessed January 4, 2021 (working translation to the Slovak Language).

² OGP Participation and Co-creation Standards, available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>, accessed June 1, 2023.

³ Non-legislative material, which is an amendment of the recommendation material Rules for involving the public in the creation of public policies of legal regulations, adopted by the resolution of the Slovak government No. 645/2014. More info available at: https://www.minv.sk/?ros_participacia2_UOSS_nove_pravidla_zapajania, accessed June 19, 2023.

stakeholders including governments, civil society, business, and others, with the aim of exchanging experiences in specific topics and shaping common approaches.⁴ Both Summit for Democracy and Open Government Partnership share related goals. Following the recommendations of Summit for Democracy, Open Government Partnership, as well as the Office of the President of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, a decision was made to incorporate thematic commitments of the Summit for Democracy into the OGP National Action Plan 2024 - 2026. Coordinating the Open Government Partnership by the Office of the Plenipotentiary for the Development of Civil Society, along with the participatory background and the binding nature of milestones in the form of action plans used by the Open Government Partnership adds value to fulfilling the commitments of the Slovak Republic declared at the Summit for Democracy. Open Government Partnership in Slovakia benefits from cooperation with new stakeholders, as well as visibility of Summit for Democracy.

1.3 Objectives of the OGP National Action Plan 2024 - 2026

The following objectives of the OGP National Action Plan 2024 - 2026 are following the goals of the Open Government Partnership Strategy for the years 2023 - 2028⁵:

1. Build a growing, committed, and interconnected community of open government reformers, activists, and champions in the thematic areas of the OGP Action Plan 2024 - 2026.

Fulfillment Indicator:

1.1 Number and composition of created working groups involving all relevant stakeholders in the thematic areas of the OGP Action Plan 2024 - 2026.

2. Make open government central to how all levels and branches of government function and deliver on their priorities

Fulfillment Indicators:

2.1 Number of public administration, civil society, and private sector organizations whose representatives participated in activities of the action plan.

2.2 Published Open and Participatory Government Index.

3. Become the home of inspirational open government innovations, evidence, and stories

Fulfillment Indicator:

3.1 Number of organized events for the exchange of good practice examples, and number of public administration organizations participating in the exchange of examples through action plan activities.

1.4 Evaluation of the creation and implementation of the OGP National Action Plan 2024-2026

In accordance with the membership conditions of the Slovak Republic in Open Government Partnership, the assessment of co-creation and implementation of the action plan proceeds as follows:

⁴ Available at: <https://summitfordemocracyresources.eu/summit-for-democracy-cohorts/>, accessed June 18th, 2023. Slovak republic is a member of following thematic cohorts: Financial Transparency and Integrity, Civic Space, Media Freedom, Resisting Authoritarian Pressure.

⁵ OGP Strategy 2023 - 2028, available at <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/OGP-Strategy-2023-2028.pdf>, accessed June 18th, 2023.

1. Development of a self-evaluation report on the implementation of the OGP National Action Plan 2024-2026 after the end of the implementation including evaluation of implementation, goal fulfillment, and the achievement of the following indicators:
 - a. Number of public and state administration organizations introducing mechanisms of accountability and transparency, which are the subject of the OGP National Action Plan 2024-2026 compared to the previous action plan;
 - b. Number of public administration organizations whose representatives participated in the participatory activities of the OGP National Action Plan 2024-2026;
 - c. Number of public administration organizations participating in the exchange of good practices in open governance through the activities of the OGP National Action Plan for 2024-2026.

Self-evaluation report will be prepared by the Office of the Plenipotentiary for the Development of Civil Society, distributed to relevant ministries and other central bodies of state administration for comments, published on the website of the Office, and presented at the Government Council for Non-Governmental Organizations.

2. Regular evaluation by the Independent Reporting Mechanism of the Open Government Partnership (IRM Mechanism) consisting of two parts, for which the IRM Mechanism prepares assessment reports:
 - a. Review of the OGP National Action Plan 2024–2026 aimed at evaluating the creation process, characteristics, strengths and challenges, which will be issued within four months of the publication of the OGP National Action Plan 2024 – 2026 on the website of the Open Government Partnership
 - b. The Final Report of the OGP National Action Plan 2024 - 2026 aimed at evaluating the fulfillment of the content of the OGP National Action Plan 2024–2026 and compliance with the terms of Slovakia's membership in the Open Government Partnership, which will be issued within four months after the completion of the implementation of the OGP National Action Plan 2024–2026.

The reports will be distributed to relevant ministries and other central bodies of state administration for comments and published on the website of the Office.

COMMITMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 2024 - 2026

2.1 INTRODUCING MECHANISMS OF CIVIC DELIBERATION AS AN INNOVATIVE FORM OF PARTICIPATION

Duration of the commitment: June 2024 - June 2026

Institution responsible for fulfilling the commitment: The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society

Background situation or problem addressed by the commitment: Many people in society rightfully feel voiceless and powerless to influence decisions that impact their lives. Trust in experts is declining, misinformation is spreading, and political polarization, partly driven by electoral incentives, weakens social cohesion.⁶

Content of the commitment: The commitment aims to collaborate with partners from civil society to adopt best practices involving various mechanisms of civic deliberation from abroad, e.g. citizen assemblies. Simultaneously, in collaboration with representatives of public administration, the goal is to test a selected method of civic deliberation on an identified significant societal challenge/issue. Conditions for the pilot testing will be predefined and communicated, including the level of commitment from the public administration to the outcome of the citizen assembly. The process of the pilot testing may be supplemented with additional participation tools. Fulfillment of the commitment will also include discussions with the responsible public administration regarding the implementation of the outcome of the citizen deliberation.

How the commitment will contribute to solving the problem: To preserve democracy, it is increasingly important to include the voices of residents in the formulation of public policies through new and transparent avenues. Mechanisms of civic participation provide an opportunity to create a diverse and inclusive deliberative public space, where collective recommendations can be formulated based on the random selection of participants. Collective input from residents is particularly crucial in an increasingly individualized society.

Relevance of the commitment to the principles/values of OGP: The commitment is an innovative reinforcement of the principle of participation, including participation with a special emphasis on inclusivity.

Additional information: The topic receives substantial support through the international thematic cohort "Deliberative Democracy and Civic Assemblies"⁷ within the Summit for Democracy. It supports Slovakia's participation in the Summit for Democracy under the goal of "Supporting cooperation between civil society, the public, and the government."

Milestones of the commitment with specific tasks:

1. Support the transfer of knowledge and expertise with mechanisms of civic deliberation from abroad to the environment of public administration and civil society in Slovakia. Responsible agency - ÚSV ROS, deadline: by September 30, 2024.
2. In a participatory manner, organize a selected type of a civic deliberation on a significant societal challenge in cooperation with relevant stakeholders. Responsible agency - ÚSV ROS, deadline: by June 30, 2026.

⁶ Summit for Democracy: Deliberative Democracy and Citizens' Assemblies Cohort Concept Note, available at: https://summit4democracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/S4D_Delib-Democracy-CAs_Model-Commitments_August-2022-Distribution-version.pdf, accessed June 17th, 2023.

⁷ Available at: https://summitfordemocracyresources.eu/cp_cohorts/deliberative-democracy-and-citizens-assemblies/, accessed June 1st, 2023.



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Other relevant partners: selected CSOs, local/regional/national government

2.2 SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN INFORMAL EDUCATION ON DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, VALUES, CITIZENSHIP, VOLUNTEERING, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Duration of the commitment: January 2024 - June 2026

Institutions responsible for fulfilling the commitment: Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Sport of the Slovak Republic (MŠVVaŠ SR), Ministry of Investment, Regional Development, and Informatization of the Slovak Republic (MIRRI SR)

Background situation or problem addressed by the commitment: A variety of non-governmental organizations in Slovakia provides informal education programs on democracy, human rights, values, citizenship, volunteerism, and sustainable development. However, from the perspective of civil society, there is a lack of systematic collaboration with state administration.⁸ Furthermore, discussion between civil society partners and state administration regarding the systematic and effective alignment of education on these topics and bridging formal and informal education is lacking.

Content of the commitment: The commitment aims to create a space for regular meetings between non-governmental organizations, state administration, and other stakeholders working in the field of informal education in relevant topics. The output of the activity is to map and connect existing initiatives, concepts, and programs of informal education and, in a participatory manner, establish effective cooperation between civil society and state administration, connecting informal and formal education on values, democracy, human rights, including the rights of national minorities, citizenship, volunteerism, and sustainable development.

How the commitment will contribute to solving the problem: The commitment builds on previous cooperation between the Ministry of Education and civil society in the area of informal education on values. It builds on previously adopted materials and programs, while opening a new space for formulating new goals within the support of implementing informal education in primary and secondary schools. It also expands the scope of actors who can bring innovative perspectives to the topic through their experiences.

Relevance of the commitment to the principles/values of OGP: Formalizing cooperation between MŠVVaŠ SR, MIRRI SR, and civil society supports participation as a tool for collaboration between the government and civil society. It also supports participation as one of the principles of democracy development, human rights, including the rights of national minorities, active citizenship, and as a fundamental assumption of sustainable development. The commitment's content also reinforces accountability in terms of protecting public control tools. Regularly publishing the schedule, agenda, and outputs of meetings supports transparency and accountability.

Additional information: Embedding the cooperation and commitment outputs can serve as examples of best practices for sharing for example through the Summit for Democracy cohort on Civil and Political Participation of Youth, formed within the Summit for Democracy.

