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REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

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1. SUMMARY

Through the joining the EU in May 2004, the Slovak Republic acquired for the first time an option of Cohesion Policy assistance through withdrawing financial resources from the EU Structural Funds. In the programming period 2007-2013, EU Cohesion Policy is implementing through the particular routing of EU Funds contributions to fulfilling its three main Objectives: Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment, and European Territorial Cooperation.

The Regional Operational Programme (hereinafter “the ROP”) for years 2007-2013 represents the programme document of the Slovak Republic for withdrawal of assistance from the European Regional Development Fund aimed at the regional infrastructure as one of the most significant determinants of the population’s quality of life. Interventions through the ROP aim particularly at support of the civil infrastructure of the territory with the goal to fulfil the current qualitative and quantitative requirements, as well as their balanced availability through enhancing quality and expanding of transportation and settlement components of amenities of the territory. The area of regional infrastructure influences significantly quality of life of the population in the supported area and it is one of the main factors of economics competitiveness and attractiveness of the territory for localisation of investments. Character of the ROP interventions within the frame of regional infrastructure concurrently contributes to the increasing of energy efficiency and to barrier-free buildings used by civil infrastructure facilities.

In the shortened programming period 2004-2006, the field of the regional infrastructure¹ was supported from the European Regional Development Fund (hereinafter “the ERDF”) in the areas of individual self-governing regions falling under the Objective 1 (i.e., except the Bratislava Self-governing Region area). That was done within the frame of the Operational Programme Basic Infrastructure (hereinafter “the OPBI”) through the four measures of the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure. The given priority focus on support of the civil infrastructure in fields of the educational system, health care system, social services, culture, as well as development of the civil society for public sector, information society and to support development of rural areas. Experiences from the shortened programming period 2004-2006 confirms, that the additional resources from Structural Funds and from State Budget of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter “the SR”) represents an important instrument to mitigate the impacts of long-term under-dimensioned capital investments into the civil infrastructure facilities, and into components of the territory amenities of the public sector, under the conditions of Slovakia.

The ROP for the programming period 2007-2013 continually links to the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI from the shortened programming period 2004-2006 and significantly expands extent of scope in several spheres. (That means for example: support of facilities performing socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, support of repository and heritage fund institutions at local and regional levels, revitalisation and economic utilisation of non-used or inappropriately used cultural monuments in the territory, support of tourism infrastructure, support of non-commercial rescue service facilities, support of integrated strategy for renovation of urban areas, including the infrastructure of housing, and reconstruction and modernisation of some sections of the 2nd and 3rd class roads, etc.).

The ROP is directly related to the objectives and priorities identified at the level of National Strategic Reference Framework of the SR for the years 2007-2013 (hereinafter “the NSRF”) as the fundamental strategic program document of the SR for the field of Cohesion and Regional Policies. Therefore, the specific priority No. 1.1 *Regional Infrastructure* of the NSRF implemented in the programming period 2007-2013 in particular, through the ROP, significantly contributing to fulfilment of the priority No. 1 of the NSRF that is *Infrastructure and Regional Availability*.

The territory of the Convergence objective is an eligible territory for the ROP financed from the ERDF. In terms of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, laying down general provisions on the ERDF, on the European Social Fund (hereinafter “the ESF”), and on the Cohesion Fund (hereinafter “the

¹ The term “regional infrastructure” in context of the ROP includes facilities of the civic infrastructure and the elements of amenities of the territory by the transportation and settlement infrastructure and the infrastructure of tourism

CF”), and repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999, eligibility concerns those territories of the NUTS 2 level, whose gross domestic product per capita measured in purchasing power parities, and calculated based on the Community data for the period 2000-2002, is less than 75 % of the average gross domestic product in the EU-25 for the same reference period. As for Slovak conditions the three NUTS 2 level regions are concerned (i.e., Western Slovakia, Central Slovakia and Eastern Slovakia).

As for its contents, the ROP as the strategic document at the all-national level has several key parts:

- Analysis of the current state in sphere of the regional infrastructure within the regions of Slovakia,
- Strategic part of the ROP,
- Operational part with a strategy projection into individual Priority Axes of the ROP,
- Financial plan of the ROP,
- Description of the ROP implementation system.

The analytical part goes from the available data on settlement of the SR as the relatively stable territorial system, influenced by historical developments of society, and especially by the developments of its economic foundation and social relations. The regional analysis of the territory amenities with various types of civil infrastructure facilities states diverse levels of unsatisfactory technical conditions of a large number of buildings, moral and physical obsolescence of technical equipments, existence of high operational costs, lack of modern technologies and unpreparedness of the service providers to introduce systems of quality into practice. Amenities of the territory with diverse types of infrastructure in large number of towns and municipalities do not reach required level of amenities in terms of quantity, or it does not meet current qualitative requirements for concrete types of the civil infrastructure. The analysis identifies significant settlement fragmentation of the SR territory, in particular in the territory of Eastern Slovakia and the above-standard density of the network of 2nd and 3rd class roads, however, it is characterised by insufficient transport-technical conditions.

The strategic part reflects the main development factors and the key disparities identified in the analytical part of the ROP, but also in the NSRF as well. The goal of proposed ROP strategy is enhancement of the quality of life and living standards in the supported Slovak regions to the level comparable with the most developed European countries. The ROP strategy with the direction of targeted interventions takes into consideration priorities implied from the strategic documents at the European, all-Slovakian and regional levels, but on the local level as well. It concerns above all of the: Community Strategic Guidelines, NSRF, Slovak Competitiveness Strategy until 2010 (i.e., the so-called Lisbon Strategy for Slovakia), National Reform Programme of the SR, Slovakia Spatial Development Perspective from the year 2001, National Sustainable Development Strategy from the year 2001, and the needs identified at level of individual regions of the Objective Convergence, under the conditions existing in the SR. The most suitable instrument for reducing regional disparities from the view of the ROP interventions is the strategy of territorial concentration of resources, in accordance with the mentioned strategic documents. The strategy of territorial concentration is based on the NSRF, where were primarily specified settlements of precedence (i.e., municipalities and towns), identified as the so-called innovative and cohesion growth poles on the ground of the SR settlement structure analysis (primarily defined in Slovakia Spatial Development Perspective 2001). Support through the particular ROP measures is priority directed towards the innovative and cohesion growth poles, what forms the selected centres of settlement on the SR territory. In specifically justified cases, operations within the frame of ROP aims at the areas outside the growth poles too, when the character of supported activities requires so. From thematic point of view, the ROP strategy aims at the selected types of civil infrastructure facilities and the elements of territory amenities identified through analysis as the key ones for achieving of the ROP global goal. Initially ERDF allocated total amount of € 1,445 million for implementation of the ROP for the period 2007-2013. The contribution from the ERDF increased to **€ 1,554,503,927** after the revision of the ROP performed in the middle of the programming period, pursuant to the allocation of additional resources. These additional resources were allocated to the SR in terms of the Articles 16 and 17 of Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, on budgetary discipline and sound financial

management², whereby the principle of addition is applied at the same time, using additional resources from the SR State Budget. The ROP strategy gives concentration of thematic and territorial assistance, and it has consequent projections into the ROP Financial Plan, reallocating available resources to the level of individual years of the programming period, Priority Axes, regions and dimension categories, in accordance with the European Commission methodology.

The system of ROP implementation suggests gradual desisting from the centralised approach and it establishes intermediate bodies under the Managing Authority at the level of NUTS 3 regions in accordance with relevant legislation of the SR and EU. The aim of the Managing Authority for the ROP is, that over the programming period 2007-2013 the self-governing regions (i.e., the NUTS 3 level) shall perform the tasks of intermediate bodies under the Managing Authority for the area of assistance, aimed at the regional roads, regeneration of settlements and the tourism infrastructure. In March 2011, an intermediary body has been established under the Managing Authority for the ROP at the Ministry of Culture of the SR in order to carry out entrusted tasks within the priority axis 7 European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013. The other areas of the ROP assistance from the view of their character are implemented directly by the Managing Authority for the ROP, that is the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the SR (hereinafter "the MCRD SR") in terms of the SR Government Resolution No. 832 of October 8th, 2006 until June 30th, 2010. The Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the SR was cancelled by the Act No. 37/2010 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No. 575/2001 Coll. on organization of activities of the government and central state administration organizations, as amended by later regulations, which is effective from July 1st, 2010. In addition, the ministry responsibilities as the Managing Authority for ROP passed to the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development of the SR. Under the Act No. 372/2010 Coll., the name of the Managing Authority for ROP has changed from the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR (hereinafter "MPRV SR") with effect from November 1st, 2010. The Act No. 372/2010 Coll., amended the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organization of activities of the government and central state administration organizations, as amended by later regulations.

1.1 SUMMARY OF GROUNDS FOR PERFORMING REVISION OF THE ROP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PROGRAMMING PERIOD

In the middle of the year 2010, it was possible to assess the past performance of the ROP implementation in the period 2007-2013. The European Commission adopted the ROP on September 24th, 2007. Beginning of the ROP implementation in January 2008 was associated with high expectations of applicants. The expectations resulted from extensive media promotion of EU funds assistance in Slovakia, large absorption capacity of the applicants during the economic boom at the turn of years 2007-2008, as well as of extensive stock of many unsupported projects from the previous shortened programming period 2004-2006.

System of ROP implementation introduced into practice some innovative features in the year 2008, such as the system of ongoing calls for proposals, online reservation system of the dates for application submission, direct electronic communications with applicants via a dedicated e-mail box, etc. In the year 2008, the first ROP calls launched and at the same time the management and control systems adjustment was completed. These actions were assessed by the audit of compliance pursuant the Article 71 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006. During the year 2009 calls were launched in all Priority Axes of the ROP. These calls resulted in fulfilling of the n+3 rule at the close of the year 2009, more than one year in advance, and in conditions enabling intensive drawing of funds during the year 2010, due to the high number of approved projects.

Since year 2009 a new currency, the euro, was introduced in the SR, at what the conversion rate was fixed to 30.126 SKK / EUR. At the time of ROP preparing exchange rate 32.600 SKK / EUR was applied in determining of the ROP financial plan, in line with official forecasts and expectations, as well

² European Commission officially informed the European Parliament and European Council on the technical adjustment of the financial framework for the years 2011 - 2013 in line with the GDP movements, including the adjustment of the amounts allocated from the funds supporting cohesion by the relevant Member State by the difference between estimated and actual level of GDP in period 2007-2009. In accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the Inter-institutional Agreement of the May 17th, 2006 and Commission Decision 2010/475/EU of 30 August 2010 amending Decision 2006/594/EC fixing an indicative allocation by Member State of the commitment appropriations for the Convergence Objective for the period 2007 – 2013 as regards additional allocations for the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, funds available for the Slovak Republic are raised by € 137,711,534.

as for calculating of estimated amount on individual projects. Strengthening of the SKK during the year 2008, on which conversion rate was fixed had cause real reduction in amount of total fund resources for the ROP of approximately SKK 55.42 milliard to SKK 51.214 milliard, what represents a difference of more than SKK 4.20 milliard.

Consequences of the global economic crisis fully manifested on the territory of Slovakia in the year 2009, had their influence to the ROP implementation and EU funds drawing. Government of the Slovak Republic has adopted in this context at the turn of 2008 and 2009 several anti-crisis measures, aimed at intensifying of the EU funds drawing (for example, measures of the SR Government to overcome impacts of the global financial crisis, approved by Government Resolutions No. 808/2008, No. 969/2008 and No. 125/2009). These facts have been taken into account in the national budget preparing for year 2010. In order to accelerate and streamline the drawdown of EU funds were also some measures took the European Commission (e.g., changes of regulations to simplify proving of eligible expenditures for the project, simplifying procedures for revenue generating projects - Article 55 of the General Regulation).

In consequence of the economic crisis, the significant socio-economic changes led to change in priorities of potential ROP beneficiaries. From a wide range of different areas supported by the ROP there were shaped areas for potential beneficiaries, i.e., particularly regional and local self-governments featured the most important development priorities and the most effective investment in terms of operating cost savings of the public sector (reducing energy demanding), job creation, ICT introduction and settlements competitiveness. On the other hand, in some areas of support were not saturated expectations in terms of goals predetermined in the year 2007, namely despite of several declared calls and their promotion. These facts, together with several other changes in external environment (legislative changes, etc.) highlighted need for partial adjustment of the initial set strategy and of the ROP financial plan and need for the ROP analytical unit completion by some new facts.

Original analytical part of ROP was based on statistical data for the year 2004 eventually 2005. Consequences of the global economic crisis, demographic evolution of the society, as well as changes of the national legislation have pointed to a need for partial modification of the ROP strategy ROP adjusted in the process of the ROP preparation in years 2006-2007. The aim of ROP revision is to modify wording of the operational program in such way, that the strategic and operational part, as well as the financial plan of the ROP will reflect changed circumstances.

Following facts are reasons for revision of the ROP and related reallocation of resources:

- a) A significant change in the socio-economic environment (global economic crisis);**
- b) Changes in development priorities at the national, regional and local levels (development priorities at the time of crisis and changes in legislation in sphere of education, tourism and in social sphere, re-evaluation of priorities in times of crisis, resolutions of the Slovak Government defining the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 as a national priority, resolutions of the Slovak Government regulating regionalization of tourism in Slovakia, and so on.);**
- c) Difficulties in carrying out some spheres of the ROP support in relation to legislative barriers (infrastructure of socio-legal protection of children and social care, infrastructure of housing), respectively other reasons (difficulties in achieving complementarity with the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth in investment promotion activities of tourism).**

Revision of the Operational Programme is not any major deviation from the originally justified objectives and values of measurable indicators on the program level. In case of some indicators, the revision allows for the achievement of higher target values.

1.2 SUMMARY OF GROUNDS FOR PERFORMING THE REVISION OF ROP AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 2012

The second revision of ROP responds to a serious problematic situation that has arisen in connection with the deficit of financial resources necessary for covering current claims declared in requests for payment within the ROP Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education. The first revision of ROP approved the principle of transfer of savings in projects carried out in ROP into the Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education **with the aim to solve the 'above-quota approval' of financial resources as a result of significant change of socio-economic environment and related**

changes in priorities at national, regional and local level. Already the first revision presupposed the necessity of this second revision. Internal analysis of grounds for carrying out the ROP revision by December 31st 2011 from January 2012 confirmed conclusions of external evaluations of ROP implementation carried out up to now: the ROP Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education is the key field of support in the programming period 2007-2013 and participates significantly in achieving the ROP strategy and global goal, incl. contribution to goals of the Strategy Europe 2020 and the National Reform Program of the SR.

Unlike the first revision, the second revision of ROP could be considered as relatively simple, because this revision does not modify the analysis and strategy of ROP, indicators and management and control systems of ROP.

1.3 SUMMARY OF GROUNDS FOR PERFORMING THE REVISION OF ROP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE YEAR 2012

The third revision of ROP follows up previous revisions of ROP with aim to continue reducing of deficit of financial resources within Priority Axis 1 ROP based on transfer of savings in projects carried out in ROP into this Priority Axis. The need for third revision was identified by Internal analysis of grounds for carrying out the ROP revision by June 5th 2012 from June 2012 with regard to recurring serious situation that has arisen in connection with the deficit of financial resources necessary for covering current claims declared in requests for payment.

The persistence of facts, which fall under points (a) and (b) of Article 33 of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 are reasons for revision of the ROP and related reallocation of resources:

a) A significant change in the socio-economic environment;

b) Changes in development priorities at the national, regional and local levels

Unlike the second revision, the third revision of ROP does not modify the analysis and strategy of ROP and management and control systems of ROP.

1.4 SUMMARY OF GROUNDS FOR PERFORMING THE REVISION OF ROP IN THE END OF THE YEAR 2013

In response to the findings of *an Internal analysis of the 4th revision of the Regional Operational Programme of May 2013 (modification no. 1 - October 2013)* the aim of the fourth revision of the ROP is to revise financial plan for the reasons identified in the present analysis. It considers primarily contracted projects contribution to the Strategy Europe 2020 for the area of energy savings. Managing Authority of ROP was also addressed by request of the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities (MRC coordinator for HP) because of the need to meet the objectives under the Priority Axis 1 of the local strategies for a comprehensive approach (hereinafter referred to as "LSCA"). For the reason of the deficit of funds under the Priority Axis 1, there was necessary to increase the allocation of the Priority Axis 1, by the amount of 39,808,000 EUR (ERDF funds), solely for the implementation of new projects under LSCA. All the other relevant priority axes projects (except Priority Axis 1) are lacking contribution to the energy savings. It was identified that the commitment of ROP to contribution to the energy savings can be maximized by the transfer of saved funds from the priority axes, where the objectives in other areas have been fulfilled and where the contribution of projects to energy savings is at a substantially higher level. This requirement are meeting only projects under the Priority Axis 1.

In the view of the fact that in the opinion of the European Commission is not possible to reallocate available resources of individual priority axes of ROP with the intention of using them to refinance "old projects" (already contracted projects), the deficit under Priority Axis 1 should be covered in the phase-out of the operational program in the form so-called 10% flexibility of allocation of individual priority axis (primarily through Priority Axis 3, which is not the subject of this revision) under the operational program (such a change would be allowed on the basis of the forthcoming revision of EC Regulation no. 1083/2006, for which the approval is expected later the end of 2013,).

The Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities conducted survey of interest of municipalities with approved LSCA in the implementation of the project plan within the ROP measure 1.1 Infrastructure of Education during the year 2013. This survey showed interest of 74 municipalities in the project implementation plan in reconstruction of primary and nursery schools in amount of 47,409,822.90 EUR.

Realization of the call for proposals for this measure is considered as crucial for meeting the principle of a comprehensive approach and support of municipalities with concentrated communities. Based on the analysis of the condition, the municipalities with a concentration of separated and segregated Roma communities are in a very vulnerable situation in terms of access to school infrastructure. Moreover, many of which serve as a catchment area for a number of municipalities with concentrated communities.

Project proposal of ROP 1.1 within approved LSCA also have a direct link to education and create synergy with OP Education. Since municipalities are involved in projects under the OP Education, Measure 3.1 Improving the level of education of marginalized Roma communities and also to national projects on inclusive education in pre-primary and primary levels of education, it is essential that municipalities would be also supported in the form of investment in school infrastructure. Link to the OP Education projects will also ensure inclusive aspect of approach to solving the MRC issue.

Projects within LSCA could be realized only at condition that they prevent the holdback or increasing of the school segregation. Considered projects are not allowed to expand the capacity of existing facilities, which are attended by children from marginalized Roma communities, if there is a capacity for pupils in neighboring facilities. These requirements will be ensured in close cooperation of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR – the MA for ROP, The Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities and Ministry of Education SR – MA for OP Education by monitoring the conditions of schools through data collected by the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education (basic filter) and through external staff by technical assistance provided via MA for ROP. For the need of external monitoring a checklist will be prepared with the fundamental questions related to conditions of schools, school attendance of children from socially - disadvantaged background and use of inclusive education programs.

Municipality which is not involved in national projects, demand-oriented calls of proposals or does not apply inclusive education programs and will receive support in renovation of school facility shall adopt measures for inclusive education. Therefore, under the conditions laid down in call for proposals itself the condition will be stipulated for municipalities to prove measures taken for the implementation of inclusive education and prevention not to extent segregation. Within the planned monitoring there will be intersection of municipalities involved in national projects MRC 1, MRC 2 and demand-oriented projects under the Measure 3.1 and municipalities where schools operate on a two - shift system, in order to avoid creating of "catch - up" or "preparatory classes".

In order to create employment opportunities for people living in marginalized Roma communities the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities, together with the European Commission Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR, representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and family SR, representatives of the Association of Construction Entrepreneurs, representatives of the Public Procurement Office and representatives of non-governmental organizations - EPIC, ETP and Človek v tiesni (Person in need), trying to enforce the socially responsible public procurement of construction works financed by the European Union.

For this purpose there were held several working meetings at national level with a view to create a pilot approach of using social considerations in public procurement. In applying of social aspect there will be a need to ensure continuity in a certified training of target group. It will be also necessary to take into account the regional aspect in public procurement considering habitation of the target group with regard to the location of the project. This issue was addressed by The Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities SR within the informal dialogue in preparation of the partnership agreement and the operational programs for 2014-2020. Currently it appears optimal to take account of social considerations in public procurement through special conditions of the contract performance already in this programming period. MA for ROP will apply conclusions and

recommendations of the working group to the call for proposals for the Measure 1.1 focusing on LSCA. Working group is formed under the responsibility of The Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities SR to address social aspects in public procurement, while keeping and respecting the legislative rules of the Slovak Republic and the EU.

Revision is carried out according to Article 33, paragraph 1, letter c) of the Council Regulation (EC) no. 1083/2006 under the Regulations of the European Parliament and of the Council no. 539/2010 of 16th June 2010.

2. PREPARATION OF THE REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

2.1 PREPARATION PROCESS OF THE REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME - APPLICATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE

The process of the ROP preparation for the programming period 2007-2013 relates to the preparation of the specific priority No. 1.1 *Regional Infrastructure* of the NSRF, which was initiated in October 2005. During the programming period 2007-2013, the given specific priority of the NSRF performs primarily through the ROP implementation.

This process was realized in responsibility of the MCRD SR, in accordance with the Slovak Government Resolution No. 832 of October 8th, 2006, designating the MCRD SR as the Managing Authority for the ROP.

The process of the ROP preparation proceeded in terms of the partnership principle, in accordance with relevant EC regulations, continuously adopting resolutions of the Slovak Government and guidelines of the Central Coordination Authority (hereinafter "the CCA").

On the date of January 31st, 2006, the specific priority No. 1.1 *Regional Infrastructure* of the NSRF was elaborated, what defined direction of assistance from the SF and from the CF in the programming period 2007-2013 in sphere of the regional infrastructure to the indicative level of groups of activities, goals, beneficiaries and basic measurable starting and target indicators.

During the preparation and approval stage of the ROP, the MCRD SR applied actively the partnership principle, under which a broad spectrum of the substantially relevant social and economic partners was involved into the given processes. Entities identified as partners are:

- Central government authorities for the relevant sector spheres,
- All territorially competent regional self-governments and representatives of local self-governments,
- Professional community representing NGO sector,
- Office of the Slovak Government's Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities,
- Representatives of the Integrated Network of Regional Development Agencies,
- External advisers participating in elaboration of analytical and strategic parts of the ROP, representing various professional areas related to the issues of the regional infrastructure (e.g., economy, land use planning, regional development, etc.).

The criterion for choice of socio-economic partners was substantial competence to the individual sector areas of the ROP assistance at the national, regional and local levels and the expected causality of impacts of the ROP interventions on the participating entities who are actors of regional development.