Milestones of the commitment with specific tasks:

1. Establish and continually coordinate a multistakeholder forum of all involved stakeholders, including civil society, on informal education on values, democracy, human rights, citizenship, and sustainable

⁸ E.g former State pedagogical office (now National Institute for Education in Slovak republic), cooperated with the Stop Corruption Foundation on the basis of a memorandum of cooperation from 2020 on supporting the introduction of ethical values and standards into education at primary and secondary schools. Working group was formed, which main goal was to create a methodology for classroom teachers to use. Methodology entitled "How to lead your class to fairness" is available at: https://www.statpedu.sk/files/sk/metodicky-portal/aktuality/metodika_spu-nzk_ako-viest-svoju-triedu-k-ferovosti_final.pdf, accessed June 21st, 2023.

- development. Develop and publish the forum's rules of procedure on the website of MŠVVaŠ SR. Responsible agency - MŠVVaŠ SR, in cooperation with ÚSV ROS, deadline: by January 31, 2024.
2. Develop a proposal for cooperation between MŠVVaŠ SR, MIRRI SR, and civil society with the aim of aligning formal and informal education on democracy, human rights, values, citizenship, and volunteerism. Responsible MŠVVaŠ SR, deadline: by January 31, 2025

Contact information: Lívia Svetlošáková, livia.svetlosakova@minedu.sk, MŠVVaŠ SR, Valéria Bankóová, valeria.bankoova@mirri.gov.sk, MIRRI SR

Other relevant partners: ÚSV ROS, Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre národnostné menšiny, civil society organizations providing informal education

2.3 SUPPORTING MEDIA FREEDOM AND PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS

Duration of the commitment: January 2024 - June 2026

Institution responsible for fulfilling the commitment: Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (MK SR)

Background situation or problem addressed by the commitment: Free media are a fundamental cornerstone of democracy, its development and sustainability. They provide citizens with information, help shape opinions and attitudes, and, through investigative approaches, serve as the "watchdog" of public affairs. In recent years, however, media freedom worldwide has faced numerous challenges. The safety of journalists is deteriorating, with physical and online threats and attacks on journalists increasing in several EU member states, including through the so-called SLAPP lawsuits⁹. International initiatives aimed at increasing media freedom are responding to this situation by strengthening journalist protection through relevant legislative tools and recommendations. Among these are Commission Recommendation (EU) 2022/758¹⁰, the upcoming Council of Europe Recommendation on SLAPP lawsuits¹¹, which aim to prevent the silencing of the public, especially journalists, in reporting on matters of public interest, the Coalition for Media Freedom¹², and the European Democracy Action Plan¹³.

Content of the commitment: The commitment aims to establish national coordination of international initiatives focused on supporting media freedom and journalist protection to create synergies within Slovakia's commitments in these international initiatives. This involves utilizing existing international initiatives where Slovakia is an active member to strengthen a comprehensive approach to challenges related to journalist protection and media freedom at the national level.

How the commitment will contribute to solving the problem: The commitment will improve the coordination of various international initiatives aimed at protecting journalists and media freedom, allowing for more effective, targeted, and efficient measures in the subject area with a clear delineation of responsibilities. The implementation of the EU Commission Recommendation No. 2022/758 will practically enhance journalist protection and extend the possibility of protection to non-governmental organizations, which may also face SLAPP lawsuits.

Relevance of the commitment to the principles/values of OGP: By creating a multistakeholder platform¹⁴, the commitment reinforces the principles of participation and accountability. The commitment's content also strengthens accountability, in terms of protecting tools for public control. Regular publication of schedules, agendas, and outputs of meetings further supports transparency and accountability.

⁹ SLAPP lawsuit - Strategic litigation against public participation is a civil action brought against an individual or organization who are involved in the protection of public interests.

¹⁰ COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION (EU) 2022/758 of 27 April 2022 on protecting journalists and human rights defenders who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings ('Strategic lawsuits against public participation'), available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32022H0758>, accessed June 19th, 2023.

¹¹ MSI-SLP Committee of Experts on Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation, available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/msi-slp>, accessed August 31st, 2023

¹² available at: <https://mediafreedomcoalition.org/>, accessed June 19th, 2023

¹³ European Democracy Action plan, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_2250, accessed June 19th, 2023.

¹⁴ A multistakeholder forum is a model used by the Open Government Partnership initiative in the co-creation and implementation of action plans. It is a working group composed of members from various areas relevant to the topic (public administration, civil society, academia, entrepreneurs) with a defined structure, functioning of the platform, terms of membership, goals, or platform outputs. Basic information about the multistakeholder platform in the OGP are available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/multistakeholder-forums/>, accessed September 6th, 2023.

Additional information: The commitment directly fulfills Slovakia's commitments within the Summit for Democracy in the "Media Freedom" topic. The implementation results may be relevant for presentation in the Summit for Democracy cohort on Media Freedom¹⁵.

Milestones of the commitment with specific tasks:

1. Establish and continually coordinate a multistakeholder forum of all involved stakeholders at the national level to coordinate and implement commitments arising from international and national initiatives supporting media freedom and journalist protection. Publish the platform's statute on the website of MK SR. Responsible agency - MK SR, in collaboration with other relevant ministries, deadline: by January 31, 2024.
2. Map and develop an implementation plan and set up a monitoring and evaluation system for the implementation of existing recommendations to enhance the safety of journalists and other media workers in the EU. Responsible agency: MK SR in collaboration with other relevant ministries, deadline: by September 30, 2024.
3. Develop a strategic plan for implementing the Council of Europe's recommendation on SLAPP lawsuits, aiming to prevent the silencing of the public, especially journalists, in reporting on matters of public interest. Responsible MK SR, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, deadline: by September 30, 2024.

Contact information: Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic

Other relevant partners: Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, partners from civil society

¹⁵ Available at: https://summitfordemocracyresources.eu/cp_cohorts/media-freedom/, accessed June 19th, 2023.

2.4 PUBLISHING BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP DATA OF COMMERCIAL COMPANIES IN A SINGLE REGISTRY

Duration of the commitment: June 2024 - June 2026

Institution responsible for fulfilling the commitment: Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (MS SR)

Background situation or problem addressed by the commitment: In 2018, Slovakia introduced a comprehensive obligation to record beneficial ownership data (BOD). However, this regulation lacks effective mechanisms for ex ante and ex post control of BOD data, despite such a need arising from European regulations on combating money laundering. Slovakia has received criticism in several international assessments due to this deficiency. Therefore, as part of the OGP National Action Plan 2022-2024, the MS SR committed to analyze the possibilities of introducing ex ante and ex post control of BOD in the commercial register. In response to the lack of connection between BOD information in the commercial register and the Register of Public Sector Partners (RPVS), the MS SR, in Government Resolution No. 146/2023, committed to submitting a proposal to the government by June 30, 2024. This proposal aims to ensure the harmonization of BOD data recorded in the RPVS with BOD data required by European legislation. The commitment also includes a proposal for linking the RPVS with the commercial register for the purpose of managing and providing BOD data in the commercial register, which requires the MS SR to analyze how to harmonize BOD data in its registers and how to link the registers by mid-2024. Following these commitments, the implementation of concrete legislative and technical solutions is proposed. In a related manner, the emerging IT system for the commercial register is being developed. The technical specification of the IT system includes pre-settings for integration with the RPVS information system.

Content of the commitment: The commitment includes ensuring alignment of regulations under the jurisdiction of the MS SR with the requirements for disclosing BOD data according to Directive (EU) No. 2015/849¹⁶. It also introduces the operation of a technical solution linking the RPVS with the commercial register for the purpose of managing and providing BOD data in the commercial register, thereby ensuring alignment with the requirements for disclosing BOD data according to Directive (EU) No. 2015/849. The commitment needs to be coordinated with the emerging information system of the commercial register.

How the commitment will contribute to solving the problem: A complete list of BOD entities recorded in the commercial register will enable the identification of entities that have not registered their BOD, serving as the first prerequisite for effective BOD control in the commercial register. Effective verification of BOD data for entities in the commercial register will contribute to combating money laundering, terrorism, tax transparency, the application of international sanctions in Slovakia, and the fight against corruption.

Relevance of the commitment to the principles/values of OGP The commitment advances the principle of transparency and strengthens participation and accountability by enhancing opportunities for public control.

Additional information: Slovakia has long been considered a leader in the transparency of beneficial ownership data. It presents its experiences on this topic at numerous significant domestic and international forums. Within the Summit for Democracy, it is active in the thematic cohort "Financial Transparency and Integrity."¹⁷ Slovakia is also a member of the Beneficial Ownership Leadership Group¹⁸, working under the Open Ownership initiative.

¹⁶ DIRECTIVE (EU) 2015/849 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 20 May 2015 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing, amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Commission Directive 2006/70/EC, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32015L0849>, accessed: August 31st, 2023.

¹⁷ Available at: https://summitfordemocracyresources.eu/cp_cohorts/financial-transparency-and-integrity/, accessed June 18th, 2023.

¹⁸ Available at: <https://www.openownership.org/en/about/the-beneficial-ownership-leadership-group/>, accessed June 18th, 2023.

Milestones of the commitment with specific tasks:

1. Submit to the Government of Slovak Republic a proposal for legal regulation ensuring the alignment of regulations under the jurisdiction of the MS SR with the requirements for disclosing data on beneficial owners according to Directive (EU) No. 2015/849 (in its current wording). Responsible agency: MS SR, deadline by December 31, 2024.
2. Implement a technical solution for linking the Public Sector Partners Register with the commercial register for the purpose of managing and providing data on beneficial owners in the commercial register. Responsible agency: MS SR, deadline by June 30, 2026.