Application of the partnership principle was realized through attendance in the Working Group for Preparation of the ROP, in form of bilateral working meetings, written and electronic communication, interdepartmental commenting proceedings, participation in the organized public forums, etc.

The Working Group for Preparation of the ROP, appointed by the Minister of construction and regional development of the SR, represents the basic platform for the ROP preparing. Above mentioned Working Group started to operate officially in May 2006, and a precise list of its members gives the Annex 3 to the ROP. Based on the updating of the NSRF in October 2006 further entities extended the Working Group for the ROP preparation. From May 2006 to February 2007, agenda of the WG meetings focused on the content fixation of the ROP and its interventions, principles application of territorial and thematic concentrations, system of the ROP implementation, and on other aspects related with assistance for sphere of the regional infrastructure in the programming period 2007-2013.

During the months from November 2005 to June 2007, the MCRD SR initiated several bilateral and multilateral meetings with the relevant Ministries (e.g., Ministries of Education; Labour, Social Affairs and Family; Culture; Agriculture; Environment; Interior, etc.). Purpose of these meetings were content specifications of individual starting points of the ROP in terms of sector spheres of assistance and

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compliance of the ROP with strategies at the national level. In addition, subject of such meetings was also to define eligible beneficiaries in accordance with the national legislation. Taking into consideration the professional opinions of relevant resorts, there were simultaneously determined the demarcation lines among the individual spheres of assistance within the frame of ROP and among related spheres supported from other operational programmes, co-financed from the EU Funds, eventually from other resources in the years 2007-2013.

Representatives of all regional self-governments and representatives of the local self-governments, within which scope of cognizance fall individual spheres of the ROP assistance, participated in the process of the ROP preparation. Moreover, representatives of regional self-governments were involved in the preparation of issues of the partially decentralised system of the ROP implementation in the programming period 2007-2013, as well as in the preparation of relevant implementation documents. The Slovak Towns and Municipalities Association represented the interests of local self-governments in the process of the ROP preparation. Responsible nominees of chairpersons of the self-governing regions empowered with a mandate to negotiate about the ROP content attended the regular meetings within framework of the ROP preparation.

Regional and local self-governments

The self-governing regions involved in the process of the ROP preparation enforced the need of enhancing quality and completing of the civil infrastructure facilities in regions, and the suggested to expand the spectrum of eligible activities within the individual spheres of the ROP assistance. Simultaneously, the self-governing regions repeatedly required to increase financial resources for the ROP, declaring their interest to meet the tasks of fully-fledged mediatory bodies under the Managing Authority for the ROP for the entire operational programme. With respect to the fact that some requirements were not in accordance with the previous resolutions of the SR Government, consensus was not reached regarding some issues within the Working Group, and it was not possible to accept some of the given proposals.

In addition, the Managing Authority for the ROP within the Working Groups submitted for discussion within the Working Groups its proposal for determining regional allocations within the frame of ROP, elaborated in cooperation with the external processors. The self-governing regions did not succeed to reach mutual consent as far as to the issue of regional allocations for the regions at the NUTS 3 level, neither after submission of a proposal of the MA for the ROP, elaborated on basis of a supplementary detailed analysis of the supported areas in territories of individual self-governing regions. The Member State level accepted a decision on distribution of the available ROP allocation among the concerned NUTS 3 regions.

The issues of territorial concentration of the ROP contributions was worked out on the professional basis in cooperation with the external processors, what were re-assessed individually at level of the relevant professional units of the all self-governing regions in the territory of the Objective Convergence.

The regional and local self-governments represents prevailing part of beneficiaries for interventions through the ROP. Besides the regional and local self-governments involvement into the ROP preparation, based on the principle of partnership, representatives of self-governments have their representation in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP. Moreover, the self-governing regions shall ensure performance of the implementation tasks in the programming period 2007-2013, as the Managing Authority delegated them for the ROP within the spheres of assistance aimed at the interventions to the regional roads, regeneration of settlements and tourism. Description of the local and regional self-governments involvement into the managing and implementing the ROP during the programming period 2007-2013 is in more detail explained in Chapter 9.

A civic association titled Rural Parliament (a network of NGOs and natural persons) participated in the process of preparing the ROP. Its comments was focused primarily on the issue of assistance to the rural and underdeveloped areas, territorial concentration of the ROP and on the necessary mechanisms defining for prevention of prioritizing interests of the regional self-governments at the expense of the local self-governments.

NGOs

The Working Groups for the ROP discussed on the fly the comments from the NGO sector concerning to regional infrastructure issues, as well as the Working Groups organised already at the level of the NSRF preparing.

The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the SG Government for Roma Communities in collaboration within the principle of partnership communicated with the MCRD SR, in particular, regarding the options of

Roma communities

optimising the use of a broad spectrum of the ROP activities for establishing conditions for a complex approach to the solution of the of marginalised Roma communities issues.

The process of submitting documents for the SR Government negotiations through the interdepartmental commenting proceedings institutionally ensures adherence of Partnership, under conditions existing in the SR. All the given decisive regional actors were involved into this process. The comments received within framework of this process were subject to specific discussions, the result thereof was submitting of the draft of ROP to the SR Government discussion without any essential discrepancies.

The ROP processors paid due attention to all requirements and demands of individual partners, including them to the possible extent to the wording of the ROP. The ROP document processed based on the principle of partnership is submitting to the European Commission as result of agreement of involved socio-economic entities. On June 29th, 2007, the final discussion on the completed document took place with the all socio-economic partners. The resultant version of the ROP has full support of the SR Government as an EU Member State.

The principle of partnership, in terms of Article 11 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, laying down general provisions on the ERDF, the ESF and the CF, and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999, is applied in relation to the ROP during the all programming period 2007-2013. The spectrum of partners, represented by the sector Ministries, regional and local self-governments and other partners is simultaneously involved into the implementation of the programme in the form of participating in preparation of calls for projects submitting and in selection of supported operations within the individual Priority Axis of the ROP.

The closer spectrum of the partners, represented by regional and local self-governments and regional development agencies, is a component of the communication strategy of the Managing Authority for the ROP, and it participates in information and publicity activities in relation to the ROP.

In the course of the programming period of 2007-2013, membership in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP created a space for the socio-economic partners for participation in monitoring and evaluation of the operational programme and in initiating its potential reviews. Description of the partnership principle application in relation to the above-mentioned activities gives the Chapter 9.

Annex 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the all socio-economic partners involved in the preparation of the ROP and the most important issues in applying the principle of partnership. The principle of partnership in relation to performance and implementation of the ROP is ensured over the entire programming period 2007-2013.

With an aim of discussing the ROP content and the way of its implementation in the programming period 2007-2013, a number of working meetings of senior representatives of the MCRD SR and of the seven involved self-governing regions eligible for the Objective Convergence took place.

With the aim of acquaintance of the broader professional public with the options of assistance in the sphere of the regional infrastructure in context of the NSRF and of the ROP, several topic-oriented conferences took place. During the months February and March 2006 was presented the issue of Regional infrastructure for the programming period 2007-2013 in context of the NSRF to the broader professional public at conferences held in Bratislava and in Košice. In May 2006, the issue of the regional infrastructure in context of the ROP was presented at the conference Structural Funds for development of Roma Communities. In April 2007, the prepared ROP was presented at the all-national conference under title European Funds for Regions Development held in Banská Bystrica. Moreover, the representatives of the MCRD SR responsible for the preparation of the NSRF and the ROP participated actively in the course of the ROP preparation also in other public events organised by various entities acting in the sphere of regional development.

The SR Government and the European Commission adopted the ROP as a programme document for withdrawing from the EU Structural Funds in the programming period 2007-2013. Government of the SR adopted the draft of ROP through its Resolution No. 1014 of December 6th, 2006, imposing a task to complete the document on a basis of results of *ex ante* assessment, results of strategic environmental assessment and technical discussions with the representatives of the European Commission. The operational programme was submitted officially to the European Commission on March 5th, 2007. The decision of the European Commission from date September 24th, 2007 adopted the draft of Regional operational programme.

2.1.1 Process of preparation of the ROP revision in the middle of the programming period

Managing Authority for ROP initiated revision of the ROP in the year 2010 on the bases of results from continuous assessment of the ROP implementation up to now, analysis of reason for revision of the ROP and resolutions of the Slovak Government concerning additional budget increase of the ROP in relation to the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013, the effects of floods eliminating and flood-protection measures. In a lesser extent was the modification raised by difficulties with implementation of some spheres of the ROP assistance.

Necessity of the ROP revision in consequence of expressive changes in socio-economic environment and therewith-associated changes in priorities at the national, regional and local levels was evident already at the end of year 2009. Managing Authority for the ROP informed its socio-economic partners about the fact at the annual meeting to the ROP and at the annual conference of the ROP in December 2009.

In May 2010 there was elaborated a first draft of modified form of the ROP, within the context of the results of the preliminary evaluation of the ROP implementation up to date, which was the subject of negotiations for the ROP Monitoring Committee at its meeting on July 3rd, 2010. Considering the comments raised by members of the Monitoring Committee for ROP was meeting on the revision of ROP suspended. The draft of the revised ROP was readjusted and submitted on September 30th, 2010 to members of the Monitoring Committee for ROP, following the subsequently adopted resolutions of the Slovak Government, in regard to additional budget increase of the ROP in relation to the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013, and removing the effects of floods and flood prevention measures.

The Monitoring Committee for the ROP approved the draft revision of the ROP on October 26th, 2010 and submitted it officially to the European Commission for approval on October 29th, 2010.

The European Commission assessed the submitted draft until February 2011. Based on requests raised by the European Commission, selected sections of the approved draft revision had to be amended, in particular the sections regarding the strategy of support for the field of social infrastructure, contribution of the ROP to the solution of situation of the marginalised Roma communities and the possibility to implement the innovative financial tool JESSICA. Concurrently, the Monitoring Committee for the ROP has approved in this regard and in voting by way of written procedure the transfer of € 5 million from the field of support of cultural infrastructure to the field of support of housing infrastructure in order to strengthen the allocation intended for the support of housing infrastructure through the innovative financial mechanism JESSICA in connection with the recommendations of the European Commission raised in the process of negotiations on the draft revision of the ROP and valuation and selection criteria for the European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013. Based on the recommendations and subsequent negotiations with the European Commission, with several social-economic partners and based on Resolutions of the Monitoring Committee for the ROP of October 26th, 2010 and of March 23rd, 2011, the Managing Authority for the ROP has completed the draft revision of the ROP in the course of February to April 2011 and re-submitted it to the European Commission on May 10th, 2011.

The revision of ROP was approved by Commission decision No K (2011)5362 of August 2nd 2011 amending Decision No K (2007)4449 of September 24th 2007.

2.1.2 Process of preparation of the ROP revision at the beginning of the year 2012

In March 2012, the Managing Authority for ROP initiated the ROP revision based on the internal analysis of January 2012 of grounds for carrying out the ROP revision as of December 31st 2011. The first revision of ROP approved the principle of transfer of savings in projects carried out in ROP into the Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education with the aim to solve the 'above-quota approval' of financial resources as a result of significant change of socio-economic environment and related changes in priorities at national, regional and local level. Already the first revision presupposed the necessity of this second revision.

The Managing Authority for the ROP submitted for approval to the members of the ROP Monitoring Committee on March 6th 2012 the draft of ROP revision, incl. internal analysis of grounds for carrying out the ROP revision as of December 31st 2011. The Monitoring Committee approved the submitted draft of revision by the written procedure.

The revision of ROP was approved by Commission decision No K(2012)3301 of May 23th 2012 amending Decision No K(2007)4449 of September 24th 2007.

2.1.3 Process of preparation of the ROP revision at the beginning of the year 2012

Regarding Internal analysis of January 2012 of grounds for carrying out the ROP revision, the Managing Authority for ROP initiated the third ROP revision in July 2012 with aim to continue reducing of deficit of financial resources within Priority Axis 1 ROP. The first revision of ROP has started changes within Priority Axis 1 ROP with regard to significant change of socio-economic environment and related changes in priorities at national, regional and local level. The aim of third revision is application of the principle of transfer of savings in projects carried out in ROP into the Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education, which was approved by the first revision of ROP.

The Managing Authority for the ROP submitted for approval to the members of the ROP Monitoring Committee on July 11th 2012 the draft of ROP revision, incl. internal analysis of grounds for carrying out the ROP revision as of May 31st 2011. The Monitoring Committee for the ROP approved the draft revision of the ROP on July 18th July 2012.

2.1.4 Process of preparing of the ROP revision at the end of the year 2013

Based on *Internal analysis of the 4th revision of the Regional Operational Programme of May 2013* the Managing Authority for ROP initiated in June 2013 in the order of execution of the fourth revision of the operational program to eliminate identified deficiencies to simultaneously maximize operational program objectives at the global level. Following the conclusions of the Government of the Slovak Republic as well as to representatives of the European Commission (raised at the Monitoring Committee of ROP on 22nd July 2013 and on the meeting with the European Commission minutes of the Slovak Permanent representation in Brussels no. 100091/2013-BESZ/33 dated 17th September 2013) regarding financing of already contracted projects, the Managing Authority for ROP proceeded to resubmission of the 4th revision of ROP in the modified version - as modification no. 1 for the approval of the Monitoring Committee of ROP in the month of October 2013. Subject to final fourth revision of the operational program is to transfer available and saved-up funds obtained under the priority axes 2, 4 and 7 of ROP into the Priority Axis 1 of ROP according to the conclusions of that analysis - to finance new projects under LSCA .

4th revision of ROP including *Internal analysis of the 4th revision of the Regional Operational Programme of May 2013 (modification no. 1 - October 2013)* was presented to members of the Monitoring Committee on 23rd October 2013. The Monitoring Committee for ROP approved the modified draft of the 4th revision of ROP.

2.2 EX ANTE ASSESSMENT³

Within period from May 2006 to May 2007, an external processor performed *ex ante* assessment of the ROP. Final Report on the *ex ante* evaluation of the ROP was elaborated as of December 31st, 2006. In the course of the first half of year 2007, the draft of ROP was customized based on technical consultations with representatives of the European Commission. Mentioned consultation resulted into changes in the ROP in several sections, and therefore the updated version was subject to the supplementary process with appurtenances of *ex ante* assessment.

The Updated Final Report on the *ex ante* assessment was submitted to the MCRD SR on June 22nd, 2007.

³ Guidance No. 3/2005 of the Coordinator for the NSRF (Methodical Guidnace to the Ex Ante Assessment of the NSRR priority - frame order specifying conditions) sent by the letter No. 11829/62183-14 of November 29th, 2005

Starting points of the analytical part should have adequate predicative ability for setting out justifiable strategy with the clearly defined goals at the ROP level, as well as at the levels of the ROP Priority Axes. Within the frame of performed *ex ante* assessment the MA for the ROP was warned of the insufficiently predicating and non-transparent statistical data in the analytical section, as well as of uneven depth of analyse in individual thematic areas. The MA for the ROP eliminated given shortcomings through refining and completing data for the individual areas, with respect to diversity of sources and availability of statistical data.

The strategy is elaborated based on results of regional analyses and on stated disparities, according to relevant spheres of assistance. The *ex ante* assessment recommended to consider arrangement of thematic areas according to logical linkages. The ROP strategy accepted this recommendation.

The *ex ante* assessment of the ROP considers the principle of topical and territorial concentration of interventions within the frame of ROP, in connection to the financing of complementary activities supported from the ESF as a significant instrument for achieving required synergic effect. Spatial distribution of scheduled interventions into the innovative and cohesion growth poles based on the actually identified needs, with focusing on regional and intra-regional disparities balancing is in accordance with the polycentric approach applied on level of the NSRF. In terms of suggestions from *ex ante* assessment there were completed more detailed information on strategy of growth poles into the ROP, with description of methodology, number of inhabitants in structuring to the innovative and cohesion growth poles.

However, from the *ext ante* findings result requirements to refine the strategy and its projection into the Priority Axes from the views of thematic and territorial concentration of interventions, with setting up adequate and justifiable criteria. The strategy was defined more comprehensible, in terms of the given suggestion, using economic and capacity criteria, as well as other substantial criteria with using principles of territorial concentration.

The *ex ante* assessment states concurrently mutual consistency and synergy of the ROP Priority Axes, what reflects the strategy and outcomes of preceding analyses in relation to the needs of individual Convergence regions of the SR. The proposed ROP Priority Axes shall optimally fulfil defined strategy of the ROP by their implementation, through development of the project plans financing; the strategy establishes potential of significant participation in fulfilling the NSRF goals by the year 2013, which is increasing of competitiveness and performance of the regions and of the Slovak economy and employment, while respecting sustainable development. The proposed ROP Priority Axes are in accordance with the priorities given in Article 4 of the Regulation (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 1080/2006 of July 5th, 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund, by what is repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1783/1999.

However, the *ex ante* assessment reproached for the insufficient projection of the National Strategy of Sustainable Development into the resolved areas of transport and tourism, on the ground of it was the ROP completed in November 2006. In addition, the *ex ante* assessment pointed at non-transparency of aiming and areas of support of the Priority Axis 3, in particular at the vague demarcation line between support for tangible immovable cultural monuments revitalization and support of tourism. Moreover, the *ex ante* assessment highlighted the ambiguities in the insufficiently described complementarity and coordination with the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth in the sphere of tourism. Arrangement of the Priority Axis 3 considered suggestions from the *ex ante* assessment through means of defining spheres of assistance, specifications of supported activities and completing of coordination with the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth in the sphere of tourism. In relation to the Priority Axis 4, the *ex ante* assessment warned of too complicated and non-transparent structure of the spheres of assistance, and mainly in case of the integrated strategies of urban development it required to increase effectiveness in the process of implementation. The Priority Axis 4 was adapted in terms of *ex ante* suggestions, while this part supplemented the implementation mechanism for integrated strategies of urban areas developing, which guarantees the more suitable approach to the implementation of projects.

One of the most crucial outputs from the *ex ante* assessment was the recommendation to re-formulate goals of Priority Axes and for the purposes of the ROP Programme Manual, and the goals of measures according to proposal, which is a component of the Final Report from the *ex ante* assessment. The suggestion was partially accepted and included into the ROP, with respect to changes in the structure of the ROP Priority Axes that implied from the technical negotiations with the EC representatives.

A system of indicators comprised in the ROP, according to the *ex ante* assessment, should establish precondition for measurement of progress achieved. As far as to the expected outcomes and impacts of scheduled ROP interventions, the *ex ante* evaluator recommends to refine indicators and their measurable values at the level of the programme so, that they will correspond to the respective indicators at the level of individual Priority Axes of the programme. The proposed indicators had mainly character of output indicators, and they had only quantitative character. In relation to preparation of the national system of indicators for the NSRF, during period from December 2006 to June 2007, the system of indicators for the ROP was adjusted as well. The newly designed system of indicators approximates more to fulfilment of the global goal of the ROP. Measurable indicators of the ROP are elaborated at the level of the programme and Priority Axes, and the indicators elaborated at the lower hierarchic level are a part of the ROP Programme Manual. In consequence to the national system of indicators for the NSRF elaboration, indicators of individual operational programme were adapted in February and subsequently in June 2007, what was also a subject of the conclusions completion from the *ex ante* assessment. The indicator titled 'percentage increasing of the civil amenities standard' was omitted out of the proposed indicators, whereas its quantification appeared problematic. Moreover, the indicators were supplemented with core indicators, and based on the *ex ante* findings also with sources of data, at finding values of output, outcome and impact indicators, through that was increased their predicative ability.

The *ex ante* assessment reproached to the ROP insufficient identification of threats related to the external effects relating the SR membership in the EU, (e.g., expected Euro introduction in the year 2009, and its possible effects on increase of prices, entry into the Schengen area, continuing migration for job within frame of the SR regions with subsequent effects on the structure of disposable labour power within the regions, etc.). However, after a detailed evaluation of possible impacts of the given aspects, it is possible to state, that substantive focusing of the ROP and implementation of its activities will not be concerned directly by the given aspects to extent requiring modification of the strategic part of the operational programme.

Moreover, the *ex ante* assessment states that the horizontal priorities are elaborated in the ROP at the sufficiently detailed level, and that the ROP is coherent with the other national sector strategic documents, and in addition that it follows fulfilling of the regional and local strategies included into the strategic documents of self-governments. Compliance of the ROP strategy with the regional and local priorities was reached also on basis of the partnership principle application in the process of programming. Missing mechanism of coordination in implementation of horizontal priorities was supplemented in accordance with the NSFR and with the guarantors of individual horizontal priorities.

One of the possible risks identified by the *ex ante* evaluator relates to the partially decentralised system of implementation. Based on the recent recommendations of the *ex ante* evaluator, some supportive measures were suggested for solving of possible absorption difficulties of individual involved NUTS 3 level regions. The given measures are a part of detailed descriptions of the assistance management and implementation from the SF and the CF (audit trails) for the programming period 2007-2013, comprising content of the internal procedures manuals of the MA for the ROP and the Intermediate Bodies under the Managing Authority for the ROP.

System of implementation is assessed by the *ex ante* evaluator as transparently designed, with proposals of functions, responsibilities and delegated tasks. The *ex ante* evaluator recommends a framing system of projects evaluation into the system of implementation, at the level of maximally possible effective and quick process. The suggestion was accepted on the part of the Managing Authority for the ROP, and innovative components were included into the implementation procedures; for instance utilization of electronic communication with the applicants, establishing a space for reducing time required for projects appraisal, while a detailed description of the implementation system is a component part of the internal procedures manuals of the involved entities.

The *ex ante* assessment recommends to complete unambiguously already at the level of operational programme the system of performance redistribution of implementation procedures in links to the respective Priority Axes of the ROP between the Managing Authority for the ROP and the Intermediate Bodies under the Managing Authority. The given recommendation concerns mechanisms for preventing from the possible conflict of interests arising in a situation, when the self-governing regions are responsible for appraisal and selection of the grant applications, while they are concurrently also eligible beneficiaries of the grant.

Final Report on the *ex ante* assessment recommends to elaborate in more details interconnections to other financial instruments, and to complete in more details what type of activities are covered

financially from the EAFRD so, that to clarify interconnections with the financial options of support from the ERDF.

The complete documentation from the carried out *ex ante* assessment is available at the Managing Authority for the ROP in terms of Article 47, paragraph 3 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, laying down general provisions on the ERDF, the ESF and the CF, and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999. Ongoing reports and final report on the *ex ante* assessment were published on the Internet page of the MCRD SR.