Contact information: Luciána Malovcová, MS SR (luciana.malovcova@justice.sk)

Other relevant partners: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

2.5 IMPROVING INTERNAL SYSTEMS FOR REPORTING ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND PROTECTION OF WHISTLEBLOWERS

Duration of the commitment: June 2024 - June 2026

Institution responsible for fulfilling the commitment: Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers (ÚOO)

Background situation or problem addressed by the commitment: The Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers, established by Act No. 54/2019 Coll. on the protection of whistleblowers of anti-social activities and on amendments to certain laws, as amended by later regulations, prepared a model manual and methodological guidelines to assist central bodies of state administration in setting up effective internal systems for reporting anti-social activities. Additionally, in the OGP National Action Plan 2022-2024, the Office committed to organize trainings for public administration employees. However, practical experience has shown the need to further advance these initiatives. Therefore, the OPW is developing unified qualitative criteria that clearly define what an internal reporting system must fulfill to be functional and effective. Deficiencies have also been identified in informing employees about the possibilities of reporting and protecting whistleblowers. Therefore, the OPW proposes introducing mandatory adaptation training for employees in the field of reporting anti-social activities and protecting whistleblowers.

Contents of the commitment:

- a) Development of qualitative criteria for internal reporting systems of anti-social activities;
- b) Cooperation in implementing qualitative criteria into existing internal reporting systems of anti-social activities;
- c) Development of the content of adaptation training for employees.

How the commitment will contribute to solving the problem: The commitment will contribute to improving internal reporting systems of anti-social activities and the awareness of employees about their existence, thereby enhancing the protection of whistleblowers and public interest. Additional goals include increasing awareness of the obligations of employers under Act No. 54/2019 Coll. on the protection of whistleblowers of anti-social activities, as well as increasing awareness of the ways citizens can report law violations at work and protect whistleblowers.

Relevance of the commitment to the principles/values of OGP: By introducing adaptation training, civil society can more effectively participate in the control and protection of public interest, thus increasing citizen participation. This commitment also reinforces the principles of transparency and accountability.

Additional information: The protection of whistleblowers is a part of Slovakia's commitments in the Summit for Democracy, under the theme "Fight Against Corruption." The competencies, as well as the performance of the OPW and activities focused on educating public administration employees, can serve as a good example of best practices to be shared.

Milestones of the commitment with specific tasks:

1. Provide an annual report to the Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers on the number and subject of whistleblower reports received, the number and subject of verified whistleblower reports and the result of the verification for the previous calendar year. Responsible agencies: Ministries and other central bodies of state administration. Deadline: by March 1, 2025, March 1, 2026.
2. Provide an annual report to the Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers on the number and subject of whistleblower reports received, the number and subject of verified whistleblower reports and the result of the verification for the previous calendar year. Responsible agency: General Prosecutor's Office. Deadline: by April 1, 2025, April 1, 2026.
3. Ensure the participation of responsible persons in trainings or work meetings organized by the Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers, if they are to be organized. Responsible agencies: Ministries and other central bodies of state administration. Deadline: by June 30, 2025, by June 30, 2026.

4. Conduct annual employee training by a responsible person in the area of reporting antisocial activity. Responsible agencies: Ministries and other central bodies of state administration. Deadline: by June 30, 2025, by June 30, 2026.
5. Include training on reporting anti-social activities and protecting whistleblowers for employees to onboarding adaptation training. Responsible agencies: Ministries and other central bodies of state administration. Deadline: by June 30, 2025.
6. Implement qualitative criteria developed by the Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers into internal reporting systems. Responsible agencies: Ministries. Deadline: by June 30, 2026.
7. Cooperate with the Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers on assessing the quality of internal reporting systems. Responsible agencies: Ministries. Deadline: by June 30, 2026.
8. Regularly inform the Office for the Protection of Whistleblowers about personal changes of the responsible persons, including the new responsible person's name, surname, job title, and contact information (phone and email address). Responsible agencies: Ministries and other central bodies of state administration. Deadline: ongoing.

Contact information: Mária Hunková, ÚOO (maria.hunkova@oznamovatelia.sk)

Other relevant partners: ministries and other state institutions, General prosecution

2.6 INCREASING IMPACT OF OPEN DATA BY PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR ACTIVITIES ENABLING THEIR USE AND REUSE

Duration of the commitment: June 2024 - June 2026

Institution responsible for fulfilling the commitment: Ministry of Investment, Regional Development, and Informatization of the Slovak Republic (MIRRI SR)

Background situation or problem addressed by the commitment: The utilization of open data in the public sector is still relatively low as reflected in the limited number of developed solutions (applications, visualizations, statistical overviews, etc.). The use of open data has not been systematically mapped, documented, or analyzed, making it difficult to estimate the real impact of open data on society, transparency, governance, economy, environment, or disadvantaged communities. In the OGP National Action Plan 2022-2024, MIRRI SR committed to establish a regular monitoring mechanism to measure the impact of open data on these aspects of society. The proposed methodology for measuring the impact of open data was developed by MIRRI SR in a participatory manner and serves as the basis for the first report on the impact of open data on selected aspects of society.¹⁹ However, the challenge remains in coordinating the demand from users for the publication of as yet unpublished data.

Content of the commitment: The goal of the commitment is to support the use and reuse of open data in public administration and increase the demand for the publication of data that is not yet disclosed. It also aims to foster relationships between (potential) users of open data and their owners. The commitment consists of two complementary activities: regularly measuring the impact of open data on selected aspects of society (political, social, environmental, economic, etc.) based on the prepared methodology. Secondly, it aims to conduct activities (such as hackathons, ideathons, workshops) focused on building partnerships between owners of open data and their users to improve the utilization of already published data and identify data that has not been disclosed. The evaluation of the fulfillment of activities will occur through regular measurements and evaluations through the Analysis of the publication of datasets by central bodies of state administration on the open data portal²⁰ and the Report on the impact of open data in Slovakia on selected areas, which are to be published annually.

How the commitment will contribute to solving the problem: Regular impact assessments of open data promote their utilization by explaining the benefits of open data for society not only to data owners but also to potential users. Activities aimed at using and reusing published data will bring concrete outputs and provide a space for discussion between owners and users to identify additional possible data that has not yet been published. These activities will also increase the awareness of potential users about open data and improve their ability to work with them. The persistent mistrust between data owners and users is eliminated, as owners will be able to see and contribute in real time to the creation of solutions based on open data, and the outputs of these activities will be reflected in the measurement of the impact of open data.

Relevance of the commitment to the principles/values of OGP: The commitment promotes the publication of additional data in an open format, contributing to increased transparency. Through activities, it enhances the

¹⁹ Participatory process leading to the creation of the Methodology for the evaluation of the impact of open data on selected aspects of society, including the final document is available at:

<https://wiki.vicpremier.gov.sk/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=101829221>, accessed August 28th, 2023.

²⁰ Regular analysis is a recurrent commitment B.10, adopted by the resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 104/2017 of the OGP NAP t for the years 2017-2019, to be published annually by June 30th for the previous calendar year. The analysis follows quantitative and qualitative criteria datasets of organizations on the open data portal; provides comparison to the previous years, formulates recommendations and details Slovakia's position in various international open data evaluation rankings. Current analysis is available at: https://www.minv.sk/?ros_vsetky-spravy&sprava=na-pripomienkovanie-analyza-zverejnenych-datasetov-ustrednych-organov-statnej-spravy-za-rok-2023, accessed August 28th, 2023.

engagement of all relevant stakeholders. At the same time, by measuring and publishing the real impact of open data, it creates space for accountability.

Additional information: The commitment complements the National Strategy of Informatization of Public Administration (NKIVS) in the area ensuring the automation and proactive publishing of data in an open format.²¹

Milestones of the commitment with specific tasks:

1. Regularly organize informational events and workshops to increase the use and reuse of open data in public administration and build partnerships between relevant stakeholders. Responsible agency: MIRRI SR in cooperation with ÚSV ROS. Deadline: by December 31, 2024, by December 31, 2025, by June 30, 2026.
2. Annually prepare a report on the impact of open data in Slovakia on selected areas and publish it on the website of the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development, and Informatization of the SR. Responsible agency: MIRRI SR. Deadline: by June 30, 2024, June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026.

Contact information: Lukáš Jankovič, MIRRI SR (lukas.jankovic@mirri.gov.sk)

Other relevant partners: ministries and other central stated institutions, civil society organizations, academia

²¹ Chapter "Open data" National Strategy of Informatization of Public Administration, adopted by the resolution of the Slovak Government No. 763/2021, available at: <https://www.mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Narodna-koncepcia-informatizacie-verejnej-spravy-2021.pdf>, accessed June 19th, 2023.

2.7 MEASURING OPEN GOVERNANCE USING THE OPEN AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNMENT INDEX

Duration of the commitment: June 2024 - June 2026

Institution responsible for fulfilling the commitment: Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for the Development of Civil Society of the Slovak Republic (ÚSV ROS)

Background situation or problem addressed by the commitment: The intention to measure the level and quality of state institutions in the context of open governance in Slovakia is based on both domestic and international stimuli. Within a broader professional discussion, there is a growing need for objective, measurable, and motivational tool that would allow for regular and comprehensive evaluation of the quality of public administration performance in achieving conditions for open governance. Several countries and international institutions, including the OECD, are aiming to create and implement such a tool.²²

Content of the commitment: The Participatory and Open Government Index (Index) will be used for monitoring and evaluating the conditions and state of open governance of the Government of the Slovak Republic. The structure of the Index will be based on three principles: transparency (pre-condition for participation), participation (conditions and state of participation), and accountability (impact of participation). The Index will be complemented by scans—regularly conducted, more in -depth qualitative assessment of open government principles using formats such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups, document analysis, etc. Qualitative scans will be conducted on a sample of central bodies of state administration for the examined period.

How the commitment will contribute to solving the problem: The results of regular evaluations will serve the ÚSV ROS, as well as other institutions, as a fundamental reference framework for proposing and implementing measures that will ensure the improvement of the state of open governance in the environment of state administration in Slovakia and in international comparisons. The results of the Index will help provide a clearer picture of the development of open governance principles in the country for both the general and professional public.