2.3 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

For the purpose of environmental aspects assessment of the proposed ROP interventions, as a strategic document with the all-national incidence, with considerations to support of sustainable development there was a strategic environmental assessment performed pursuant to the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on the Environmental Impact Assessment and on the modification and amendment of certain acts. Mentioned Act is fully in accordance with the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 2001/42/EC of June 27th, 2001, on effects assessment of the certain plans and programmes on the environment. Within the given process were identified and assessed any direct and indirect effects and impacts of the proposed ROP strategy on the environment

The procedural process of a strategic environmental assessment was performed in accordance with the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on the Environmental Impact Assessment and on the modification and amendment of certain acts. By December 14th, 2006, the external processor had elaborated a Report on the Assessment of the Strategic Document ROP, that was subsequently submitted to the Ministry of Environment of the SR (hereinafter “the MENV SR”). The Report was publicly discussed on January 15th, 2007. The professionally competent person appointed by the MENV SR elaborated an expert opinion on the Report by January 29th, 2007. Based on this opinion a Final Position on the ROP assessment was elaborated on February 14th, 2007, as a strategic document with the all-national incidence, comprising the recommendation for the approving authority, i.e., for the SR Government, to adopt the Regional Operational Programme.

The Report on the Strategic Document ROP assessment (hereinafter “the Report”) states in the individual Chapters the following:

- Basic data on the procurer, i.e., on the MCRD SR that is the Managing Authority for the ROP,
- Basic data on the ROP as the strategic document with the all-national incidence,
- Basic data on the current state of the environment on the concerned territory (i.e., Objective Convergence territory under the conditions existing in the SR),
- Basic data on the expected impacts on the environment, including effects on health of the population,
- Proposed measures for prevention, elimination, minimisation and as high as possible compensation of every significant negative effect of the proposed strategic document implementation on the environment and health of the population,
- Reasons for choice of the considered alternatives and description of that what the assessment was carried out, including difficulties in providing required information, e.g., technical shortcomings or uncertainties that occurred in compiling of required information,
- Proposal for environmental impacts monitoring, including impacts on health of the population,
- Likely significant cross-border environmental impacts, including effects on health of the population,
- Non-technical summary of the information provided.

Moreover the Report states, that in case of the ROP implementation there will not occur significant positive changes in the sphere of environment what are subject of increased attention, and where shows any need to improve the current state, repression of lagging behind the developed EU countries, or ensuring commitments and requirements fulfilment, and implementation of the measures arising from the EU regulations in the sphere of environment (i.e., in the area of environmental infrastructure and protection of biodiversity, nature and country). Improvement occurs in the quality of the population life through the regional infrastructure developing or completing, thus indirectly positive

affecting the overall health status of the population. Thus, improvement occurs in the quality of human resources, what contributes positively to the social pillar of the sustainable development. As far as the proposed priorities and aims of the supported activities, relationship of the ROP to especially significant fields in terms of the environment is indirect only; it may mostly and directly concerns to the highest extent the activities within tourism projects.

Report states further, that the ROP supports mainly the spheres falling under the competences of the regional and local self-governments. Considering the fact, that the supported type of activities, groups of eligible beneficiaries, and other relevant content specifications of the ROP were set out, based on the principle of partnership in cooperation with the representatives of regional and local structures (i.e., the self-governing regions and Slovakia Towns and Municipalities Associations (hereinafter "the STMA"), it is possible to state that the ROP follows fulfilment of the regional and local strategies defined in the strategic documents of self-governments.

Principles and criteria of sustainable development were employed to assess the ROP effects on the environment. With respect to the ROP character and its directions towards the measures for increasing the life conditions quality of the population, the system of measures for prevention, elimination, minimisation and compensation of impacts on the environment and health is directed to ensure optimisation of the individual activities implementation in relation to targets of sustainable development. The given Report recommended the following measures:

- 1) To ensure consistent realization of the assessment of impacts on the environment at the level of individual activities/projects in accordance with the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on the Environmental Impact Assessment and on the Modification and Amendment of Certain Acts.
- 2) Consistently watch the aspect of sustainability of any supported activity in decision making while selecting projects.
- 3) To follow balance of the local, regional and supra-regional effects of the projects in decision making while selecting projects, with the aim of preferring cumulative and synergic effects.
- 4) To support integration of financial resources at the horizontal and vertical levels (i.e., establishing public-private partnerships (hereinafter "PPP"), micro-regional associations, etc.) in decision making while selecting projects.
- 5) To ensure transparency.
- 6) To improve effectiveness, and to simplify administration of projects preparation and implementation from the view of availability and access to the information.

Particular proposed measures were assessed, and the processor of the ROP accepted them to the appropriate extent. In accordance with Article 9, paragraph 1, letter b) of the Directive No. 2001/42/EC, the considerations of environmental aspects were included into the subsequent issues for the ROP, what are in more details elaborated at the level of the ROP Programme Manual and internal procedure manuals of the involved entities, as follows:

- 1) The projects implemented within frame of ROP are assessed individually from the view of effects on the environment (e.g., minimally already at the level of building permit proceedings).
- 2) The strategy of selection of supported operations goes out from the concentration principle, which is applied in territorial and thematic level, but also in economic level, in the interest of support of the sustainable and perspective project plans.
- 3) Synergic effects in aiming of assistance through the ROP are ensured through representation of the social and economic partners (e.g., other managing authorities, territorial self-governments, etc.) in the preparation of calls, selection criteria defining (e.g., through membership in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP) and selection process of eligible operations.
- 4) Aiming of assistance through the ROP mainly in spheres of tourism and sustainable urban development integrates the financial resources territorially as well as thematic. Project plans of several entities, in particular of the municipalities, are implementing on the principle of one (1) beneficiary plus partners.
- 5) Transparency and information of the public about the implementation of the operational programme are a component part of the Communication Plan of the Managing Authority for the ROP. Based on the experience from the shortened programming period 2004-2006, the

Managing Authority for the ROP pertains: explicit criteria defining in advance for the territorial and thematic aiming of support, realization of a transparent selection process with participation of a broad spectrum of the socio-economic partners, and provision of ongoing topical information about the programme development, in particular by means of Internet.

- 6) Proposed mechanisms of assistance implementation through the ROP utilize in significant extent electronic communications with the applicant or with the beneficiary, reducing so time periods and administrative demands of implementation procedures. Those aspects CCA coordinates with efforts to simplify and increase effectiveness of the processes at the level of the all operational programmes.

In addition, the process of monitoring is an integral part of the ROP; the Monitoring Committee for the ROP will coordinate monitoring. The main role of the Monitoring Committee is to ensure supervision over the performance and implementation of the ROP and its regular monitoring, as from the view of economic effectiveness, as from the view of effects of the ROP implementation. In the monitoring process of effects on the environment, it is possible to use synergic effects with the process of the EU Funds monitoring at the level of individual projects, what are performed through the IT Monitoring System. Resources of data for the monitoring process are mainly information aggregated from the levels of projects up to the level of the operational programme. The annual reports approved by the Monitoring Committee for the ROP are accessible at the Internet page of the Managing Authority for the ROP. The Managing Authority for the ROP is obliged to monitor whether the all operations implemented within frame of the ROP fulfil the conditions in terms of relevant legislation. Through the participation of the MENV SR representatives the NGOs representatives in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP, this Managing Authority for the ROP establishes conditions for activity of the given entities in relation to the monitoring of potential environmental impacts of the ROP implementation and impacts on health of the population.

From assessment of the effects of ROP, neither positive, nor negative explicit environmental benefits did ensue after the entire implementation. Due to this reason, through implementation of the activities within the frame of ROP, one cannot expect occurring of impairments or improvements of the environment, either in the surrounding states, or in the neighbouring states.

The Report anticipates that implementation of the ROP will require capacities increasing at the level of management and implementation. The ROP imposes high demands on the qualification, organisational and managing capacities of human resources of the self-governments, as well as public administration of all hierarchal levels.

A public discussion aimed at the processed Report took place on January 15th, 2007. Contributions of participants from the public discussion aimed to the ROP implementation, while no comments or proposals rose towards the given Report as such.

The MENV SR, in terms of the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on the Environmental Impact Assessment and on the Modification and Amendment of Certain Acts, appointed a processor of opinion on the Report on the Assessment of ROP Strategic Document from a list of professionally qualified persons for assessment of environmental impacts.

Opinion for issuing of an attitude, pursuant to the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on the Environmental Impact Assessment and on the Modification and Amendment of Certain Acts, aimed to the process of environmental impacts assessment and to the Report on the Assessment of the ROP Strategic Document. The opinion was elaborated on January 29th, 2007, and it was forwarded to the processor of the final position (i.e., MENV SR). The opinion states in its conclusions that the Report on the Assessment of the ROP Strategic Document complies with the requirements set out in the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on the Environmental Impact Assessment and on the Modification and Amendment of Certain Acts. This Act establishes that implementation of the measures contained in the ROP document in case of observing the precautions for minimising negative consequences of the plan implementation is in accordance with the applicable standards and criteria of human-environmental carrying capacity and sustainable development. Negative effects can be minimised, or are eliminable, or compensable in terms of the proposed measures and conditions for their elimination or mitigation. Opinion recommends issuing a positive consideration of the assessing authority with determination of the conditions and measures for negative effects elimination or mitigation at implementation of the ROP. The results of the assessing process of impacts on the environment are included into the ROP in collaboration with the Environment Impact Assessment Department at the MENV SR.

MENV SR issued the Final Position on the process of assessment of impacts on the environment on February 14th, 2007. The given position comprises recommendations to approve the ROP as the strategic document with the all-national incidence.

The complete documentation to the process of assessing impacts on the environment is available at the Managing Authority for the ROP. The Final Position of the MENV SR on the process of assessment of impacts on the environment, in relation to the ROP as the strategic document with the all-national incidence, gives publicity at the Internet page of MCRD SR and at page www.enviroportal.sk.

2.3.1 Assessment of environmental impacts of the revised ROP programme in the middle of the programming period

In accordance with the Act. No. 24/2006 Coll., on assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment of certain acts, as amended by later regulations, a draft revision of ROP was submitted in the mid-term of the program period for assessment of environmental impacts on September 30th, 2010. In accordance with the procedural arrangements of that Act, Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development of SR as Managing Authority for the Regional Operational Programme, which functions are performed by the Programs of Regional Development Implementation Department, provided the development of a notification on the strategic document with a nationwide incidence "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 in the year 2010". Based on this notification, the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development (Department assessing strategic documents and proposed actions for environmental assessment) carried out screening under § 7 and in accordance with § 17 of the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment of certain acts as amended by later regulations (hereinafter referred to as the "Act").

The notification was elaborated under § 5 para. 5, and under Annex 2 of the Act, and it contained basic information about proposed change of the strategic document, stating the nature of the ROP revision, main objectives, content, material and time schedule for preparation and approval, relations to other strategic documents, and introduction of the authority competent to adopt that change in question, and type of approval document.

As the main reasons for revision of the ROP, the notification cited the utilization of the amount scheduled by the Slovak Government Resolution No. 546/2010 of August 13th, 2010, to provide funding to national priorities related with project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 (hereinafter referred to as "ECC") and an allocation increasing of the Priority Axis 4 and Priority Axis 5 of the ROP in relation to measures for the elimination of flood damage in the year 2010 under the resolution of Slovak Government No. 566/2010 of August 27th, 2010. As additional reasons have been given some formal modifications of identification data of the authorities involved into ROP implementation in relation with changes of the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organization of government activity and the central state administration, as amended by later regulations, creating conditions for implementation of the financial mechanism JESSICA within frame of ROP Priority Axis 4, and internal reallocation of funds within frame of ROP Priority Axes 2 and 4, and reallocation of funds between the ROP Priority Axes 1, 2 and ROP 3. In connection with the strengthening of ROP allocation for Priority Axis 4 and 5 with respect to the removal of flood consequences, the eligible activities and operations within these priority axes are not extended, no new priority topics are proposed and the eligibility of expenses for all ROP priority axes, including new fields of support, remains unchanged (i.e. without any changes as compared to the situation of September 24th, 2007). The notification was published under § 6 par. 1 of the Act on October 1st, 2010 on web pages www.enviroportal.sk and www.land.gov.sk and in the newspaper SME on October 8th, 2010.

During the screening there were no comments delivered to the strategic document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in 2010". Public community did not express specific opinions during the screening procedure to strategic document.

Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development of the SR within frame of screening procedure assessed notification on the strategic document with a nationwide incidence "Revision of

the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in the year 2010" and subject to change particularly in terms of its nature and scope, importance of expected impacts on the environment and health of population, taking into account criteria for screening according to Annex 3 of the Act and received opinions on the notification on the strategic document, and **on October 22nd, 2010 this Ministry decided that the document in question will not be further considered.** The decision was published on web page www.enviroportal.sk

Under the decision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR dated on October 22nd, 2010 on the screening process to the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in the year 2010," is reasonable to expect, that environmental impacts will not differ from those which have already been identified in the assessment process of the strategic document Regional Operational Programme - draft by the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment of certain acts, which took place in May 2006 - February 2007, within frame of the process of ROP developing.

In connection to additional amendments to the draft revision of the ROP with respect to the incorporation of comments of the European Union of February 2011, the Managing Authority for the ROP has procured, in line with Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment of certain acts as amended, a repeated assessment of impacts of the strategic document on the environment. The notification on the national-wide strategic document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in the Middle of the Programming Period - Additional Amendments with Respect to the Incorporation of Comments of the European Commission" was submitted to the Ministry of Environment of the SR on April 8th, 2011 and was subsequently published on web pages www.enviroportal.sk and www.land.gov.sk and on October 8th, 2010 in the newspaper SME.

The additional adjustments to the ROP draft revision primarily dealt with the transfer of funds from Priority Axis 3 (the area of cultural infrastructure) to Priority Axis 4 in order to enhance the allocation of funds to support housing infrastructure through JESSICA initiative. Also the strategy ROP for social infrastructure and tourism was modified and the principle of solving the over-contracted funds in Priority 1 was applied. At the same time indicators were added and specified and all information throughout the document was updated to the state of February 2011. Given the nature of the document and proposed changes the document was not prepared in multiple variations.

During the screening there were no comments delivered to the strategic document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in the Middle of the Programming Period - Additional Amendments with Respect to the Incorporation of Comments of the European Commission". Public community did not express specific opinions during the screening procedure to strategic document.

In the screening procedure the Ministry of Environment of SR assessed the notification of the strategic national-wide document and the change especially in terms of its nature and scope, the importance of expected impacts on the environment and human health, taking into account criteria for screening according to Annex. 3 of the Act, the criteria listed in Annex II Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and Council on the assessment of certain plans and programs on the environment and received comments.

Based on these facts, the Ministry of Environment SR in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR issued **on April 29th 2011 decision that the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme in the Middle of the Programming Period - Additional Amendments with Respect to the Incorporation of Comments of the European Commission" will not be further considered.** This decision was published on web page www.enviroportal.sk.

Pursuant to the decisions to the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme in the Middle of the Programming Period - Additional Amendments with Respect to the Incorporation of Comments of the European Commission" is reasonable to expect that the environmental impacts will not differ from those already identified in the assessment process the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in the 2010" and Regional Operational Programme - proposal by Act no. 24/2006 Coll z. about impacts on the environment and amending certain laws, which took place in May 2006 - February 2007 in the process of developing ROP.

2.3.2 Assessment of environmental impacts of the revised ROP at the beginning of 2012

In accordance with the Act. No. 24/2006 Coll. on assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment of certain acts, as amended by later regulations, a draft of second revision of ROP was submitted for assessment of environmental impacts on 27 January 2012. In accordance with the procedural arrangements of that Act, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of SR as the Managing Authority for the Regional Operational Programme provided the development of a notification on the strategic document with a nationwide incidence "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 from the beginning of year 2012". Based on this notification, the Ministry of Environment of the SR (Department of assessment of strategic documents and proposed actions for environmental assessment) carried out screening under § 7 and in accordance with § 17 of the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment of certain acts as amended by later regulations (hereinafter referred to as the "Act").

The notification was elaborated under § 5 clause 5, and under Annex 2 of the Act, and it contained basic information about proposed change of the strategic document, stating the nature of the ROP revision, main objectives, content, material and time schedule for preparation and approval, relations to other strategic documents, and introduction of the authority competent to adopt that change in question, and type of approval document.

The notification indicated as main grounds for ROP revision solving of a serious problematic situation that has arisen in connection with the deficit of financial resources necessary for covering current debts declared in requests for payment within the ROP Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of education.

The first revision of ROP presupposed carrying out of the next revision. The first revision of ROP approved the principle of transfer of savings in projects carried out in ROP into the Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education with the aim to solve the 'above-quota approval' of financial resources as a result of significant change of socio-economic environment and related changes in priorities at national, regional and local level. The ROP Priority Axis 1 is the key field of support in the programming period 2007-2013 and significantly participates in achieving of ROP strategy and global goal, incl. contribution to the goals of the Strategy Europe 2020 and the National Reform Program of the SR. Unlike the first revision, the second revision of ROP could be considered as relatively simple, because this revision does not modify the analysis and strategy of ROP, indicators and management and control systems of ROP.

The notification was published under § 17 par. 3 of the Act on January 27th, 2012 on the website www.mpsr.sk and www.enviroportal.sk on January 31th and in the Slovak newspaper SME on February 17th, 2012.

During the screening there were no comments delivered to the strategic document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 from the beginning of year 2012". Public community did not express specific opinions during the screening procedure to strategic document.

In the screening procedure the Ministry of Environment of SR in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR assessed the notification of the strategic national-wide document and the change especially in terms of its nature and scope, the importance of expected impacts on the environment and human health, taking into account criteria for screening according to Annex. 3 of the Act, the criteria listed in Annex II Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and Council on the assessment of certain plans and programs on the environment and received comments.

Based on these facts, the Ministry of Environment SR in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR issued **on March 5th 2012 decision that the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 from the beginning of year 2012" will not be further evaluated.** This decision was published on the website www.enviroportal.sk.

Pursuant to the decisions to the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 from the beginning of year 2012" is reasonable to expect that the environmental impacts will not differ from those already identified in the assessment process the document "Revision of the Regional

Operational Programme 2007-2013 in the 2010" and Regional Operational Programme - proposal by Act no. 24/2006 Coll. z. on impacts on the environment and amending certain laws, which took place in May 2006 - February 2007 in the process of developing ROP.

2.3.3 Assessment of environmental impacts of the revised ROP in the middle of the year 2012

In accordance with the Act. No 24/2006 Coll. on assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment of certain acts, as amended by later regulations (hereinafter referred to as the "Act"), a draft of third revision of ROP was submitted for assessment of environmental impacts on June 12th 2012.

In accordance with the procedural arrangements of that Act, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of SR as the Managing Authority for the Regional Operational Programme provided the development of a notification on the strategic document with a nationwide incidence "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 – 2013 in the middle of the year 2012". Based on this notification, the Ministry of Environment of the SR (Department of assessment of strategic documents and proposed actions for environmental assessment) carried out screening under § 7 and in accordance with § 17 of the Act.

The notification was elaborated under § 5 clause 5, and under Annex 2 of the Act, and it contained basic information about proposed change of the strategic document, stating the nature of the ROP revision, main objectives, content, material and time schedule for preparation and approval, relations to other strategic documents, and introduction of the authority competent to adopt that change in question, and type of approval document.

The notification indicated as main grounds for ROP revision solving of a serious problematic situation that has arisen in connection with the deficit of financial resources necessary for covering current debts declared in requests for payment within the ROP Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of education. The third revision is based on application of the principle of transfer of savings in projects carried out in ROP into the Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education, which was approved by the first revision of ROP. The ROP Priority Axis 1 is the key field of support in the programming period 2007-2013 and significantly participates in achieving of ROP strategy and global goal, incl. contribution to the goals of the Strategy Europe 2020 and the National Reform Program of the SR. Unlike the first revision, the second revision of ROP could be considered as relatively simple, because this revision does not modify the analysis and strategy of ROP and management and control systems of ROP.

The notification was published under § 17 par. 3 of the Act on June 12th, 2012 on the website www.mpsr.sk, www.enviroportal.sk and in the Slovak newspaper.

During the screening there were no comments delivered to the strategic document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 – 2013 in the middle of the year 2012". Public community did not express specific opinions during the screening procedure to strategic document.

In the screening procedure the Ministry of Environment of SR in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR assessed the notification of the strategic national-wide document and the change especially in terms of its nature and scope, the importance of expected impacts on the environment and human health, taking into account criteria for screening according to Annex. 3 of the Act, the criteria listed in Annex II Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and Council on the assessment of certain plans and programs on the environment and received comments.

Based on these facts, the Ministry of Environment SR in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR issued **on June 29th 2012 decision that the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 in the middle of the year 2012" will not be further evaluated.** This decision was published on the website www.enviroportal.sk.

Pursuant to the decisions to the document "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 in the middle of the year 2012" is reasonable to expect that the environmental impacts will not differ from those already identified in the assessment process the document Regional Operational

Programme - proposal by Act no. 24/2006 Coll. z. on impacts on the environment and amending certain laws, which took place in May 2006 - February 2007 in the process of developing ROP and in the assessment process of the revisions of ROP („Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 in the year 2010, “Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in the Middle of the Programming Period - Additional Amendments with Respect to the Incorporation of Comments of the European Commission”, “Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 from the beginning of year 2012”).

2.3.4 Assessment of environmental impacts of the revised ROP in the end of the year 2013

Managing Authority for ROP ensured Consideration of the 4th revision of ROP in terms of environmental impact in accordance with the Act 24/2006 coll. Slovak legislation on the assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendments to certain laws as amended laws (further the "Act").

Under the established procedures Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR as the Managing Authority for Regional Operational Programme ensured a statement preparation of the strategy document with nationwide scope "Revision of the Regional Operational Programme of 2007-2013 in mid-2013". Based on the this, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment SR (Department of Environmental Assessments) conducted an inquiry proceedings under § 7 in accordance with § 17 of the Act.

The statement was drawn under § 5 section 5 and Annex no. 2 of the Act and contained basic information about the proposed modification of the strategic document stating the nature of the revision of the ROP, the main objectives, content, material and time schedule for the preparation and adoption, relation to other strategic documents, stating the authority competent to adopt this change and the type of approval document.

Notice stated as the main reasons for the revision of the ROP mentioned in chapter 1.4 and it needs to solve the identified failure to meet the targets under the Priority Axis 1 in the terms of Local strategies for a comprehensive approach (LSCA) where, due to deficiency of funds under the Priority Axis 1 was necessary to raise additional allocation by the amount of 39 808 000 EUR (ERDF resources), solely for the implementation of new projects under the LSCA. Furthermore it was identified insufficient contribution of projects of all relevant priority axes (except Priority Axis 1) to the energy savings within the Strategy Europe 2020. It was identified that this commitment of ROP can be maximized by a transfer of unused and saved funds from the priority axes, where the objectives in other areas have been fulfilled into the operations, where the contribution of projects to energy savings is at a substantially higher level. This requirement meet only projects under the Priority Axis 1. Update of Internal analysis for proposal of 4th revision of the Regional operational program with refinancing of already contracted projects under the Priority axis 1 in the form of a reallocation of funds is excluded.