Relevance of the commitment to the principles/values of OGP: The commitment advances the principle of government accountability to its citizens. Through regular publication, it also promotes the principle of government transparency.

Additional information: In collaboration with the OECD, the Index directly builds on the OECD's Participatory and Open Government Index. As a result, synergy is created between both indexes, which eliminates duplicate and time-consuming work in data collection for monitoring by the OECD, and provides comparable data.

Milestone of the commitment with a specific task:

1. Participatively create and publish the Participatory and Open Government Index on the ÚSV ROS website and present it at the meeting of the Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations.
Responsible: ÚSV ROS. Deadline: by December 31, 2025.

Contact information: Lucia Lacika, ÚSV ROS (lucia.lacika@minv.sk)

Other relevant partners: ministries

²² E.g.: OECD Open Government Dashboard, available at: <https://www.oecd.org/governance/open-government-dashboard/>, accessed June 17th, 2023

COORDINATION AND CONTINUATION

In order to enhance the success of the action plan's implementation, it is crucial for the coordinator of the Open Government Partnership agenda – ÚSV ROS – to continue coordinating the OGP Slovakia multistakeholder forum²³. Together with its members, the coordinator will oversee the fulfillment of tasks within individual commitments, as well as regularly monitor and evaluate the progress of the action plan. Following the final evaluation, a new action plan for the subsequent period will be prepared in a participatory manner.

In accordance with the current conditions of the country's membership in the international Open Government Partnership, as defined by the Standards of Participation and Co-creation of the Open Government Partnership²⁴, it is necessary to co-create the next action plan by June 2026.

Coordination and administrative tasks related to the implementation of the action plan and co-creation of the next action plan:

1. Annually coordinate the activities of the platform of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the action plan and in the co-creation of the next action plan, responsible: ÚSV ROS, deadline: by June 30, 2024, by June 30, 2025, by June 30, 2026.
2. Develop and submit to the Government of the Slovak Republic for approval the Action Plan of the Open Government Partnership in the Slovak Republic for the subsequent period, responsible: ÚSV ROS, deadline: by June 30, 2026.

²³ according to the conditions of membership in the Open Government Partnership

²⁴ OGP Participation and Co-creation Standards, available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>, accessed June 1st, 2023.

APPENDIX

DESIGN OF THE CO-CREATION PROCESS OF THE NATIONAL OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2024 - 2026

Type of material (non-legislative strategic material)

Author of the design	Lucia Lacika	Lucia.lacika@minv.sk
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Authority responsible for submitting of the proposal	Filip Vagač Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Development of Civil Society Ľudovít Ódor Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic in charge of in charge of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic	Splnomocnenec_ros@minv.sk
Date and place of preparation	22 June 2023	Bratislava

PART 1: BACKGROUND OF THE PROPOSED PUBLIC POLICY

Table 1 Background of the proposed public policy

	yes/likely	no/ unlikely
Is the need for proposed public policy since something is not working and needs to change?	X	
Is the need for proposed public policy based on the government manifesto?	X	
Is the need for proposed public policy since something works differently than we thought it would and we need to change it?	X	
What issue is the proposed public policy reacting to?	Proposed public policy reacts to the need to strengthen cooperation and partnership between public administration and civil society, and to increase awareness of the open government and its principles. Furthermore, it fulfills one of the commitments of the Slovak Republic towards the Open Government Partnership, which Slovakia joined in 2011.	
Does the proposed public policy impact whole population?		From the point of view of propagation of the open government principles as the culture of governance, yes. From the point of view of implementation of the proposed public policy, no.
Does the proposed public policy impact one specific group in society more than others?		X

Text box 1 Background of the proposed public policy

Slovak Republic has committed to open government through its membership in the Open Government Partnership initiative. As a part of their membership, member states are required to develop national action plans in a participatory manner once every two years. Action plans contain concrete, achievable and measurable commitments on selected topics, in which the Slovak government in cooperation with civil society decides to promote and strengthen open government and its principles in an innovative way.

Active participation of civil society and other relevant actors, including academic sector is a unique tool of the OGP. As per OGP membership criteria, for the development of a national action plan a minimum requirement of the level of engagement of civil society is consultation, with preferred level of co-creation.

The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Development of Civil Society is responsible for the coordination of Slovakia's membership in the OGP, including coordination of co-creation of OGP national action plans.

The OGP national action plans are adopted by resolutions of the Government of the Slovak Republic and the implementation of the commitments identified in the national action plans are binding for the responsible ministries and other central government bodies.

The co-creation process of the current action plan fulfills commitment B.20 of the Slovak Government Resolution No. 457/2022 (OGP National Action Plan 2022 – 2024), „develop and present to the Government of the Slovak Republic the Open Government Partnership National Action Plan for the following period “.

PART 2: OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED PUBLIC POLICY

Text box 2 Objectives of the proposed public policy

The following objectives of the OGP National Action Plan 2024-2026 are based on the objectives of the OGP Strategy 2023-2028:

1. Build a growing, committed, and interconnected community of open government reformers, activists, and champions in the thematic areas of OGP Action Plan 2024-2026.