Notice on the strategy document was under § 17 section 3 of the Act published on 9th July 2013 on the websites www.mpsr.sk, www.enviroportal.sk and in the mass media.

Ministry of Environment of the Slovak republic in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak republic within the investigation procedure assessed a notice on the strategy document with a nationwide scope especially in terms of its nature, the importance of expected impacts on the environment and human health, taking into account the procedures under the Annex 3 of the Act, the criteria set out in Annex II. Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programs on the environment.

During the investigation procedure were not submitted any comments. Public did not comment submitted strategic documents.

Based on the above, the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak republic in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development issued a decision [whereby](#) the document " Revision of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 in mid-2013 " will not be further considered. This decision was published on the website www.enviroportal.sk.

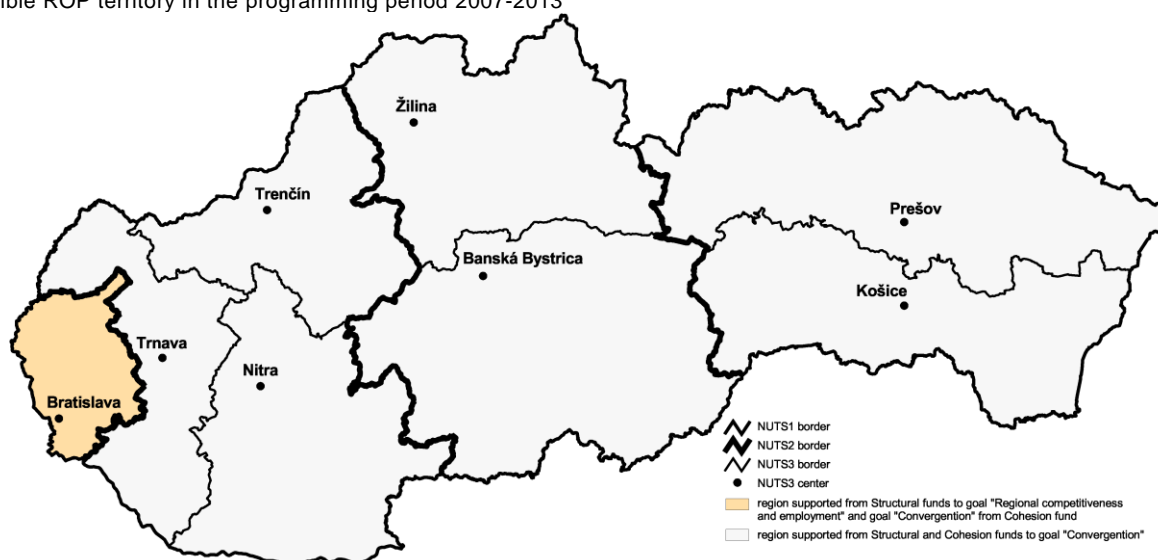
3. GENERAL CHARACTERISTIC OF SITUATION

The analysis of background at the time of the Regional Operational Programme preparation was based on data available in 2005-2007.

3.1 CHARACTERISTIC OF THE ELIGIBLE TERRITORY

The eligible territory for Objective Convergence is the territory of the NUTS 2 level regions, whose gross domestic product per capita, measured in purchasing power parity and calculated based on Community figures for the period 2000-2002 is less than 75 % of the EU-25 average gross domestic product for the same reference period. That is based on the Article 3, paragraph 2, and Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, laying down general provisions on the ERDF, ESF and CF, and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999. Under the conditions existing in Slovakia, the areas of the three NUTS 2 level regions are concerned (i.e., Western Slovakia, Central Slovakia and Eastern Slovakia).

Eligible ROP territory in the programming period 2007-2013



Source: Aurex, 2007

The preceding figure depicts graphically that division of the SR territory into the NUTS 3 level regions is identical within Slovakia with the territorial-administration division of the SR into the eight self-governing regions.

The territory of Bratislava self-governing region is eligible territory for the Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment, based on the used Community methodology, and thus it is not eligible territory for the ROP.

Table in the subsequent page gives information on the basic macro-economic, settlement and territorial characteristics of the SR and its individual regions. The table concurrently provides a comparison of economic power of the SR regions, based on comparisons of figures on gross domestic product per capita, measured in purchasing power parity with the EU-15 average. In case of the ROP, the value of GDP per capita measured in purchasing power parity can be consider as the sourcing context indicator from the view of the socio-economic situation of the supported territory.

Table 1: Characteristics of the SR territory - basic macro-economic, settlement and territorial indicators

Region	Area in km ²	Number of inhabitants as of 31 Dec 2004	Density of inhabitants per km ²	Regional town	Number of districts	No of municipalities (of them towns)	GDP per capita in SKK	Index region/ SR average	GDP per capita in EUR in 2003	
							In fixed prices of 2004		EU-15 = 100	EU-25 = 100
NUTS 2 level Bratislava	2 052	601 132	293	Bratislava	8	73 /7	573 976	228	109,4	119,7
Bratislava Region	2 052	601 132	293	Bratislava	8	73 /7	573 976	228	109,4	119,7
NUTS 2 level West	12 993	1 863 940	126,3	-	23	881 /49	235650	93,8	44,6	48,8
Nitra Region	4 344	709 350	112	Nitra	7	354 /15	218 232	86,7	41,2	45,0
Trnava Region	4 147	553 198	133	Trnava	7	251 /16	258 387	102,6	49,6	54,2
Trenčín Region	4 502	601 392	134	Trenčín	9	276 /18	230 330	91,5	43,1	47,2
NUTS 2 level Centre	16 256	1 352 497	86	-	24	831 /42	207239	82,5	39,3	43,1
Banská Bystrica Region	9 455	658 368	70	B. Bystrica	13	516 / 24	209 525	83,2	40,7	44,5
Žilina Region	6 801	694 129	102	Žilina	11	315 /18	204 952	81,4	38	41,6
NUTS 2 level East	15 733	1 567 253	101,5	-	24	1106/40	188526	75,1	35,5	38,8
Prešov Region	8 981	796 745	89	Prešov	13	666 /23	152 786	60,7	28,8	31,5
Košice Region	6 752	770 508	114	Košice	11	440 /17	224 265	89,1	42,2	46,2
Objective Convergence	44 982	4 783 690	107,7	-	71	2818/131	214 068	85,03	40,5	43,5
SR in total	49 034	5 384 822	110	Bratislava	79	2891/138	251 184	100	47,7	52,2

Source: SR Statistical Yearbook 2005

The values of basic macroeconomic indicators highlights the fact, that the individual regions of the SR, except the Bratislava Region, lags significantly behind the EU average. The values of indicators concurrently highlights the existing regional disparities within frame of the SR, namely between the more developed West and the less developed East of Slovakia.

3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SETTLEMENT OF THE ELIGIBLE TERRITORY

Settlement of the SR, as relatively stable territorial system, is marked by the historic evolution of society and especially by the evolution of its economic foundation and social relations. The current state of settlement of the SR is outcome of continual society evolution in the course of several centuries. At the Population and Housing Census (hereinafter "PHC") performed in the SR in the year 2001 there were identified 2,883 individual municipalities. In late year 2004, it registered 2,891 separate municipalities. Of the total number of municipalities, only 138 municipalities have the town statute.

Predominantly the period of last 50 years of the 20th century was characterised with the radical development of urbanisation as the consequences of spatial interrelations of industrialisation development. The urbanisation process was managed in accordance with principles of the centre-focused system of settlements. Based on this, medium-sized towns (i.e., with 20 to 50 thousand inhabitants) were systematically formed, what were homogenously spread throughout whole territory of Slovakia. Development of larger towns (with numbers of inhabitants exceeding 50 thousand) was supported, what in principle developed into the tertiary centres with supra-regional significance of services. Of it, four towns developed into the towns with almost one hundred thousand inhabitants (i.e., Prešov, Nitra, Žilina and Banská Bystrica). Only two towns grew up so to exceeding over 100 thousand inhabitants, i.e., Bratislava as the capital city of the SR, and Košice.

Evolution of society during the last decade of the 20th century and its dramatic changes in economic, political and social life reflects also the development of the Slovakia's settlement.

These changes manifest themselves as in the development and construction of individual municipalities, as well as in development of the mutual relationships between individual municipalities. Natural migration of the population underwent dramatic changes. Migration of the population towards towns has almost stopped due to various reasons. Previous clear tendencies of distinct concentration of population into selected centres decreased dramatically. Development of urbanisation manifests itself more in form of the "concentrated de-concentration" and one can speak of certain suburbanisation tendencies, as well. This resulted into an absolute decrease in number of inhabitants in many towns in the course of the last 15 years.

Settlement of the SR is characterised in the significant manner by the structure of size groups of municipalities.

In the preceding period (i.e., in the second half of the 20th century, up to year 1990) the highest growth was observed in towns with over 50 thousand inhabitants. There are together 11 such towns in Slovakia, and almost 25% of the total population of the SR lives in them. There are together 72 municipalities in the SR with population over 10 thousand, and about 50% of the total population of the SR lives in them. In the SR 52 municipalities have population from 5 to 10 thousand, and in these municipalities lives about 7% of the total population. **Thus, 56% of all the people in the SR lives in 124 municipalities, out of the total number of municipalities amounting to 2 891.**

All regions have the common feature, that in each of them there are medium-sized towns uniformly distributed throughout their territories. These towns possess relatively well-established infrastructure that is a good starting basis for their further improvement. They can thus develop as the principal centres of development with regional significance, and they can act within the respective regions as the centres offering all the higher social and servicing functions, not only for their own inhabitants, but also for the people of the surrounding area. **These centres are accepted in context of the NSRF as innovative growth poles.** The centres together with their nearby municipalities, with which they interact intensively, form the core settlement centres in terms of the Slovakia Spatial Development Perspective 2001 (hereinafter "the SSDP 2001"). The most significant of them are considered as background of the innovative growth poles within the framework of NSRF, and the main role thereof is to equalize the interregional disparities. In principle, the regional and district centres and their urbanised neighbouring areas are concerned. Except these innovative growth poles, there exists also a system of smaller towns and larger municipalities that as the centres of local importance intermediate access to the infrastructure of local importance for their closest neighbourhood. **These centres are accepted in context of the NSRF as cohesion growth poles,** the main role thereof is to equalize intraregional disparities and evenly ensure availability of the basic civil infrastructure for all citizens in the area.

The basic difference in character of settlement among individual regions is number and average size of municipalities in the region. The regions on the west of the SR (i.e., the regions Trnava, Nitra, Trenčín) have lower number of municipalities, but their average size is larger than in the regions in the east (i.e., the regions Prešov, Košice and Banská Bystrica), that have large number of municipalities with a small average size. Character of settlement among the regions on the western and eastern territory of the SR is a consequence of historic evolution issuing as from morphological determinates, as well as from the historic development of economic activities in the individual regions.

Slovak Republic is characterised by a high rate of the settlement structure fragmentation. An issue for the strategic part is the cognition, that in directing of limited and additional financial resources from the EU Structural Funds it is needed to define not only topic-focused, but also territorial priorities. The municipalities identified as the innovative and cohesion growth poles have the highest assumptions to ensure utilisation of interventions for the widest range of users, ensuring their permanent sustainability, and achieve synergic effects with interventions implemented within the frame of ROP, or from other operational programmes.

3.3 REGIONAL ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY

In recent decades placement of the civil infrastructure facilities followed the principle of so-called centre-oriented system of settlement. This principle created a system of centres distributed relative evenly throughout the entire territory of the SR, whose positional efficiency can satisfy and saturate

population's needs on the present too. Based on the assessment of individual groups of the civil infrastructure facilities, some groups of towns and villages were created, what provide service for the population of municipality itself, but also for the population of its whole hinterland. From the point of view of individual centres serviceability, it is important to monitor their accessibility. Centres accessibility from the individual adjacent settlements is measured in units of distance or time. From the point of view of the population movement to and from work, education or for social services, etc., in particular time accessibility is important.

Time accessibility is monitored according to various modes of transport - in the Slovakia conditions it means transportation on roads and railroads. Optimal time accessibility of the centre depends on the type of facility whose services should be available to every inhabitant.

Standard facilities of the higher civil amenities (e.g., secondary schools, social service facilities for socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, healthcare centres, polyclinics, theatres, services centres, etc.) should be accessible to the inhabitants within 30 to 45 minutes according to generally accepted criteria.

Specific facilities of the civil amenities are in principle situated according requirements related to surrounding or background of individual specific types of facilities.

In terms of the rules and principles of the land-use planning and town zoning, facilities of the basic civil amenities (i.e., kindergartens, elementary schools) are located near the places of residence. In cases of very small settlements, where operation of some facilities of the basic civil infrastructure would be non-efficient, it is recommended to concentrate these facilities into such municipality, which in terms of its accessibility will provide services not only of its own inhabitants, but also for inhabitants of the municipalities in its hinterland.

As for the requirement to ensure accessibility of standard facilities of the civil amenities may be recommend to concentrate such facilities mainly into the tertiary centres of settlements, specified in the SSDP 2001. The scope, number and location of individual facilities into the centres are needed to calibrate (size-design) with respect to the number of people, which should receive services from the given facilities. The criterion of the centre accessibility within 30 minutes preserve for practically all the centres specified in SSDP 2001 throughout the entire SR territory. Generally can be state that the 30-minute accessibility isochrones of these centres cover in practice the entire territory of the SR, overlapping each other to the large extent. There exist several border areas where it is not possible to fulfil this accessibility requirement through the existing road connections. These are certain municipalities lying along the borders in face of selected centres (e.g. in the districts Kežmarok and Humenné) and some municipalities lying inside the districts' territory due to morphological circumstances (e.g. the eastern corner of the Brezno district, the northern corner of the Rožňava district and Spišská Nová Ves). In such cases, it is necessary to solve individually development and placing of the standard facilities for higher civil and servicing infrastructure on a case-by-case basis, depending on the urgency and efficiency of the utilisation of the given facility.

According to analyses carried out it may be conclude, that the time accessibility of the individual settlement centres will be further reduced with building up and improving of the road and railroad networks quality, whereby will improve also accessibility of the social and service infrastructure facilities.

Another important criterion in addition to the time accessibility becomes a question of the frequency of mass transport connections from the individual municipalities adjacent to the appurtenant centre of settlement, or existence of an appropriate quality transport network, meeting the requirements of the people reliant on the individual transport. This criterion has, in particular, an organisational character and is an outcome of abilities of the regional and municipal management.

The basic types of civil infrastructure are localised evenly through the entire SR territory thanks to the system of settlement centralisation applied over the previous decades, with some exceptions in the territory of the Prešov, Košice, eventually also Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Regions. Accessibility and availability of the centres is the basic assumption for development of the polycentric system of settlement, enabling to apply more comprehensively the principles of sustainable development in the area.

3.4 DEMOGRAPHIC EVOLUTION

Demographic structure of the Slovak population over the recent decades reported significant changes. Deterioration of the population situation in SR is associated with significant change in the demographic behaviour of the Slovak population in the nineties of the 20th century. In essence, the process is identical to the situation in developed countries. However, on the other hand, this state relates partially also with the changes in the internal circumstances of the Slovak society (i.e., increased living costs, significant level of unemployment, very low financial availability of housing, etc.), which have impacts primarily on young families and young people.

For the indicator of trends in population number with the best explanatory/predicative ability might consider data obtained from population census. Comparison of data on population from census in the years 1991 and 2001 shows, that the growth index for the monitored period achieved 101.99 for the SR, that means an increase in population of 105.1 thousand persons. The highest population growth recorded the Prešov, Žilina and Košice regions, and decline occurred in the Bratislava and Nitra regions.

In the year 2003 a natural decline in the population was reported for the first time since the year 2001, when the number of the deceased exceeded the number of the newborns. In 2004, however, the natural growth became again positive. The natural decreases of the population are primarily result of the dramatic drop of birth rate that relates to the overall changes in the life conditions, but especially to the change in the model of demographic behaviour of the population, and significant enforcement of the second demographic revolution. After many years of the number of live newborn infants decrease (since 1979), this tendency stopped in the year 2003. However, there exist also large regional differences, both between the town and the country, as well as among the regions - especially among the western Slovakia and the north and eastern parts of Slovakia. During the monitored period over years 1999-2004, the population of the Bratislava, Trenčín, Nitra and Banská Bystrica Regions decreased. There was a slight increase of the population in the Trnava, Žilina, Košice and Prešov Regions.

Natural increase in the towns has positive values at present, while the given indicator is negative in the rural areas. This depends significantly upon the age structure of the population, where in the towns there are relatively younger inhabitants with relatively strong represented productive component and little numerous post-productive components. Opposite situation is in migration of the population, where we see over the recent years **moving of the population from the towns into the surrounding municipalities, due to that through migration increases the numbers of inhabitants in the surrounding rural areas, while the numbers of people in the towns alone declines (i.e., concentrated de-concentration).**

Moreover, the average age has been increasing, resulting into the overall deterioration of the population age structure (the aging index⁴ was 111.24% in the year 2004). The age structure of Slovak population we can characterize as uneven and aging. Along the relatively stable level of death rate and insignificant cross-border migration, the evolution of birth rate influences the age structure.⁵ The state of the population is characterised also by the low average lifespan and its slow growth that is especially obvious in comparison with the developed countries. In addition, the substantial differences between the average lifespan of the male and female population are deepening, as women achieve higher age.

The state revealed in the year 2004 demonstrates further deterioration of the demographic situation in Slovakia. There regions with favourable and less favourable situation are distinctively circumscribed. The situation is unflattering in Western Slovakia and in the south of Central Slovakia, where the share of the post-productive segment of the population is higher than that of the pre-productive population segment. The most complicated situation is in the Bratislava, Nitra, Trenčín, Trnava and Banská Bystrica Regions, what significantly exceed average aging index of Slovakia. Distinctively the best situation is in the Prešov and Košice Regions. By the age groups of population, we can see significant difference in the share of pre-productive and productive segments as identified during the censuses in years 1991 and 2001, where their percentage shares became equal, reaching the level of 18%. The number of pre-productive persons decreased significantly by 298 thousand, while the number of

⁴ Index of aging – it means the number of persons in post-productive age per 100 persons in age from 0 up to 14 years.

⁵ Source: Population Development in the Slovak Republic in 2002, Infostat, Research Demographic Centre

productive persons increased by 303 thousand and the number of post-productive persons increased by 53 thousand persons.

Influenced by a drop in the children's share and by increasing of the number of post-productive age persons, the average age of the population as well as aging index is further increasing. According to this indicator, in Slovakia there are 68.12 persons aged 65 years and more per 100 persons of pre-productive age (in the year 2004), dangerously approaching to the European average, which is around 73.⁶

Changes in the age structure of the population reflect also in the increasing economic burden on the productive segment of the population. The decline of the economic burden index has been slowing down, approaching to a point of its standstill up to its growth.

Adverse demographic development reported the western Slovakia and the south of central Slovakia, where the share of post-productive component of the population is already higher than pre-productive population component. Moreover, changes in the age composition of the population reflects on the needs and demands for diverse types of facilities of civil amenities, as for example, educational facilities, social service facilities, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, facilities performing activities in the sphere of culture and others.

3.5 PROGNOSIS OF THE NUMBER OF POPULATION DEVELOPMENT UNTIL 2025

In the year 2002, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, in collaboration with the Demographic Research Centre of INFOSTAT, developed forecasts of the population development in the Slovak Republic for the period up to 2025.

The new forecasts of the SR population development are processed in three variants, using three different scenarios (i.e., low, medium, high) of the expected development of reproduction indicators and migration. Through combining parameters of separate processes (i.e., fertility, mortality and migration), three alternative projections of anticipated development of the population were obtained.

The most probable medium alternative assumes that the population of Slovakia will be approximately 5.2 million in the year 2025. In comparison with the present situation, the number of population will be lower by 180 thousand persons. Significant divergence assumes in the proportion of the productive population segment to the non-productive one. **According to the projection, the share of children between 0 to 14 years of age will decline in the year 2005 from the present level of 18% to 12%. The rate of persons older than 65 years will increase from the current 16% to 18%.** The average age of birth-giving women will shift from the present 26.5 years to 28.5 years of age.

In the near term, no significant changes are expected in the number of the population in SR and this is valid for the majority of districts. The entire prognosticated period can be characterised from the view of population increases or decreases in principle as stagnation. Increases of the population will decline towards the end of the prognosticated period, or increase will change into declines. The process of the population decline will reach gradually all the regions and large majority of districts, it will accelerate, culminating only far behind the horizon of this prognosis, i.e. after the year 2025.

Because of the different demographic behaviour of the Roma population, the Demographic Research Centre has worked out a Prognosis of Roma Population in Slovakia until the year 2025, what anticipates increase of the Roma minority population from the current circa 380 thousand to 520 thousand persons. The share of Roma people of the SR population should increase from the current 7.2% to 9.6% in the year 2025 in event of fulfilling the given Prognosis. With respect to the higher concentration of Roma people in the Prešov and Košice Regions, this growth will become evident in the total increase of the population in the mentioned regions.

The share of older people will increase and the share of children will decrease of the overall number of population pursuant to the expected demographic development of the SR until the year 2025. Concurrently, an increase of the Roma population share is expecting, primarily in Eastern Slovakia.

⁷ Source: SR Health Yearbook 2002, Institute of Health Information and Statistics

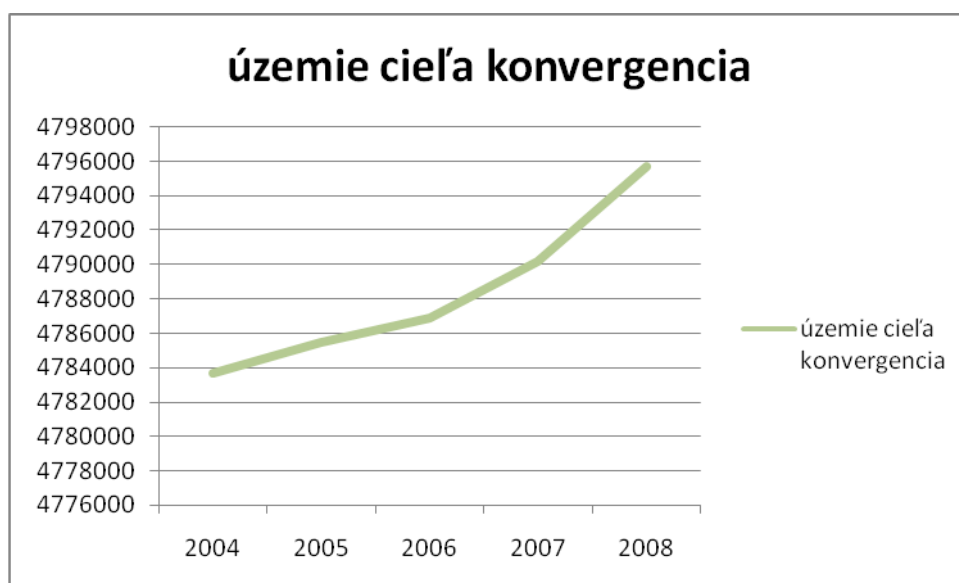
3.6 CHANGES OF BACKGROUND SITUATION IDENTIFIED IN THE 2010 PRELIMINARY ROP EVALUATION

After years of long-term decline of born alive children (since the year 1979), the decline stopped in the year 2003, and since year 2004 has recorded natural increase of population. Henceforward there are major differences in term of regions, as well as among towns and countryside.

In the period 1999-2004, which formed the basis for determining the ROP strategy, population of Bratislava, Trenčín, Nitra and Banská Bystrica Regions decreased. Population slightly increased in Trnava, Žilina, Košice and Prešov Regions.

During the period 2004-2008 population growth was recorded in Bratislava, Trnava, Žilina, Košice and Prešov Regions. A slight decrease recorded in Trenčín, Nitra and Banská Bystrica Regions.

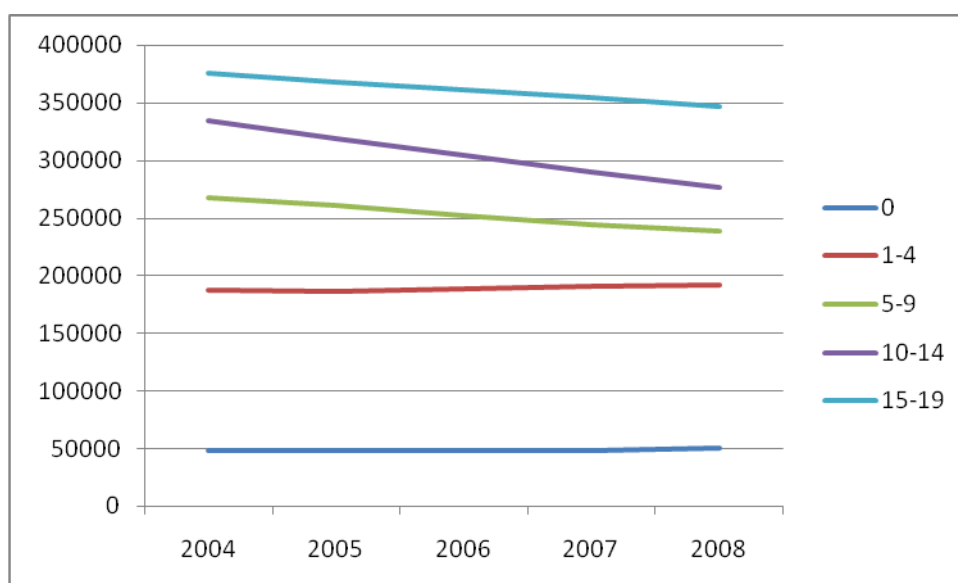
Chart No. 1/2011: Development in the number of population in the area of the Objective Convergence



Source: Statistical Office of the SR, 2009

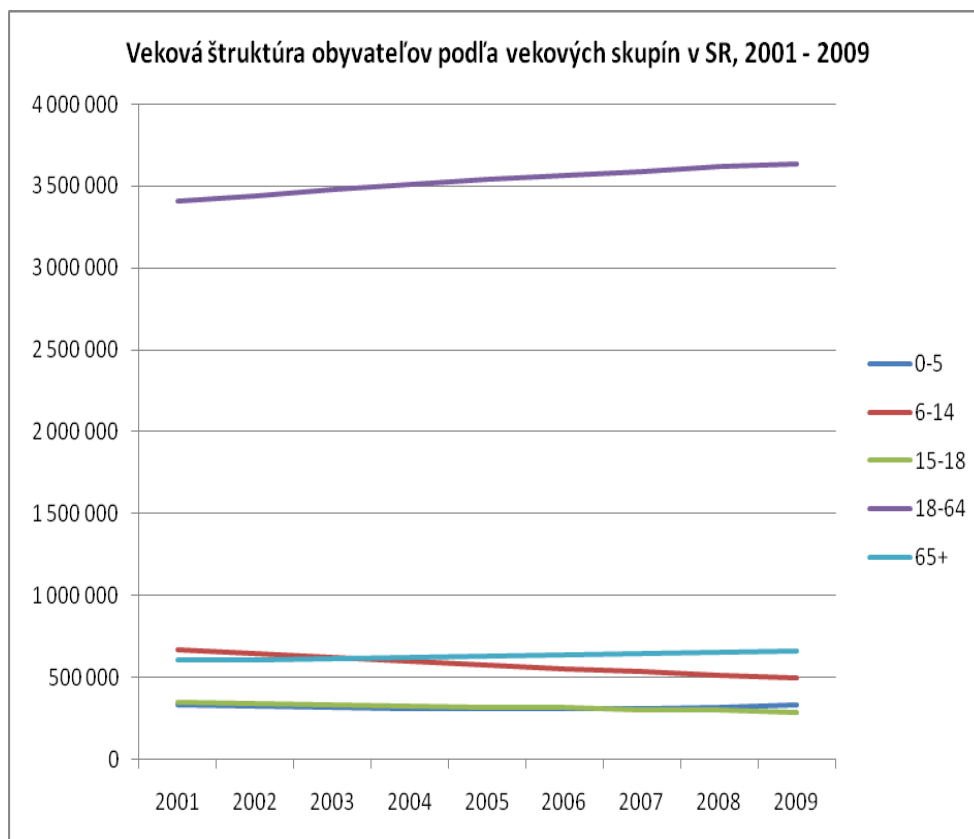
During the period 2004-2008 were recorded the largest increases in the group of persons aged over 60 years and in the age group of 0-4 years old persons.

Chart No. 2/2011: Development in number of population by the age groups



Source: Statistical Office of the SR, 2009

Age structure of population by the age groups in SR, 2001 - 2009



Source: Statistical Office of the SR, 2009

Population of Slovakia grows older in the long-term, indeed, but at a slower rate than expected. In determining the projections of the population number in Slovakia it is necessary to take into account also social and economic environment. From 2002 to 2008 SR recorded in average the largest increase in GDP, employment, gross wages, and other pro-family-oriented social incentives. Improved was the accessibility and affordability of housing, what also creates preconditions for establishment of new families. ROP strategy ranks among medium term development strategies with a time horizon of 7-15 years; for that reason it will be important to continue monitoring of development in number of population until the end of the programming period 2007-2013.

The highest recorded increase since year 2004 recorded the age group of 0-4 year old people, what is a target group for the ROP Priority Axis 1. The initial strategy of ROP determination started from a decreasing trend of natural population growth, which was however stopped, and since the year 2004 it came into increasing character. Importance of Priority Axis 1 of the ROP in this context is growing, because primary school attendance is obligatory in SR. Population trends will be necessary reflected in the territorial concentration of the Priority Axis 1 strategy of ROP, and intensifying routing of assistance particularly in areas with higher birth rates.

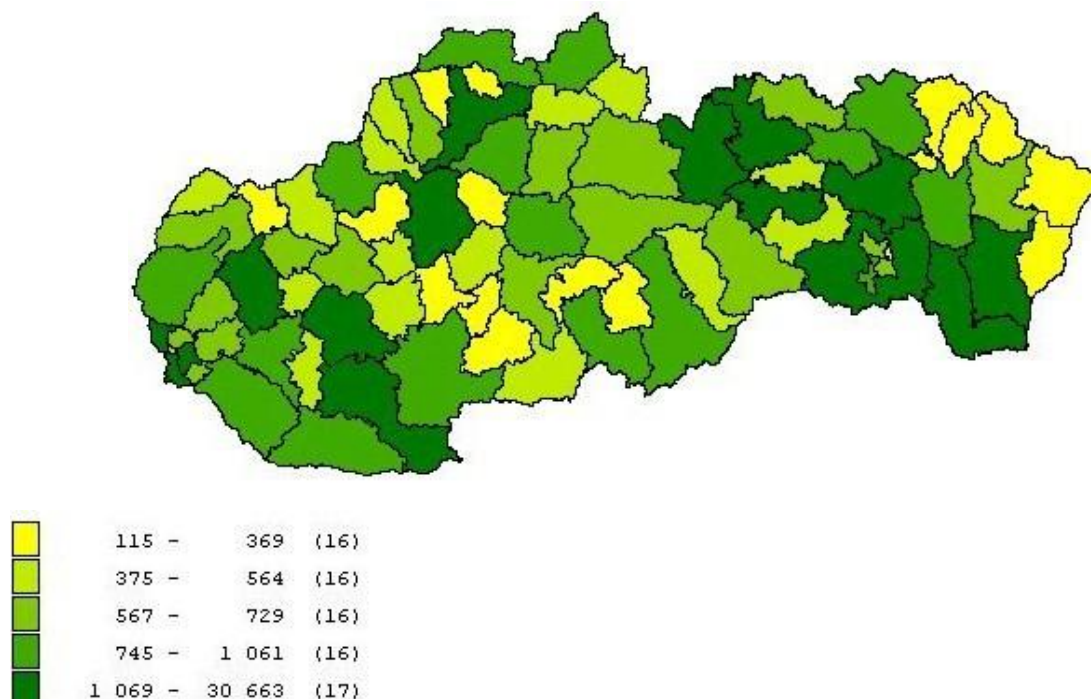
In the context of strong population grow it was possible to observe in the period 2006 to 2009 a full-area increase of the number of children in the age group 0-4 years. It is assumed, that natural increase will persists at least 5 till 10 years, when there will come into being a period of lower birth rates again. These projections confirms also data of the Institute of Education Information and Prognosis of early 2010 year, that for the school year 2010/2011 indicate an overall increase in the number of pupils enrolled into first grade of elementary schools, at which the largest increase is recorded in Prešov, Košice and Žilina Regions.

Year 2010 characterizes demographic expansion, which may cause in future shortage of places in primary schools, especially in their lower grades. This fact is also influenced by the adoption of the Act No. 245/2008 Coll., on education and training (thereinafter "Education Act"), and amendment of

certain Acts, as amended by later regulations (hereinafter also "Education Act"), what sets limits on the number of children in classrooms. In the lower grades may be in average 23 children in one classroom. Number of children is set with emphasis on quality of education.

Following introduced facts may be state that within the next 10 years Slovakia will be lack of school facilities adequate to required standards. In that context is important expansion of schools and school facilities expansion, without their number increasing.

Map No. 1/2011: Number of born alive in SR



Source: Statistical Office of the SR, 2009

Another strongly growing age group of population is the group of people from 55 to 59 years, as well as the age group of people over 60 years. Cyclical waves in demographic trends can be observed especially in population of the group 55-59 years, which has the highest representation, and these years are so-called "Baby boomers".

In connection with elongation of retirement age, this group of people is still economically active and it is assumed, that it is not reliant on the social services providing to resolve any adverse social situation because of retirement age completing. Delayed retirement age, stressful working environment, poor food consuming habits and deteriorating health state of population indicates, that there will be mainly demand for providing social services for seniors.

In terms of current legislative regulations and European trends, in the social field it is concerned particularly services provided to certain time of day, respectively different type of support services. In this regard a positive change is presented by legislative change, by which were introduced some new supporting services, as well as other services provided to persons who have reached pensionable age. It is assumed that elderly persons who need not intensive, respectively day-long care will live in their households, respectively in households with their near relatives, and they will utilize available services on a daily basis. Based on these assumptions, on current legislation in Slovakia, as well as basis of qualitative indicators of social services providing for persons who have reached retirement age, should be preferred institutions with capacity up to 40 places. Increasingly assumed is utilization of day stationary centers. In successive steps should be modified existing facilities and constructed new facilities with less capacity and a wider range of provided services, what increases costingness of the economic operation of these institutions. Compared with baseline circumstances of ROP development on basis of data for the year 2004 it is concerned a change that can adversely manifest

itself during implementation of this sphere of ROP assistance (implementation difficulties, lower interest of applicants).

3.7 ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE SUPPORTED AREA

Within the scope of the ROP, the analytical preparation focused on the sphere of so-called regional infrastructure. On behalf of increasing quality and availability of services provided by different types of the civil infrastructure facilities and in the interest of current the quantitative and qualitative requirements fulfilment for the territory facilities with components of settlement and transportation infrastructure. That comprises following areas:

- Infrastructure of education,
- Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship,
- Infrastructure of repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels,
- Non-used immovable cultural monuments in the area,
- Infrastructure of tourism,
- Tangible infrastructure of settlements,
- Urban areas affected or threatened with physical deterioration and social exclusion,
- Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services,
- Regional communications, ensuring transport serviceability of the regions.

Facilities of the civil infrastructure provide services to the population that are one of the fundamental determinants of the quality of life. This concerns, in particular, services of educational, social and cultural nature, but also services in the sphere of healthcare and protection of health and property. Entities providing these services are establishing under conditions existing in SR predominantly by the regional and local self-governments, and in the lower extent by the state administration bodies (e.g., some specialised institutions). The Constitution of SR guarantees to the certain extent directly to all population provision of certain types of services, with public services character. Based on the Act No. 416/2001 Coll., on assignment of some competences from the state administration bodies to the municipalities and self-governing regions, as amended by later regulations, the competence of founders of facilities for the civil infrastructure in the spheres of education, social and culture was re-distributed among the local and regional self-governments and state administration. There is no hierarchy relationship among the given levels, i.e., all levels are individual and equal as far as to the founders' competence. Competences re-distribution is joined with specific types of institutions (e.g., local self-government establishes elementary schools, regional self-government establishes secondary schools and state administration establishes special schools). The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the SR, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR and Ministry of Culture of the SR are central authorities of the state administration for the above mentioned areas, under authority of the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on activities organisation of the government and central state administration, as amended by later regulations. Central authorities of the state administration establishes a legislative and methodological framework for activities of the given institutions, ensuring essential part of their financing and managing the network of given types of facilities. Majority owners of respective infrastructure are mainly local self-governments, and to the lower extent regional self-governments, that ensures operations of the given types of institutions. Specialised types of institutions (e.g., special schools) are in founder's competence of the state.

Besides the entities of public sector, the spectrum of the above given service providers complements also the private sector entities, represented by NGOs, churches, foundations, but also by commercial companies and other entities with different legal form.

A specific field in the current conditions of the SR represents the field health service, characterised with the ongoing transformation process, decentralising process from the state administration to the regional and local self-governments, and not yet completed legislative development, not only in the field of healthcare, but also in fields that relates to it. Support of the given field from the SF requires a specific approach ensured through the separate operational programme of a sector nature.

In relation to the amenity components of the territory, the ROP with its character aims at the types of infrastructure, which are in ownership and competence of the regional and local self-governments. It

concerns one of conclusions of the process of the partnership principle application at the level of the NSRF. The higher types of infrastructures in competence of the state are supported within frame of other operational programmes, managed by the relevant sector central authorities of the state administration.

The concept "infrastructure of the territory" in the context of the ROP includes mainly particular components of transport and settlement infrastructure, but also the territory equipment with the public infrastructure related to tourism.

Transport serviceability of the SR regions is the basic factor influencing accessibility and availability of the civil infrastructure, concentrated mainly in the growth poles, mobility of the population towards job, but also attractiveness of the territory for investors. In the SR conditions, the decisive role has mainly the road and railway transport, while more used is the road network.

The tangible infrastructure of towns and municipalities comprises of public accessible areas and spaces, squares, local communications, walkways, public lighting, public sanitary facilities, and similar. The given components of tangible infrastructure are predominantly in ownership of the towns and municipalities, and their technical conditions and aesthetic level are an important determinant of the quality of life of population and attractiveness of the territory for its population, visitors and potential investors.

Infrastructure of the territory can be characterised also as public tourism infrastructure, which implements additional functions for visitors of concrete areas, and usually it links to the attractive locations (e.g., centres of tourism, significant historical and natural monuments, etc.). This concerns, in particular, the infrastructure that itself does not generate any profit, but through its presence establishes presumptions for development of the territory by means of increasing its attractiveness for visitors (e.g., information boards, bike paths, surrounding infrastructure to the tourism centres, tourist information offices, etc.).

3.7.1 Infrastructure of education

Contemporary pedagogical and educational system of the SR consists of the following: preschool facilities, elementary schools, secondary schools (i.e., grammar schools, secondary vocational schools and conservatories, secondary vocational colleges and centres of practical tuition), training colleges for pupils who have completed compulsory education at primary school in less than a ninth grade, special schools (e.g., kindergartens, elementary schools, secondary schools, practical schools and apprentices training colleges), schools for hobby interest education, universities and institutions of further education. A separate group, which is not a part of the pedagogical and educational system of the SR, is the network of day nurseries/crèches.

Crèches / Day Nurseries

Day nurseries represent facilities allowing parents at maternity leave to return into job. In Slovakia are born about 55 thousand children annually. Operation of separate crèches accompanying higher costs as for instance in kindergartens, because in crèches is lower number of children per one employee. A crèche is usually a lower capacity facility with its own administration, kitchen, play fields etc. Whereas there is at present very high demand for this type of facilities and the territorial self-governments as the potential founders of crèches are not able to satisfy this demand, the given type of facilities arise mainly on private basis. However, services of the private facilities relate with fees, which the big part of clients is not able or willing to bear, and so they prefer to stay at maternity leave. With the given phenomenon are affected mainly women who in this manner are losing their working habits and often they lose working position as well. Women after maternity leave establish in the current SR conditions the third largest group of unemployed. Utilization of crèches service is mainly in towns for this group one of instruments for overcoming possible barriers of repeated inclusion in the labour market.

Pre-school facilities

The Regulation of the MED SR No. 353/1994 Coll., on the Preschool Facilities, as amended, arranges the issue of kindergartens and special kindergartens, as the so-called preschool facilities.

The mission of kindergartens is to supplement education in family with the upbringing and education activities focused on multilateral development of the child's personality and to create conditions for training of children. Moreover, the preschool education plays an important role in levelling differences among the children from diverse social, economic and cultural environment, and in early diagnosing of

deviations and disorders in the child's development. Another argument in favour of strengthening the preschool education and its systematic incorporation into the pedagogical and educational system is also accustoming of future pupils to the school duties, but also to the pluralistic society. The preschool facilities represent together a tool enabling to parents integration into the group of economically active population.

The preschool preparation has a remarkable significance for the children coming from language and socially disadvantaged environment, especially for children from the marginalised Roma communities. It appears efficient to introduce free of charge training in the last year of attendance of the preschool upbringing and education, before the child's entry to an elementary school, as well as organisational linkage and integration of the kindergartens with the first grade of elementary schools.

In the year 2004 there were registered 3,046 kindergartens in Slovakia, of which 34 classes were private and 60 sponsored by churches, attended totally by 149,232 children. About 80 percent of children attending kindergartens are aged 3-5 years. The most numerous population group of children attending kindergartens are the 5-year old children (33.2% share on average for the years 1993 to 2004). Then follow the 4-year old children with 26.5% share, and the 3-year old children with 20.4% share. Other marginal age groups comprise together 19.8% (5.5% younger than 3 years, and 14.3% those who are 6-year old and older).

Share of children from the population year-class who attend kindergartens (called also as the net pre-schooling of the population group) varies depending on the age. The highest net pre-schooling was in 5-year old children, when on average almost 80% of the 5-year old children attended the preschool upbringing and education. It is positive that this share is growing in the long-term. Since 1995 year, the pre-schooling of this population year-class increased from 72% to the current 93% (preliminary data for the year 2007). The most numerous group of preschool upbringing attendants are, and as well as in the future will be, the 5-year old children, what relate with the effort to prepare them for the compulsory school attendance.

Table 2: Kindergartens (KG) in the school year 2004/2005

REGION	NUMBER OF KINDERGARTENS (KG)	NUMBER OF CLASSES IN KG	HEREOF IN PUBLIC KG	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	HEREOF IN PUBLIC KG
NUTS 2 level Bratislava	208	757	729	16,390	15,898
Bratislava Region	208	757	729	16,390	15,898
NUTS 2 level West	1,061	2,453	2,435	49,942	49,560
Trnava Region	325	766	759	15,289	15,145
Trenčín Region	305	769	765	16,126	16,035
Nitra Region	431	918	911	18,527	18,380
NUTS 2 level Centre	750	1,741	1,720	36,633	36,187
Žilina Region	355	911	894	19,731	19,347
Banská Bystrica Region	395	830	826	16,902	16,840
NUTS 2 level East	1,027	2,166	2,139	46,267	45,672
Prešov Region	550	1,131	1,119	24,438	24,158
Košice Region	477	1,035	1,020	21,829	21,514
Objective Convergence	2,838	6,360	6,294	132,842	131,419
SR	3,046	7,117	7,023	149,232	147,317

Source: Regional Comparison, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2004

Based on Prognosis of the number of population development in the SR districts by the year 2025⁷, it implies, that by year 2015 the number of children attending kindergartens will increase by 5%, this shows need to extend these facilities despite of negative overall demographic trend, what is due by increasing of the net pre-schooling indicator.

⁷ Prognosis of development of number of the population in the SR districts by 2025, INFOSTAT Bratislava, November 2004

The kindergartens together with the elementary schools comprise the facilities of basic civil amenity. Their qualitative structural-technical characteristics and localisation in the territory therefore have similar characteristics as the elementary schools (defined in the following section). It is the consequence of social development since the second half of the 20th century (e.g., application of the centre system of settlement, mass construction, transformation of society, demographic development, financing of facilities, etc.). The given statement proves the fact, that of 2,881 municipalities in the SR territory 2,086 municipalities have a kindergarten. As far as to the Objective Convergence territory, 2,016 of 2,818 municipalities have their kindergarten. Of the entire number of municipalities identified as the growth poles in the Objective Convergence territory, 98.56% have their kindergartens. With respect to the significant number of kindergartens, it appears as efficient to support trends of merging kindergartens with elementary schools, in particular in the growth poles. Almost 60% of the all pre-school upbringing and education facilities occur in the growth poles.