Indicator of completion:

1.1 Number and composition of working groups established in the thematic areas of the OGP National Action Plan 2024 - 2026.

2. Make open government central to how all levels and branches of government function and deliver on their priorities - increased awareness of open government as a culture of governance in public administration.

Indicator of completion:

2.1 Number of public administration institutions, civil society and private sector organizations, whose representatives have participated in the activities defined by the National Action Plan.
2.2 Published baseline values of the Open and Participatory Government Index

3. Become the home of inspirational open government innovations, evidence, and stories

Indicator of completion:

3.1 Number of exchange events organized and number of public administration institutions participating in exchanges of good practice on open government and its principles.

PART 3: BENEFITS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED CO-CREATION PROCESS

Text box 3 Benefits and objectives of the proposed co-creation process

Open government and its principles aim to promote citizens' trust in their government and its institutions. In this sense, citizens' trust also depends on the extent to which they are, as members of different groups of relevant actors (civil society, NGOs, academia), involved in public policymaking.

In line with the conditions of Slovakia's membership in the OGP, a minimum requirement of the level of engagement of civil society in the development of national action plan is consultation, with preferred level of co-creation. The process of co-creation, as well as the implementation of national action plans and its commitments is monitored and evaluated by the OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM).

One of the stated objectives of the proposed national action plan includes the promotion of dialogue between the civil society and government, aiming to establish and strengthen partnerships between the government and civil society, including foreign partners and the public.

Proposed co-creation process fulfils principles of open government, conditions of membership in OGP, and, at the same time, objectives of the proposed public policy.

PART 4: TIMEFRAME AND FACTORS AFFECTING EXECUTION OF THE CO-CREATION PROCESS

Text box 4 Timeframe and factors affecting execution of the co-creation process

<p>Proposed timeframe for the co-creation process, including the legislative process, is set at 7 months: March - September 2023</p> <p>RISKS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - summer holiday months - lack of interest of civil society actors and government institutions to participate in the co-creation process - unstable political situation - change of government - short time for preparation and implementation of the co-creation process - lack of staff capacity at the Office of the Plenipotentiary <p>OPPORTUNITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishment of new partnerships with actors from government institutions, as well as CSOs (Summit for Democracy) - partnership with international organizations, e.g. OECD in improving the quality of commitments - possibility of using innovative formats for participation in time-sensitive situations - use of joint events for formal/informal discussions with relevant actors (e.g. conferences of the Office of the Plenipotentiary and other actors, etc.)
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PART 5: DESIGN OF THE CO-CREATION PROCESS

Text box 5 Design of the co-creation process

<p>March 2023</p> <p>Launch of the commitment's formation</p>	<p>First meeting of the multistakeholder forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of the idea to bring together OGP and the Summit for Democracy initiative - Stakeholder brainstorm to formulate new commitments <p>Publication of opportunities to participate in the development of the material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of new ideas for National Action Plan 2024-2026 main themes, including commitments under the Summit for Democracy - Introduction of possibility to add suggestions, challenges, relevant stakeholders, questions etc. to the topics already proposed - Dissemination of the information to other stakeholders <p>More details: https://bit.ly/3WJaR3b</p>
<p>April 2023</p> <p>Publication of the open call for commitments submission</p>	<p>Publication of preliminary information on the Slov-lex portal</p> <p>More details: https://bit.ly/3N6tlrx</p>
<p>May 2023</p> <p>Co-creation of the commitments</p>	<p>Clustering of proposals</p> <p>Evaluation and incorporation of comments, suggestions and input from preliminary information and thematic working groups</p>

	<p>More details: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19NfHO2NroEUc0cyPFfuHYcIusbjMv4i26UVK_CsXKVw/edit?usp=sharing</p>
<p>June 2023</p> <p>Publication of the draft of OGP NAP 2024 - 2026</p>	<p>Presentation of the draft at the Council of the Slovak Government for Non-Governmental Organizations (12 June 2023) More details: https://bit.ly/44IkUsI</p> <p>Publication of the draft on the website for public comment More details: https://bit.ly/3pgk3Qq</p> <p>Evaluation and incorporation of comments More details: https://bit.ly/3ISrnID</p>
<p>July – September 2023</p> <p>Legislative process of the adoption of the OGP NAP 2024 - 2026</p>	<p>Submission of the draft to the legislative procedure according to the rules of submission of materials for governmental adoption</p> <p>Intra-ministerial comment procedure (26 June - 10 July 2023) More details: https://bit.ly/3pVBVAA</p> <p>Preliminary comment procedure (28 July - 7 August 2023)</p> <p>Inter-ministerial comment procedure (14 August - 25 August 2023) Activity information: https://bit.ly/3YXiZP1</p> <p>Meeting of the government: More details: https://bit.ly/4bgXddC</p>