Elementary schools

The elementary schools comprise of the two study grades: the first grade (i.e., 1-4 years, with an option to establish so-called zero year), and the second grade (i.e., 5-9 years). In the school year 2004/2005 there were together registered 2,342 elementary schools in the SR territory, what attended totally 557,328 pupils. Thus, 21.36 pupils was the average number in a class. Comparing to year 2004, there was a drop by 14.69% in the elementary school pupils. On that drop participated also gradual emergence of eight grammar schools, which children begin to attend after the fourth grade of elementary school. Density of the existing elementary school network outlines, that the elementary schools were one of the types of facilities of the basic civil amenity, which have been collectively built-up within the frame of settlement system in the SR. The largest construction of elementary schools was conducted over the 50's and following in the 70's years of the previous century. At present, the average age of elementary school buildings is about 40 years, corresponding also to their unsatisfactory structural-technical conditions and to the high level of physical depreciation.

Transformation process performed in the sphere of the school system accompanied changes among founders of schools and school facilities in previous years, changes in ownership relations and changes in the system of public financing of the school system. One of consequences of the given process was also the lack of capital investments from the side of founders of the given facilities for repairs and maintenance of buildings, but also for their inevitable modernisation. The buildings, where is realized the educational process concurrently do not meet the current standards of energy efficiency of buildings and current capacity requirements for design of buildings.

Application of the concept of traditional school transformation into modern school (i.e., Concept of education in the SR for the closest 15 to 20 years, called as Millennium, adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 1193/2001) requires higher number of specialised classrooms (i.e., ICT classrooms, physical and chemical laboratories, technical classrooms, workshops, school gymnasiums, etc.) with lower spatial demands. Besides the given limitations, there are often unsatisfactory also sanitary facilities, cloakrooms, change rooms, kitchens and catering rooms, from the view of hygienic standards.

Decentralisation of the elementary schools into competence of the local self-governments and the system of their financing motives individual schools to increase, or at least to maintain the numbers of pupils through increasing level of conditions, in which the educational process is performed, enhancement of internal equipment quality and through quality of educational programme.

Table 3: Elementary schools in the school year 2004/2005

REGION	NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF CLASSES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	OF THIS AT THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF PUPILS	OF THIS AT THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH MORE THAN 200 PUPILS
NUTS 2 Bratislava	159	2,188	2,013	48,503	45,040	94
Bratislava	159	2,188	2,013	48,503	45,040	94
NUTS 2 West	812	8,781	8,421	183,499	176,295	334
Trnava	261	2,599	2,523	54,236	52,776	102

Trenčín	216	2,778	2,664	61,252	58,852	111
Nitra	335	3,404	3,234	68,011	64,667	121
NUTS 2 Centre	578	6,658	6,322	144,806	137,736	276
Žilina	276	3,580	3,329	79,817	74,438	156
Banská Bystrica	302	3,078	2,993	64,989	63,298	120
NUTS 2 East	793	8,463	8,042	180,520	171,706	310
Prešov	461	4,600	4,377	97,614	92,741	161
Košice	332	3,863	3,665	82,906	78,965	149
Objective Convergence	2,183	23,902	22,785	508,825	485,737	920
SR in total	2,342	26,090	24,798	557,328	530,777	1,014

Source: Regional Comparisons, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2004

In the school year 2004/2005, there were 103.13 pupils per 1,000 inhabitants attending elementary schools, while the average is lower in 44 districts and higher in 35 districts than the all-national average. A value above 120 pupils in elementary schools per 1,000 inhabitants has been observed in the districts of the northern and eastern parts of Slovakia: Námestovo, Sabinov, Kežmarok, Tvrdošín, Stará Ľubovňa, Vranov nad Topľou, Bardejov, Čadca, Bytča, Revúca, Dolný Kubín, Svidník. Annex 5 displays the situation in Figure 5.

In total, 2,183 elementary schools are in the territory of Objective Convergence. The average number of pupils per one elementary school is about 232 pupils. From the view of sustainability and economic effectiveness, more stable are schools with the number of pupils exceeding 200, where costs per one pupil are by 25% lower than in the smaller schools. There are 924 elementary schools with the number of pupils over 200 in the territory of Objective Convergence. Of these, 99.6% is located in the municipalities, which are identified as the growth poles.

According to the Prognosis of development of the population in the SR districts by year 2025⁸ (<http://www.uips.sk> and <http://www.infostat.sk>), population of the SR will grow old, and the total number of inhabitants will decline. The number of children attending elementary schools will decline about 14%. Exceptions are the Košice and Prešov Regions, where with respect to the high concentration of Roma population, their demographic development does not correspond to the all-Slovakia declining trend, and the increase has positive balance. Analysis of demographic development (e.g., section 3.4) points at the fact, that natural increase of the population has negative values mainly in the countryside. This implies need to concentrate on the schools with more than 200 pupils, with the complete educational programmes for classes 1-9, what are economically sustainable and sufficiently equipped in terms of capacity. The given schools have pre-conditions for ensuring fulfilment of the concept of the traditional school transformation to a modern educational institution. From the point of view of activities, it is necessary to concentrate on enhancement of technical conditions and outfitting of specialised classrooms. Concurrently, interventions should be territorially concentrated into the growth poles, where the negative demographic trends shall demonstrate to a smaller extent.

Secondary schools

During the school year 2004/2005, in total 330,963 students studied at 931 secondary schools, of which 30.14% were students of grammar schools (i.e., secondary schools preparing students for university study), 46.01% studied at secondary vocational schools (i.e., secondary vocational schools and associated secondary schools), 22.22% studied at secondary vocational and apprentice colleges, and 1.64% at special secondary schools. Comparing to year 2000 by the year 2004 the number of grammar school students increased by 23.4%, the number of students at secondary vocational schools decreased by 9.7%, and at secondary apprentice colleges decreased by 30.37%. According to the individual regions, the Prešov Region has the highest number of secondary schools (154) and the Trenčín Region has the lowest number of secondary schools (75). The largest number of

⁸ Prognosis of the population development in the SR districts by 2025, INFOSTAT, Bratislava, November 2004

secondary school students is in the Prešov Region (49,368) and the lowest number in the Trnava Region (32,037). Increase of the number of students attending generally oriented schools with perspective of following higher education establishes increased capacity demands for ICT equipment at the secondary schools that has been not yet sufficient under the conditions existing in the SR.

Table 4: Secondary schools facilities according to the regions in the school year 2004/2005

Region	Number of facilities in total*	Number of classrooms in total	Number of students in total	Number of schools with more than 200 students
NUTS 2 level Bratislava	131	1,594	41,588	82
Bratislava Region	131	1,594	41,588	82
NUTS 2 level West	269	4,158	109,186	188
Trnava Region	88	1,244	32,037	57
Trenčín Region	75	1,344	36,326	55
Nitra Region	106	1,570	40,823	76
NUTS 2 level Centre	235	3,195	84,479	152
Žilina Region	113	1,657	45,342	79
Banská Bystrica Region	122	1,538	39,137	73
NUTS 2 level East	296	3,620	95,710	180
Prešov Region	154	1,850	49,368	95
Košice Region	142	1,770	46,342	85
Objective Convergence	800	10,973	289,375	520
SR in total	931	12,567	330,963	602

* Grammar schools, secondary vocational schools, associated secondary schools, secondary vocational and apprentice colleges, special secondary schools

Source: Institute of Education Information and Prognoses, 2005

In the school year 2004/2005, in average **61.4 students** per 1,000 inhabitants attended the secondary schools in the SR, what is a **significant increase** comparing to the school year 2000/2001, when this number was only 54 students per 1,000 inhabitants. Differences in this number are significant in the individual districts of Slovakia as well. The districts with markedly higher value than the all-Slovakia average (i.e., over 80) are Košice IV, Košice I, Banská Štiavnica, Bratislava I, Bratislava II, Bratislava III, Žarnovica, Banská Bystrica, Dolný Kubín and Prešov. The districts Košice surroundings and Malacky have significant absence of the secondary schools (below 15 students per 1,000 inhabitants), where the absence of secondary schools is substituted with commuting to the Bratislava and Košice.

Figures 5b and 5c in the Annex 5 illustrate the situation in relation to secondary schools in the SR.

According to the Prognosis of the number of population development⁹, the **number of students attending secondary schools will decline by 10 %**, what is similar trend as in case of the elementary schools. Issuing from the current situation, capacity of classrooms at the secondary schools on the NUTS 3 level is sufficient in the almost all territory. As far as to the secondary schools, significant exceptions are the Košice and Prešov Regions, where an increase of children in the age of secondary school is expected, and where due to this trend some classrooms will be lacking.

Table 5: Profile of secondary school graduates in the year 2005

Region/ number of graduates in 2005	Grammar schools	Secondary Vocational Schools	Secondary Apprentice Training Colleges	Associated Secondary Schools	Total
NUTS level 2 Bratislava	3,004	2,705	1,916	1,520	9,145
Bratislava Region	3,004	2,705	1,916	1,520	27,130
NUTS level 2 West	5,673	6,207	7,241	8,009	27,130
Trnava Region	1,700	2,175	2,516	1,518	7,909
Trenčín Region	1,759	1,434	2,421	3,481	9,095

⁹ Prognosis of the population development in the SR districts by 2025, INFOSTAT, Bratislava, November 2004

Nitra Region	2,207	2,598	2,304	3,010	10,119
NUTS level 2 Centre	4,782	5,067	4,065	6,055	19,969
Žilina Region	2,482	2,828	2,390	3,026	10,726
Banská Bystrica Region	2,300	2,239	1,675	3,029	9,243
NUTS level 2 East	5,825	6,393	5,985	4,739	22,942
Prešov Region	2,908	3,101	3,285	2,681	11,975
Košice Region	2,917	3,292	2,700	2,058	10,967
Objective Convergence	16,280	17,667	17,291	18,803	70,041
SR in total	19,284	20,372	19,207	20,323	79,186

Source: Regional Comparisons, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2006

From the view of economic demands of secondary schools per one student, the vocational schools have higher financial demands than the general-education schools. Analysis of trend in number of graduates points that there is a trend of students shift to the general educational facilities, and declining interest in study at vocational schools. This decline of interest in vocational study supports obsolete equipment of schools, insufficient curricula not reflecting the needs of market, and lack of financial resources for attending vocational practice. Decrease of graduates in secondary vocational schools can result into serious structural problems in the labour market, where lack of vocational professionals will be evident. Based on the given reason it is necessary to concentrate on increasing of vocational schools attractiveness and increasing options of graduates applications in the labour market. It is necessary to establish suitable conditions for education, flexible responding to the current needs of labour market, through modernisation of structural buildings and renovation of their interior outfitting.

Abovementioned facts have the consequence that at on present, rationalisation of the school networks is carrying out from the side of their founders, mainly through integration of secondary vocational schools with secondary vocational colleges. Operation of the associated secondary schools is more effective in terms of economy, while it is possible to ensure higher quality of conditions for the educational process. Whereas the transformation process in sphere of the school system has concerned also the secondary schools, existing problems related to the technical infrastructure have similar character and reasons as problems of elementary schools. The structural-technical conditions of many buildings are unsatisfactory from the view of available results from energy audits, but also from the view of hygiene and capacity standards.

Territorial concentration of secondary schools reflects trends of the SR settlement during previous decades. The secondary schools belong within specific civil amenities, what means that they have been forming in the bigger settlements, which are well accessible by traffic within 30-45 minutes. As far as to localisation, 100 % of the all secondary schools are in the growth poles.

Universities

Based on the issues implied from the level of the NSRF, the ROP is aimed at such types of the civil infrastructure that provide services to the most broad number of inhabitants of supported area within the SR, i.e., the eligible territory of the Objective Convergence. There is no support of universities implemented through the ROP within the programming period 2007-2013, in particular, due to the following two reasons:

1. Universities represent the civil amenities of the higher type, support thereof has not such strong local impact as support of facilities of the civil infrastructure in the founders' competence of the local and regional self-governments
2. It implies from the data available in year 2006, that 11 out of 33 universities in Slovakia were localised in Bratislava, i.e., outside the territory of the Objective Convergence. Support to the universities infrastructure through the ROP could disadvantage a large part of universities in the SR, and therefore support of universities implements the Operational Programme Research and Development.

Analysis in the field of the educational infrastructure issues mainly from available data on the network of existing schools and educational facilities, from the data on conditions under which the educational process is performed, from the data on demographic development of the population, as well as from the current trends of rationalisation of the facilities network in the supported territory.

Main findings:

In connection with support of family and working life harmonisation, there is identified a lack of crèches ensuring care of children up to age 3 years.

Capacity of the existing kindergartens is not sufficient for the entire number of children in the age 3-5 years, for which the preschool upbringing is the zero grade of the upbringing and educational process.

The expected moderate decline in the total number of children in the following years will form stress on rationalisation of the schools and school facilities network. From the analysis implies, that economically sustainable are elementary and secondary schools with more than 200 pupils/students, which are concentrated in the growth poles, in economic conditions of the SR.

Transformation of a traditional school into a modern one requires investments for reducing numbers of pupils or students in classrooms, and for procurement of modern equipment for the purposes of increasing the educational process quality.

The pedagogical and educational system facilities at all levels are in unsatisfactory structural-technical conditions, with low level of technical outfitting, mainly ICT devices, and with unsatisfactory conditions for immobile pupils. In addition, they characterize high rate of energy demanding operations.

Regions Prešov and Košice have the highest lack of educational facilities, mainly of kindergartens and elementary schools, and both reports positive demographic development.

3.7.2 Completion of the analysis in the field of education infrastructure based on findings from the ROP assessment carried out in the year 2010

Adoption of the Act No. 245/2008 Coll., on education, and on amendment of certain Acts as amended by later regulations (hereinafter the "Education Act"), which had replaced the previous legislation in the field of primary and secondary schools represents a significant change in sphere of educational system during the ROP implementation. Simultaneously with this Act was repealed also the Decree of the Ministry of Education No. 353/1994 Coll., on pre-school facilities (nurseries and kindergartens) and kindergartens were assigned into the school system.

The Education Act adapts mainly the principles, objectives, conditions, forms and organization of education, as well as rights and obligations of individual subjects. Under authority of this Act was modified school system, where belongs kindergartens, elementary schools, grammar schools, secondary vocational schools, conservatories, school for children and pupils with special upbringing and educational needs, elementary art schools and language schools. Associated secondary school, secondary vocational college and training college established under current regulations are in accordance with new legislation a secondary vocational school.

New Education Act allows to schools to create their own educational program, by which they can learn almost during a third of school-time, while introducing compulsory teaching of two foreign languages, as well as the maximal number of pupils in classes.

Considering determined capacity size of classes, it will be necessary to realize construction works in majority of schools, to ensure compliance with scheduled capacity limits in individual classes. In connection with reduction of the number of pupils in individual classrooms may be expected increasing of the number of classes at school. These adjustments will require additional resources for

intervention into school buildings. Capacity expansion of schools is assuming also in relation to the updated analysis of demographic trends. However, there is no presumption of creation new facilities and of expansion of the network of schools and school facilities. Accordingly, additional costs incurs in connection with the provision of material equipment of classes, as well as costs to ensure adequate amount of teaching staff. These changes lead to superior learning environment, but they require additional investments. In consequence of these legislative changes, average value of the projects increased over the value of projects planned during development of the ROP financial plan. Originally set ROP interventions in sphere of education infrastructure has been designed only for the removal of the defective condition of structures used by elementary and secondary schools, and for ensuring adequate internal outfit.

Despite of that legislative changes, the educational infrastructure represents an area of the support of the ROP, what is in terms of public sector one of the most important development priorities in terms of applicants (especially of local governments). In times of economic crisis during year 2009 the Managing Authority for ROP recorded low interest of the applicants in majority of calls for grant applications, but in the case of education infrastructure was in previously published calls recorded demand representing more than 360% of the available allocation. Managing Authority for ROP records continued strong interest of potential beneficiaries on the area of education infrastructure, and that is despite of significant progress in the ROP implementation, and redistribution of the financial allocation to the field of education infrastructure. Based on available information, the operations assisted by ROP in sphere of education have the most significant contribution to reducing energy intensity of buildings, to the introduction of ICT and to creation new jobs.

Following the afore mentioned facts, as well as the results of regular assessment of the ROP implementation to date, the ROP interventions in sphere of education infrastructure can be considered as the most the productive and the most required within frame of the ROP in term of the public sector.

Conclusion: Conclusions from the assessment performed and updated analysis of the situation have confirmed the correctness of the original setting of the ROP strategy in the field of education infrastructure, which is defined appropriately in terms of topic and of territory. Strengthening of the ROP allocations in sphere of the education infrastructure is essential in particular for the following reasons:

- The highest development priority of self-governments (elimination of modernization debt of schools);***
- The highest efficiency in terms of mitigating impact of economic crisis (reduction of the operating costs);***
- Significant contribution to the reducing energy consumption of buildings, introduction of ICT and to education (Lisbon strategy) and to life-long learning;***
- Contribution to new jobs creation.***

3.7.3 Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship

Demographic development and age increasing of the post-productive segment of the population, as well as mitigation and elimination of the social exclusion and poverty in conditions of the SR necessitates significant changes and investments even in sphere of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship.

Infrastructure of facilities actuating in the social field is characterised to a certain extent with similar shortcomings as the infrastructure of education. Identified problems in the field of social infrastructure can be considered as remnants of ideologically influenced approach applied in the past, which contributed to the deepening of social exclusion of some groups of clients (e.g., facilities placing into inconvenient buildings, which had another intended original use). Problem of the specific types of facilities is their peripheral localisation and isolation in relation to the centres of settlement.

Transfer of competences from the state administration bodies to the self-governments, lack of capital investments from the part of founders and changes in legislation have in this sphere also as

consequence arising and deepening of technical and operational shortcomings, which the individual facilities or their founders must face with. Existing facilities of certain type thus are not able to respond to the current development trends in approach to clients (e.g., receding from large-capacity facilities to the facilities of a smaller capacity type with synchronic securing of economic sustainability and adequate utilisation of released rooms) without interventions.

Constitutive characteristics of social infrastructure under conditions existing in the SR are unsatisfactory infrastructure, insufficient amenity and obsolescence of structural buildings, missing barrier-free access and signalisation for handicapped persons, low availability and accessibility of social service facilities and facilities for performance of measures for socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship. Current state in the given field does not correspond to the modern cognition, aims and needs in the field of preventing from social exclusion, and that is at all groups of the population.

Problem of social services is very extensive, and its infrastructure comprises various types of facilities. For the purpose of transparency in situation, in the following section is a basic overview and definitions of individual types of facilities. For the purpose of the ROP, the social services facilities and facilities for performance measures of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship called overall as facilities of the social infrastructure.

Social services

In particular, the Act No. 195/1998 Coll., on the Social Aid, as amended by later regulations, arranges the sphere of social services, based thereon:

- Self-governing regions and/or the municipalities establish following facilities: houses of social services for children, to whom care is providing weekly and annually; social service houses for adults to whom care is providing annually and weekly; pensioners' houses; houses for single parents; nursing service station; refuge, and rehabilitation centre.
- Municipalities moreover establish besides the above listed social service facilities, the following: houses of social services for children to whom care is provided daily; pensioners' houses; pension-houses for pensioners; pensioners' clubs; catering rooms for pensioners; personal hygiene centre; laundry; sheltered dwelling facility; nursing service facility.

Pensioners' houses

Care in a pensioners' house may be providing to a citizen, to whom it is not possible to provide other social services or provision of other social service does not solve enough social distress of this citizen, and who is concurrently a beneficiary of the retirement pension. And, where this person due his/her unfavourable status of health requires systematic care of other person, which cannot be provided from family, nor through provision of nursing service. Pensioners' houses comprise 21.2% of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions. The average number of clients in pensioners' houses is 72.4.

Houses of social services

Care in houses of social services can be provided to a citizen with health handicap/disability, such as physical disability, mental disorders or disorders in behaviour, senses disability, as given in Annex 2 of the Act No. 195/1998 Coll., on social aid, as amended by later regulations, or with combination of these handicaps. There we differentiate houses of social services for children and for adults. The houses of social services for adults comprise 20.79%, and the houses of social services for children comprise 8.55% of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions. The average number of clients in houses of social services for adults is 63.5, and average number of clients in houses of social services for children is 41.5.

Nursing service facility

Nursing service facility can provide care to a citizen, who according to the recommendation of a healthcare facility is reliant on the provision of inevitable vital acts, if it is not possible to provide nursing care to this citizen in his/her apartment, according to relevant provisions of the Act. Nursing service facility provides inevitable care, comprising catering, dwelling and provisory care. Nursing service facilities comprise 19.1% of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions.

Shelter

Shelter can provide care to a citizen, who is without housing and which is in material distress, or his/her institutional upbringing or protective upbringing was abolished after reaching his/her lawful age. Shelter can provide care also to the citizen on which is perpetrating violence by an individual with which he/she lives in the household. Shelters comprise 8.55% of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions.

House for single parents

House for single parents can provide housing and counselling to a single parent of an underage, or to a single parent with an underage whose life or health are threatened, or upbringing of the underage is threatened. In addition, that can provide to the single pregnant woman who got in social distress due to loss of the family environment. Houses for single parents comprise 4.42% of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions.

Sheltered dwelling facility

Sheltered dwelling facility can provide housing and supervision to a citizen with health handicap or with mental disorder. Such citizen must be able to lead his/her individual life with help of any other person.

The below given types of the social infrastructure comprises a small share (max. 3.5%):

Pension-house for pensioners

Pension-house for pensioners can provide care for a citizen, to whom cannot be provided dwelling otherwise, if he/she is a beneficiary of the old-age pension or of the retirement rent, older than 60 years, and his/her status of health does not require ongoing care of any other person.

Pensioners' club

Pensioners' club establishes conditions for spare-time activities, cultural activities and keeping physical and psychical activities of the citizen, who is the beneficiary of the old-age pension, or of the citizen with unfavourable status of health.

Rehabilitation centre

Rehabilitation centre can provide care to a citizen with serious health handicap/disablement, who is reliant on recovery of his/her highest reachable individual grade of personality development and physical performance. Rehabilitation centres comprise 2.06 % of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions.

Catering room for pensioners

Catering rooms for pensioners can provide public catering for a citizen which catering cannot be providing otherwise, and who is the beneficiary of the old-age pension, or who is reliant on the public catering due his/her unfavourable status of health.

Personal hygiene centre

Personal hygiene centre can provide personal hygiene to a citizen to whom nursing service is providing, or to a citizen who is without housing due to his/her social non-adaptability.

Laundry

Laundry serves to a citizen to whom nursing service is providing, or to a citizen who is without housing due to his/her social non-adaptability, for washing of his/her personal cloths and other textile, if washing cannot be providing otherwise.

Socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship

Act No. 305/2005 Coll., on the socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship arranges exercise of measures for socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship in the conditions of the SR. This relatively new enactment reacts to the actual modern cognitions, intentions and needs in the cited area, developing under the conditions existing in the SR.

The socio-legal protection of children is a set of measures to provide the following:

- a) Protection of a child, that is inevitable for its wellness, respecting its best interest, according to the international Convention,

- b) Education and multilateral evolution of a child in its genuine family environment,
- c) Substitution environment for a child, what cannot get education within own family.

The social guardianship is a set of measures for elimination, mitigation and prevention of deepening or repetition of the failures of psychical, physical and social development of a child and an adult person, and provision of aid depending upon seriousness of the failure and situation in that the child or the full-aged person is situated.

Measures according to this Act perform the following persons:

- Accredited natural persons,
- Municipalities/self-governing regions through the following type of facilities: children's home, children's home for underage without conductor, crisis centre, re-socialisation (acculturation) centre and other facilities for execution measures according to the cited Act.

Crisis centre

Crisis centre provides conducting measures for children, families and full-aged persons, which life occurs in some crisis; execution of the court judgement on the upbringing measure; execution of the upbringing measure in terms of the relevant regulations. The target group of this facility are primarily children with behaviour disorders, children with incomplete vocational training, children which recent upbringing were seriously threatened or violated, abused children, sexual abused children, or children exploited for commercial purposes. Crisis centres comprise 3.09% of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions.

Re-socialisation centre

Re-socialisation centre specialize itself in overcoming psychical, physical and social consequences of drug dependence and other dependences, with a goal of including into social life within the natural environment. The target group of these facilities are mainly children and full-aged persons, drug depending underage with completed school attendance, adult citizens after treatment in the healthcare facility for treatment of drug addict persons. Re-socialisation centres comprise 2.50 % of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions.

Share of the below listed facilities of socio-legal protection and social guardianship does not exceed 2%-share of all types of the social infrastructure facilities in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions.

Children's home, children's home for underage without conductor

Children's home replaces temporarily to the child its natural family environment, or alternate family environment. Inpatient care ends attaining lawful age (i.e., 18 years of age), with possible extension to 19 years of age, however at latest by his/her becoming independent (maximally by 25 years of age). In children's homes for underage without conductors, the court interim measure place children here.

Tutor care (accredited natural persons)

Within framework of tutor care, the accredited natural persons provide services for children given into tutor care through final court decision on giving the child into tutor care. The accredited natural person, to which the children are given, provides substitution family care for children (mainly to siblings). Providing of tutor care may be at least to four children. For execution of tutor care can be used also an apartment or family house of the tutor.

Distribution of amount of providers and type of services and measures in the social sphere is not sufficiently and evenly within the Slovak Republic. Due to this reason, supply does not cover neither present nor prospective demands of citizens, in terms of facilities type and multitude within individual regional units. Existing network of social service facilities in terms of the offered care quality, determined also by technical conditions of buildings, does not create conditions for ensuring appropriate level of care. This is a consequence of the non-suitable localisation of the existing facilities in course of the second half of the 20th century, and following long-term lack of capital investments in renovation and development of the material and technical fundament.

Globally 730 facilities of the social infrastructure operate within the SR with 37,111 beds (in the year 2004). The highest density of the social infrastructure facilities (hereinafter "FSI") is in the Prešov and Banská Bystrica Regions, equally per 113 facilities. The lowest number of the FSI is located in the Bratislava Region (79) and in the Žilina Region (77). The highest numbers of beds are in the Nitra

Region (5,445) and in the Košice Region (4,990). The lowest number of beds is in the Trnava Region (4,035). At evaluating the indicator “number of beds per 10,000 inhabitants”, the all-Slovakian average is 68.92, while below this average are the Prešov Region (59.91), the Žilina Region (60.95) and the Košice Region (64.76). Overall number of the social infrastructure facilities (i.e., FSI and facilities for conduct of socio-legal protection and social guardianship) was 909.

Based on confrontation statistic data for years 2000 and 2004, it is obvious that the amenities of the social infrastructure had an increasing tendency, both in terms of the entire Slovakia and of all the regions separately as well (growth index reached level 166%).

Issuing from application of current urban zoning approaches, anticipating the needs of certain number of inhabitants in a certain attraction zone it may be state that in the Objective Convergence territory in the conditions of the SR there is the significant lack of the social infrastructure facilities in the municipalities over 5,000 inhabitants. The total number of such municipalities in the Objective Convergence territory is 120, while all these are the growth poles. Significant demand is for the services provided in the facilities as houses of social services for adults, and pensioners’ houses, where demand exceeds almost 1.5 to 2 times current capacity of such facilities. On the contrary, in case of the daily-service type of facilities, as for example pensioners’ clubs, catering rooms for pensioners, personal hygiene centres, nursing care facilities, rehabilitation and re-socialisation centres, an insufficient interest is reported from the side of clients. This trend implies from significant amount of external economic and social factors (e.g., demographic development, financial demands of the individual dwelling unit providing, traditional links to the place of birth, psychological barriers, etc.). It implies from performed analyses, that assistance to the infrastructure in the social sphere should be concentrated on enhancing quality of facilities ensuring long-term stays and on extension of their activities even in field of weekly, eventually daily stays, and on other complementary services. In the case of facilities aimed at the marginal types of services, due to economic effectiveness and sustainability, it appears as essential routing to the facilities combining several types and forms of services or care providing (e.g., in cases, where it is suitable, or possible, based on the legal rules).

Significant majority of facilities have not suitable area and technical parameters, required for movement of immobile clients, or clients with limited mobility. Issuing from the minimal area standards, the minimum standard of 8m² of floor area per person is the requisite for the social infrastructure facilities with beds. At present, this value is 4m² per one person, in average. Average capacity of the most frequently represented types of facilities is 60 clients per a facility. As implies from the available data from the founders of such facilities, that economically sustainable are the facilities with capacity of 50 and more clients. It is not possible to apply universally the criteria of economic effectiveness to the all types of facilities. Mainly it is not possible within such type of facilities, where is effort to create genuine family environment, in particular, in case of the social infrastructure facilities for children (i.e., children’s homes). At present, in total 10 children’s homes operate in the SR conditions within the Objective Convergence territory. However, the accredited natural persons, the so-called professional families, ensure family environment even more frequently; they do not live, nor conduct activities in the standard facilities established by the public sector, but in the apartments owned by the natural persons (i.e., prevailing in family houses). Support of such “facilities” of the family type requires in comparison to standard facilities in the founders’ competence of the public sector relative low investment resources, which may provide other than additional and for natural person administratively more difficult accessible resources from the EU Structural Funds. There is an assumption that the national strategy for the social infrastructure for children will drift just towards the facilities of family type. Thus, the recommendation of analysis for the strategic part of the ROP is to utilize additional resources from the SF for other types of the social infrastructure facilities, where it is possible to expect long-term sustainability from the side of the public sector.

Table 6: Overview of the most frequent types of the facilities of the social infrastructure in the year 2004

Region	House of social services for adults	House of social services for children	Pensioners' houses	Pension-houses for pensioners	Pensioners' clubs	Pensioners' catering rooms	Personal hygiene centres	Laundry for pensioners	Facilities of protected dwelling	Children's homes	Single parent houses	Tutor care facilities	Shelters	Crisis centres	Re-socialisation centres	Rehabilitation centre	Nursing service centres
Bratislava Region	12	12	23	4	71	21	4	5	5	3	4	N/A	6	3	5	6	47
NUTS level 2 Bratislava	12	12	23	4	71	21	4	5	5	3	4	N/A	6	3	5	6	47
Trnava Region	13	9	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	5	0	4	0	4
Trenčín Region	9	9	32	0	0	3	0	0	1	2	4	0	7	1	0	0	23
Nitra Region	33	8	24	5	0	9	4	0	0	2	2	0	5	2	5	3	21
NUTS level 2 West	55	26	77	5	0	12	4	0	1	5	8	3	17	3	9	3	48
Žilina Region	30	13	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	4	2	0	0	12
Banská Bystrica Region	17	11	30	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	1	8	2	2	0	22
NUTS level 2 Centre	47	24	34	2	1	2	0	0	1	2	5	1	12	4	2	0	34
Prešov Region	26	4	19	0	2	1	0	0	2	2	12	3	20	8	4	7	10
Košice Region	13	4	14	0	0	9	0	0	2	1	5	4	9	6	2	4	38
NUTS level 2 East	39	8	33	0	2	10	0	0	4	3	17	7	29	14	6	11	48
Obj. Convergence	141	58	144	7	3	24	4	0	6	10	30	11	58	21	17	14	130
SR in total	153	70	167	11	74	45	8	5	11	13	34	11	64	24	22	20	177
Of them, in the growth poles	122	55	124	7	3	23	4	0	5	8	28	9	55	21	15	13	127

Note: Some facilities are combined types, while they are recorded according to the main type of the facility, what can impose a partial data distortion.

Source: Aurex, 2007

From territorial point of view, 91.3 % of the facilities of the social infrastructure are located in the growth poles. Allocation of individual facilities should not deepen social exclusion of clients. Due this reason, it appears as suitable to use in selecting operations the principle of territorial concentration into the growth poles.

However, there are some types of facilities, where it is suitable to locate them outside the growth poles (e.g., re-socialisation centres, crisis centres) with respect to the type of social service provided there. For such facilities, their localisation outside the growth poles has positive effects on physical and psychical conditions of clients and due this reason, specific approach should be using in operations choice for these types of facilities.

With respect to the prognosis of population development by the year 2025 is expecting that demand for the facilities of social services for adults will grow further. This growing demand for certain type of services establishes concurrently assumptions for a more broad involvement of private entities in the following years in this sphere.

The social sphere is one of the spheres of the ROP assistance that can contribute significantly to the integration and increasing of living standards of marginalised Roma communities. Important element in support of Roma communities can be establishing of the facilities what have character of community centres, or centres aimed at working with Roma children. Suitable localisation of such facilities, mainly into municipalities with segregated or separated Roma settlements, can significantly contribute to the elimination of negative social phenomena in these areas. Introduced approach is suitable to use also within frame of the integrated strategies of ROP in the urban areas affected or threatened with physical deterioration and social exclusion. That area of support creates a space to promote social infrastructure through the ROP implementation within a comprehensive approach to marginalised Roma communities, which provides the coordinator of this horizontal priority.

Analysis in the sphere of the social infrastructure is based upon data assessment of the existing network of all types of facilities from the view of their quantitative and qualitative characteristics and on data about demographic development of the population in the supported territory.

Main findings:

The increasing demand for the facilities for adults and seniors results mainly from the data on the increasing share of population in post-productive age. Building new facilities with respect to serviceability of the gradient territory is reasonable in the municipalities with population over 5,000, which are in total 120 in the Objective Convergence territory.

The social services facilities are in unsatisfactory structural-technical conditions, with the low level of equipment and hygiene conditions and unsatisfactory conditions for immobile clients. These facilities feature characterizes concurrently by high energy-intensive operation.

One of the prerequisites of sustainability most often represented social infrastructure facilities is the size of facility from 50 clients, observing the minimal area standards and respecting pre-conditions for ensuring quality services. Analysis identifies the need to support the interventions into buildings and outfitting of the facilities, inclusive of ICT equipment.

The family-type facilities established by the public sector are hardly sustainable in terms of economy.

The majority (i.e., 91.3%) of the facilities are localised in the growth poles.

The sphere of assistance to the social infrastructure within the ROP can contribute significantly to the integration of marginalised Roma communities, which are often localised outside the growth poles.

3.7.4 Completion of the analysis in the field of infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship on the basis of findings from the ROP assessment carried out in the year 2010

Sphere of social services and socio-legal protection of children and children guardianship were marked by the most significant legislative changes from the ROP adoption in September 2007. The conditions for operation of the social infrastructure facilities have changed, and in view of the ROP, the Thematic Strategy of the ROP has been significantly narrowed. Nevertheless the fact, that in the ROP Priority Axis 2 were declared in the middle of 2010 year so far the most calls for grant applications from all ROP Priority Axes (calls for applicants from the private and public sectors), the allocation for cited axis was not redistributed. One of reasons is tightening of relevant legislation, especially in the area of requirements imposed to the founders and to the social infrastructure facilities (eg, spatial, hygienic and other legislative standards). Managing Authority for ROP on the basis of mapping interest of applicants identified barriers, as well as fears of applicants associated with the generation of so-called net income from the project, forasmuch namely in the facilities for seniors are accepted payments from users of supported infrastructure. Another reason due to which the expectations in the promulgation of calls in sphere of the social infrastructure were not fulfilled can be the impact of economic crisis, which caused that the potential applicants, especially municipalities and self-governing regions in the years 2009-2010 focused their priorities on other areas of ROP assistance.

Social Services

Area of social services is governed by the Act No. 448/2008 Coll., on social services, and on amendment and completion of the Act No. 455/1991 Coll., on trades (the Trades Licencing Act), as amended by later regulations (hereinafter the "Social Services Act"), which with effect from January 1st, 2009 replaced the Act No. 195/1998 Coll., on social assistance, valid at the time of preparing the ROP.

Social Services Act is a new legislative adjusting of social services providing and supervision of their provision. At the same time new competences and duties were defined for local and regional self-government, a new funding system was put into practice for financing private providers of social services, and some new social services were introduced (eg respite services, interpreting service, etc.) and new types of device (e.g., lodging house, low-threshold centers, half-way houses, etc.).

The new legislation is complex focused on an individual, family and community of individuals, who fell into unfavourable social situation or in critical social situation, whose solution or risk thereof constitutes suitability and purposefulness of the aid by the provided social service. For an unfavorable social situation is considered state of social distress of a natural person, family and community, in which that person, family, community is found on the ground that it has not provided basic necessities of life, for own life habits, for manner of life, for serious health disability or unfavourable state of health, for achieving retirement age, for the exercise of treating an individual with severe disabilities, for threatening of other individuals behaviour or because it was a victim of peddling

Social Services Act divides the social services according to the nature of adverse social situation and by target groups, to which social services are designed to:

a) Social services providing necessary conditions to satisfy basic necessities of life in facilities, what are:

1. Lodging houses,
2. Shelters (casualty wards),
3. Half-way houses,
4. Daily low-threshold centers,
5. Emergency housing facilities;

b) Social services to support families with children, what are:

1. Assistance at personal child care and support to harmonization of family and working life,
2. Provision of social services in temporary care facility for children,
3. Provision of social services in day low-threshold center for children and families;

c) Social services for resolving of adverse social situation due to serious health disability, poor state of health, or due to achieving retirement age, what are:

1. Provision of social services in facilities for natural persons, dependent on assistance of another individual person, and for natural persons who have achieved retirement age,
2. Nursing service,
3. Transportation services,
4. Guides and reading services,
5. Interpreter services,
6. Mediation of interpreter service,
7. Mediation of personal assistance,
8. Rental of tools;

d) Social services using telecommunications technologies, what are:

1. Monitoring and signalization of needs for help,
2. Emergency assistance provided through telecommunications technology;

e) Assistance services, what are:

1. Respite service,
2. Assistance in securing of guardianship rights and obligations,
3. Provision of social services in a day centre,
4. Provision of social services in an integration centre,
5. Provision of social services in a dining room,
6. Provision of social services in a laundry,
7. Provision of social services at a centre of personal hygiene.

The aforementioned social services may be combined in appropriate and purposeful manner.

Social Services Act stipulates, what social services provides, respectively ensures the community, and what social services ensures regional self-government.

1. Municipality provides or ensures provision of social services to ensure the necessary conditions for satisfying necessities of life in a lodging house, day low-threshold centre, day low-threshold centre providing social services for children and families, in a facility for seniors, in nursing care facilities, and in day care nursing services, transport services, and facilitation services;

2. Regional self-government ensure providing of social services in the shelter (casualty ward), in the half-way home, in the emergency housing, in the temporary child care facility, in a facility for supported housing, in the rehabilitation centre, in social services home, in a specialized centre facilities, and in integration and interpretation service centre.

One of the objectives of the new legislation was to ensure appropriate conditions remaining of the clients in their genuine (home, domestic) social environment. Residential form of social service in facilities is provided in case that a part of the social services is housing. This service is provided as a year-round social service, or as a weekly social service.

The new legislation prefers providing of a social service in facilities for natural persons, who are dependent on assistance of other individual, and for natural persons who have achieved retirement age (supported housing facility, facilities for seniors, nursing care facilities, rehabilitation centers, social services home, specialized facility and day care nursing service) in facilities with the capacity less than 40 places, supporting the approximation to the European trend of providing services in smaller centres to a certain extent. This change has a direct impact on the strategy of ROP, which was set in the years 2005 to 2007, and which due to the results of analyses and due to the procurement of economic and operational sustainability of projects preferred the support of facilities with the amount over 50 clients. By reason of objective conformity of projects with relatively complicated legal framework in sphere of social services, there was introduced in the year 2009 an element of ex ante assessment of grant applications by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family into the process of assessing grant applications. All of the above mentioned aspects may have incidence on constriction of the group of potential applicants and on the demand for intervention into the social infrastructure.

In connection with social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities, there is a persistent need for support of so-called **community centres** (such as low-threshold daily centres). According to § 82 para. 3 of Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on social services and on the amendment of Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trade Licensing (Trade Licensing Act) as amended, community centres may be established for the performance of community rehabilitation. Community rehabilitation is a coordination of activity of entities, being in particular the family, municipality, educational institutions, providers of employment services, providers of social services and providers of healthcare. The objective of the community rehabilitation is the renewal or development of physical skills, mental abilities and working abilities of an individual in an adverse social situation and the support of its inclusion in the society. In addition, other activities under special regulations may be carried out in a community centre, such as under § 10 of Act No. 305/2005 Coll. on socio-legal protection of children and on social guardianship and on the amendment and supplementation of certain acts as amended. The support of the mentioned community facilities via ROP responds to the social-wide request formulated by the Office of Plenipotentiary of the SR Government for Roma Communities, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR, involved non-governmental sectors as well as by the European Commission. In this sector, there is a great potential for complementarity with OP EaSI (synergy of activities of ERDF and ESF) mainly within the support of local strategies of complex approach.

Socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship

At the time from approval of the ROP the wording of Act No. 305/2005 Coll., on socio-legal protection of children and on social guardianship, and on amending and completing of certain acts was amended several times, and by the Act No. 27/2009 Coll., was declared its full statutory text. This law regulates socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, to ensure the prevention of crisis situations in the family, protection of rights, and protect of legitimate interests of children, prevention of deepening and recurrence disorders in mental, physical and social development of children and full-aged natural persons, and to prevent accrument of socio-pathological phenomena.

Socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship performed for children and adults represents a specially arranged system of the interlinked and mutually conditioning measures, by means of what the state, respectively the society guarantees to everyone, especially to a child and to its family

protection, support and assistance, particularly in those cases where the parents for various reasons are unable or unwilling to provide proper care for the child.

Measures of socio-legal protection and social guardianship are implemented, in the sense of applicable legislation, in the genuine family environment, in an alternative family environment, in an open environment, in an environment created and arranged for performance of socio-legal protection and social guardianship measures. The cited Act regulates also the basic types of facilities for implementation of the socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship measures (children's home, children's home for underage without conductor, crisis centre, re-socialization centre for drug addicts and other addicts) and elementary scope of their activities to fulfill the purpose for which they have been established. Designated authority for socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, municipality, regional self-government, or an accredited body may establish these facilities. The accreditation process of non-state actors ensures the same level of implementation measures for socio-legal protection of children social guardianship by the state authorities, municipalities, regional self-governments and non-state subjects.

In the sense of applicable legislation the principle of priority for performance measures of socio-legal protection and social guardianship in the genuine (family) environment is applied at implementation of measures of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship children's homes.

Amendment of the legislation simultaneously create premises for higher effectiveness of the process of child adoption, as well as of procedures associated with foster care. At the same time, preconditions were created for the support of the deinstitutionalisation of children's homes.

Measures of the socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship under Act No. 305/2005 Coll. are exercised by the following entities:

- accredited persons and legal entities (can be founders of children's homes, children's homes for minors without accompaniment, crisis centres, re-socialization centres and other facilities of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship; to exercise selected measures of the socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship);
- municipalities/self-governing regions (can be founders of children's homes, crisis centres, re-socialization centres and other facilities of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship; to exercise selected measures of the socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship);
- specified Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family/Head Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (can be founders of children's homes, children's homes for minors without accompaniment; to exercise measures of the socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship).

The measures of the socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship under Act No. 305/2005 Coll. are exercised in the following types of facilities:

a) Children's home (temporary substitute for child's natural family environment or substitute family environment by way of a residential form based on court's decision, up to 25 years of age at most 25), whereas children's home pursuant to legislation is established as:

- home of children – consisting of professional families and/or groups (approx. 8 children in one group) every group is placed exclusively in a family house or apartment (i.e. no boarding-house type of institution);
- children's centre – comprised of professional families or groups (approx. 8 children in one group), these are mainly diagnostic and/or specialised individual group; used if care cannot be carried out in home of children (from 1 January 2013 the total number of children in groups cannot exceed 40 in an object which is not an individual family house or individual apartment).

Court's decision in children's home is exercised:

- in professional families, in family house or apartment of the children's home or employee,
- in an individual diagnostic group for a necessary period of time required for specification of specialist diagnosis (no more than 6 weeks),
- in independent groups,

- in specialised individual groups (such as for children with behaviour disorders, for drug-addicts or other addicts, for children with mental disorder, mentally or physically or sense handicapped, for severely mentally handicapped children, etc.),
- in an individual group for young adults,
- in an individual group for minor mothers with children.

Exercise of court's decision in a professional family shall legally take precedence over exercise thereof in groups, and concurrently the exercise of court's decision in home of children shall legally take precedence over exercise thereof in children's centre. Children up to three years of age shall be placed in a family-type environment in compliance with the Directive of UN on substitute care.

b) Children's home for minors without accompaniment (previous upbringing of child shall be considered and cultural and religion variations of child are observed);

c) Crisis centre (in the case of exercise of court's decision, it shall carry out the measures by way of a residential form. In the crisis centre, preliminary measures may be carried out in a professional family);

d) Re-socialization centre for drug-addicts and other addicts;

e) Other facilities of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship.

Table 7/2011: Numbers and types of facilities of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship as of 31 December 2010

Self-governing region of	Children's homes *	Crisis centres	Re-socialization centres
Bratislava	8	5	4
Trnava	10	1	2
Prešov	11	2	2
Košice	14	9	2
Nitra	10	3	4
Banská Bystrica	15	4	2
Žilina	10	3	2
Trnava	13	2	1
Total	91 **	29	19

* Table 6 shows the number of children's homes based on data provided from regional, local and municipal statistics. Using this methodology of data collection during the preparation of the ROP Analysis in 2006-2007 it was not possible to ensure a uniform classification of different types of social infrastructure facilities. Current data of the MLSAF (Annual reporting of childcare in children's homes in 2004) shows that in 2004 there were 94 facilities in Slovakia falling in the category of children's homes under the current legislative provision.

** Thereof 20 facilities are established by accredited entities, being NGOs and churches.

Source: MLSAF, 2011

Deinstitutionalisation

In September 2009, an expert group at the level of European Commission elaborated a report and recommendations for Member States on the transition from institutional to community-based care.¹⁰ The objective of this study is to create practical conditions for fulfilment of rights established in international human-rights conventions (in particular, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union). In order to achieve the mentioned objective, the availability of the entire complex of community services has to be provided, enabling them to participate in every-day life. Placement of persons on a long-term basis into collective residential facilities is considered as a conduct contradictory to the above-mentioned rights and principle of equality of opportunities.

The so-called deinstitutionalisation process comprises the transformation of place, content and organisation of care provision, i.e. a transformation of providers (mainly of facilities) and concurrently a change of approach in care provision (requalification of employees, perfection of qualification and the like). A part of the deinstitutionalisation process is also an emphasis on the maximum support of

¹⁰ Report of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care.

individualised services and measures, enabling clients to remain in their natural environment, support of creation of deinstitutionalised types of facilities based on natural and standard living.

The following requirements of the European Union and socio-economic partners of the Managing Authority for the ROP have been considered in the ROP revision preparation process:

- a) to consider principles of deinstitutionalisations in the revised ROP strategy for the field of social infrastructure support;
- b) not to create conditions for further support of residential facilities or boarding or collective nature from ROP (i.e. institutions situated in mid-capacity and large-capacity objects, providing boarding and collective upbringing and care);
- c) to focus the ROP strategy in the field of social infrastructure support also on the support of social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities by way of support of community centres (see the text about community centres above).

In addition, the socio-economic partners of the Managing Authority for the ROP for social area, in particular the non-governmental sector and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR as a supervisor of national legislation for social area react to the trends of deinstitutionalisation. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR is responsible for the preparation of conception and programme documents which should initiate the process of deinstitutionalisation of social infrastructure facilities under the conditions of the SR, not only in relation to the support of such facilities from EU structural funds. The role of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR consists also in the provision of non-investment activities (ESF) for the deinstitutionalisation projects carried out within the ROP. The synergy of investment and non-investment activities is a precondition for success of the deinstitutionalisation processes.

Although there is no assumption to achieve a complete deinstitutionalisation of existing facilities in the SR until the end of the programming period 2007-2013 and there is still spare for support of humanisation of the existing facilities (mainly for seniors), the ROP strategy in 2011-2015 should be focused exclusively on the support of deinstitutionalisation processes in Slovakia.

Conclusion: In the period from approval of the ROP some changes were made in the direction of the social policy at European level, as well as there were amendments of the national legislation in social sphere, what is now completely focused on individual, family and community of natural persons, who are found in unfavourable or in critical social situation. One of the main modifications is creation of appropriate conditions for clients' retention in the genuine (home) environment.

For these reasons, there is a need to adapt the ROP strategy in the social sphere to the trends of deinstitutionalisation and to use the remaining allocation of the ROP for support social infrastructure in 2011-2015 exclusively for:

- Support of deinstitutionalisation projects, which may concurrently represent a pilot approach and to provide starting points and experience for socio-economic partners involved in the preparation of conceptual and programme documents as national strategic material for social sphere,***
- Support of community centres contributing to social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities (mainly as the key activity within local strategies of complex approach).***

3.7.5 Infrastructure of repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels and valorisation of the monument stock in the area

The repository and heritage fund institutions and cultural heritage reposing in the existing stock of immovable cultural monuments serves a crucial role in strengthening of the cultural potential of the individual regions, but also of the SR as a whole. It is possible to divide the infrastructure related to cultural potential according to several aspects.

Repository and heritage fund institutions

The repository and heritage fund institutions (e.g., galleries, libraries and museums) are significant entities ensuring preservation of collection items, historical, library or archive documents, as well as various other items, that are subjects of protection and preservation for the reasons of social cognizance preservation. These items are stored often in the non-suitable rooms without sufficient protection, what is one of the reasons why it is not possible to exhibit or made accessible to the public many of these items. Under the conditions existing in the SR, the founder's incidence in relation to the repository and heritage fund institutions is redistributed among the local and regional self-governments and the state. So, the scope of powers of the state as founder covers mainly the subjects with all-national importance (e.g., National Library, National Museum, or the facilities with specialised orientation, etc.), where support thereof is realized over the programming period 2007-2013 through the Operational Programme Informatization of Society, mainly in relation to their digitalisation and ICT. With respect to the presented, the facilities in the founders' competence of public sector (i.e., regional self-government and state administration) with the local and regional significance are subject of analysis.

Local cultural infrastructure facilities

Facilities of the local cultural infrastructure (e.g., culture houses, community centres, etc.) have mainly local character. The given facilities perform beside their roles in the sphere of culture also various leisure time and educational activities. It implies from the available data that in Slovakia there is a large number of diverse culture and community facilities, and their localisation correspondents to the number of municipalities within the region. The highest representation of culture and edification houses has the Banská Bystrica Region. With respect to the high financial demand for operating such facilities, there can be seen rationalisation trends of the founders of such facilities (i.e., of the local and regional self-governments), with efforts to integrate the facilities of local cultural infrastructure with other facilities of civil amenity.

Table 8: Number and types of repository, cultural heritage found and other cultural facilities in the SR in year 2004

REGION	GALLERIES	MUSEUMS	PUBLIC LIBRARIES	CULTURAL HOUSES / CULTURAL CENTRES / OTHER
NUTS 2 level Bratislava	3	18	87	100
Bratislava	3	18	87	100
NUTS 2 level West	5	21	879	1,373
Trnava Region	2	7	247	456
Trenčín Region	1	7	276	446
Nitra Region	2	7	356	471
NUTS 2 level Centre	7	28	744	797
Žilina Region	6	11	313	264
Banská Bystrica Region	1	17	431	533
NUTS 2 level East	6	17	967	763
Prešov Region	3	10	567	460
Košice Region	3	7	400	303
Object. Convergence	18	66	2,590	2,933
SR in total	21	84	2,677	3,033

Source: Regional Comparison 2004, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, MC SR

In spite of the fact, that the entities conducting activities in the field of culture do not participate directly in reinforcing of the economic growth of individual regions, they performs the un-substitutable functions in modern society. In particular, the repository and heritage fund institutions contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage of their regions, their inclusion in the upbringing and educational process contributes to increasing of cultural awareness of the citizens, and they boosting competitiveness of the territory through increasing its attractiveness for the citizens and visitors.

The transformation process in previous years affected also institutions in the field of culture. Their number is lower comparing to other facilities of civil amenity; however, despite of it lack of capital investments affected also this area. As well as in case of the facilities of the civil infrastructure

analysed in previous sections, also in the field of culture, structural-technical conditions of individual facilities are significant problems. Many of the given facilities must ensure technical conditions to preserve the collection or book stock. Concurrently, many structural buildings utilized by the repository and heritage fund institutions resides in the listed immovable cultural heritage monuments. These facts require a specific approach from the side of the founders, and therefore there are increased financial demands for establishing suitable conditions, too.

Based on the available data it is possible to state, that almost all galleries and museums, what are subjects of analysis are located in the growth poles. But the relatively low number of galleries and museums in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions, establishes pre-conditions that the SF in the programming period 2007-2013 will be, despite of its additional character, a significant mean for maintenance of cultural heritage of the regions and providing access to it.

It is possible to consider in relation to the public libraries, that long-term sustainability of these facilities will be linked to their digitalisation and accessing of library stock through ICT means. With respect to these considerations, it is possible to assume long-term sustainability of libraries mainly in the innovative growth poles, where sustainability relates with presence of the broader spectrum of educational and professional institutions. In total, 183 libraries are located in the innovative growth poles in the territory of Objective Convergence in the SR conditions, which thanks to their capacity, have the potential to ensure accessibility of library stock to the citizens of the broader territory.

Immovable cultural monuments

The Central Register of the Heritage Stock maintained by the MC SR registers in total, 11,611 immovable cultural monuments in the SR territory. From this number, mainly such buildings as palaces, castles, mansions, manor houses, technical monument facilities, historical parks, burgher houses are socially and culturally valuable. Issuing from available data about such monuments, it can state that 500 cultural monuments of the given type are in the private sector ownership, and 707 in ownership of the public sector entities. The highest share of selected historic monuments is in the Regions of Prešov (20.28%), Banská Bystrica (15.38%) and (Košice (15.16%). From the analysis on the structural-technical conditions of the cultural heritage stock results, that 30% of such buildings are currently in disturbed, deteriorated and desolated state, or in conditions without finished renovation.

Table 9: Palaces, castles, mansions, manor houses, historic technical facilities, burgher houses

REGION	PRIVATE SECTOR	PUBLIC SECTOR	TOGETHER
NUTS 2 level West	132	239	371
Trnava Region	47	78	125
Trenčín Region	45	70	115
Nitra Region	40	91	131
NUTS 2 level Centre	166	193	359
Žilina Region	88	64	152
Banská Bystrica Region	78	129	207
NUTS 2 level East	202	275	477
Prešov Region	123	150	273
Košice Region	79	125	204
Objective Convergence in total	500	707	1 207

Note: Table gives the data only for the Objective Convergence territory because the character of data does not enable to compare competitiveness of the regions from the view of their performance of economy and economic growth

Source: MC SR, 2005

Revitalisation of the important monuments interconnects nearly always humanisation and aesthetisation of the environment. At present, it is necessary progressively regenerate and revitalise damages of historical structures of settlements and deprived areas, either through support of individual buildings or of the entire structural complexes. Provision of the long-term functionality and economic sustainability is essential pre-conditions for revitalisation of unused or inappropriately used monuments. Potential of their future utilization should concentrate on preservation of cultural heritage of the regions, and on utilization of the given monuments in context of their historical importance.

At present, the higher share of selected monuments is in ownership of the public sector, within which is problematic just starting investment of sufficient volume of capital resources for renovation of the structural building as such.

Among the most sought historic landmarks belong also the monuments meeting criteria of the World Cultural Heritage are also subject of an interim selection for nomination pursuant to UNESCO Convention. The ruins of Spiš Castle with its surroundings, the town Banská Štiavnica with neighbouring technical monuments, the folk architecture hamlet Vlkolínec, the historic core of the town Bardejov, and the caves of Slovak Karts and Aggtelek Karts are classified as the localities of the world culture heritage. They are registered according to the respective UNESCO Convention, especially thanks to the preservation of undamaged links of cultural heritage with the original country and protected nature, as well as for their exceptionality. Measures for their protection are component part of a separate SR Government Resolution and activities of the Intradepartmental Commission. The monuments, that are most threatened, i.e., what are in desolate or damaged conditions, should have priority. With respect to their significance, the monuments in the UNESCO localities are subject of a separate overview, listed in Table 9. In the interest of effective utilization of the restricted resources from SF, as well as in the interest of regional disparities balancing through support of several regions, it is suitable to use for support of renovation of castles, manors and similar buildings of large scope other resources than are the resources from the ERDF (e.g., national resources).

Table 10: Monuments in the registered UNESCO localities

Locality	Number of monuments	Structural-technical conditions		
		Physical ruin	Desolate conditions	Damaged
Bardejov	174	1	1	24
Banská Štiavnica	264	0	14	81
Vlkolínec	85	0	0	15
The ruins of Spiš Castle with the extramural settlement	140	3	6	21

Source: MC SR, 2006

Culture is one of factors supporting growth of tourism in the region, in particular, in the localities with the lower presumption for utilization of natural heritage. The identified priorities from the territorial aspects are the unused or inappropriately utilised monuments with potential of their utilization within frame of existing cultural-learning routes. It is necessary to reconstruct the selected monuments and to provide access to the items of high cultural, historical and social value for development of cultural-learning tourism, as well as for support of the upbringing and educational process.

Analysis in the field of cultural heritage accords on the assessment of data about the repository and fund institutions at the local and regional levels, and on the data of the cultural monument stock.

Main findings:

Analysis in the field of repository and heritage fund institutions infrastructure at the local and regional levels identified the unsatisfactory conditions for preserving and accessing cultural values and library stock.

The buildings used by the repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels are in unsatisfactory structural-technical conditions, with unsatisfactory conditions for immobile visitors, moreover they characterise high rate of energy consumption of operations.

The region of Eastern Slovakia has the most numerous quanta of unused or inappropriately used cultural monuments with the potential of their future utilization in relation to preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage.

The aspect of long-term sustainability is the key presumption for successful revitalisation of monuments. Culture is one of the factors supporting growth of tourism in the region, mainly in the localities with a lower representation of natural curiosities.

Prevailing portion of selected immovable cultural monuments is in ownership of the public sector. At presents, about 30% of monuments are in the disrupted, deteriorated, desolated condition, or in state without finished renovation.

Conclusion from the analysis is recommendation to utilize the complementary and restricted resources of the Structural Funds for other priorities than to the repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional level. That substantiates respect to high number of culture houses and community educational facilities in the entire supported territory, and with regard to their relative low importance for reinforcement of the regions competitiveness.

3.7.6 Completion of the analysis in the field of infrastructure of repository and fund institutions and immovable cultural monuments on the basis of findings from the ROP assessment carried out in the year 2010

Managing Authority for ROP did not record any significant change in legislation, neither other structural changes in the area of repository and fund institutions, respectively of immovable cultural monuments, which would have any radical impact on intervention of the ROP in this area.

During implementation of the ROP was in contrast to the assumptions in the preparation of the ROP strategy ROP in years 2006-2007 identified significantly lower interest of potential beneficiaries in this area. As a principal cause of this situation can be considered the global economic crisis, whose effects were fully manifested in the territory of Slovakia during the year 2009.

Public sector entities as eligible beneficiaries participates in co-financing of projects supported by EU funds. Based on the real demand of applicants can be stated, that in times of the economic crisis, the public sector bodies expressed in the years 2009 - 2010 priority interest in the ROP interventions into other areas.

During implementation of the ROP appeared in the field of infrastructure of cultural, repository and fund institutions at local and regional level, and at the revitalization of immovable cultural monuments, that these eligible types of operation have within frame of the ROP the lowest potential to contribute to the energy efficiency of buildings owned by public sector (listed structures) and while there is a greater assumption of generation so-called net income, in accordance with Article 55 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 (e.g., revenues from direct payments from users, revenues from rental, etc.), as it is concerned facilities in the field of culture organizing various events.

In the case of immovable cultural monuments there are, in the respect of size of the individual projects, greater demands for co-financing from side of the beneficiaries, and in many cases there are necessary expensive construction and technological processes, whereby can not be excluded relative high risk of unforeseen expenses burdening the recipient (e.g., archaeological works, unforeseeable restoration works).

Concerning the foregoing facts it is recommended, so that within frame of the ROP the support will be directed into support for repository and fund institutions and/or into unused immovable cultural monuments, located on the most important and in the most visited areas, that have the greatest potential to contribute for strengthening of tourism development (in particular to cultural-cognitive tourism and to urban tourism).

A significant event during the ROP implementation is the adoption of Resolution of the SR Government No. 546/2010 of August 13th, 2010 to the proposal of the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR for utilization of a part of additional funding from EU for the SR, by which is directly imposed additional increasing of allocation ROP from funds, which were assigned to the SR in accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement among the European Parliament, European Council and European Commission on budgetary discipline and proper financial management in amount of € 60 million.

Based on this resolution, the SR Government approved an additional increasing of allocation for the purposes to secure financing of subprojects of the ECOC - Košice 2013 as a national priority. Slovak Republic is bound to the implementation of the ECC event - Košice 2013 by the Resolution of the EU Council No. 8770/09 from date April 21st, 2009.

Conclusion: Adaptation of the ROP strategy in area of cultural infrastructure to changed socio-economic conditions:

- Orientation on assistance of the most important and most visited repository institutions and fund institutions and/or unused immovable cultural monuments, located in areas that have the

greatest potential to contribute for strengthening of tourism development (in particular of the cultural-cognitive tourism);

- Creation of conditions for implementation of subprojects from the project ECOC - Košice 2013 in a separate Priority Axis of the ROP.

3.7.7 Infrastructure of tourism

In the previous period under the SR conditions, in the sphere of tourism, several strategic documents and concept documents were adopted (National Tourism Development Programme, adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 185/2001; Tourism Development Strategy, adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 632/2005; Tourism Development Concept, adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 923/2005; New Tourism Development Strategy of the Slovak Republic by the year 2013).

The field of tourism is still characterised with low coordination among the entities involved in development of tourism, despite several strategic and concept documents. Fragmentation of service providers has the consequence in unwillingness and inability to cooperate in establishing integrated products of tourism (e.g., package of services) in the destination places. Balance of foreign tourism in the year 2006 reached amount of SKK 13,635.8 million, while over the last years its amount continually increases.

Over the recent years, the local and regional self-governments began fulfil their roles, when in year 2002 the competences in the field of tourism were shifted to them from the state administration. Cooperation among the entrepreneurs in the field of tourism and self-government reported also positive progress over the last period. It is concerned above all of cooperation in marketing and presentation of municipalities, regions and tourist curiosities. However, neither in this field the potential of cooperation is fully utilised fully. As suitable appears utilization of regional clusters, partnerships at the level of the self-governments and private sector for the purposes of integrated offer of products for tourism, with emphasis on effective utilization of the natural and cultural potential.

The potential of tourism of Slovakia is relatively widespread, covering almost all decisive forms and types of tourism. The area of Objective Convergence has a large potential of utilization cultural and natural heritage, especially on the territories economically less developed regions.

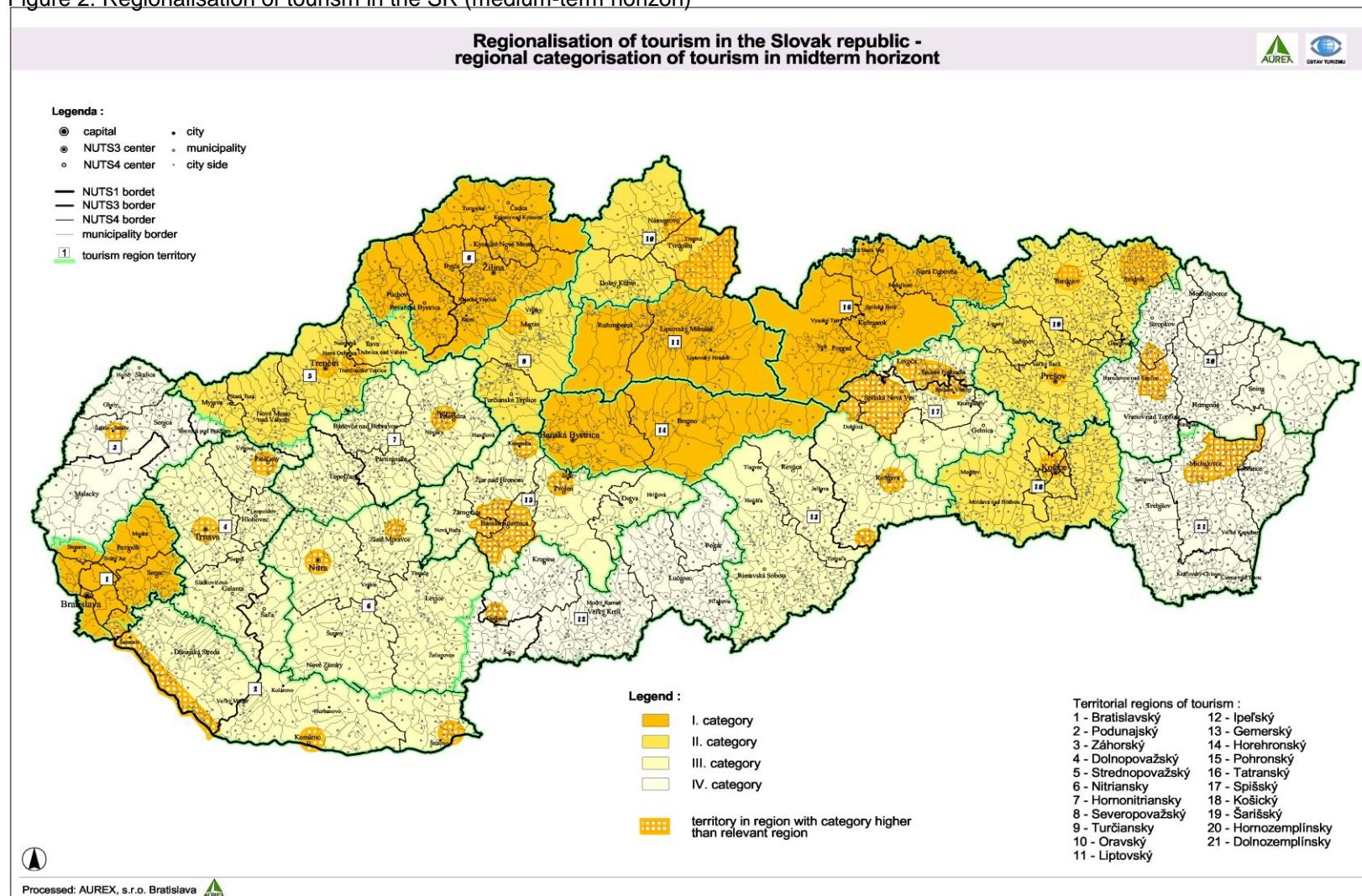
Regardless of the visit rate of the Bratislava Region (23.5%), the highest visit rate in the year 2006 reported the Žilina Region (18.2%), Prešov Region (18.1%), Banská Bystrica Region (11.8%) and Košice Region (8.5%). Other regions reported visit rates 6-7%. However, on the other hand, stays of visitors in the Bratislava Region were the shortest, only 2 nights, while in the Trnava Region stays were the longest for 4.8 nights, what caused different purposes of tourist visits in these regions.

The New Tourism Development Strategy by the year 2013 elaborated by the Ministry of Economy of the SR and adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 417/2007, analysed tourism in the SR conditions from the view of its territorial and thematic characteristics. Previously mentioned strategy identifies the following crucial forms of tourism:

- Summer tourism and stays with water,
- Spa and healthcare tourism,
- Winter tourism and winter sports,
- Urban and cultural-learning tourism,
- Rural tourism and agro-tourism.

The following figures illustrate regionalisation of tourism of the New Tourism Development Strategy:

Figure 2: Regionalisation of tourism in the SR (medium-term horizon)



Source: Aurex, 2007 Regionalisation of tourism in the SR (medium-term horizon)

Regionalisation of tourism in the SR (long-term horizon)

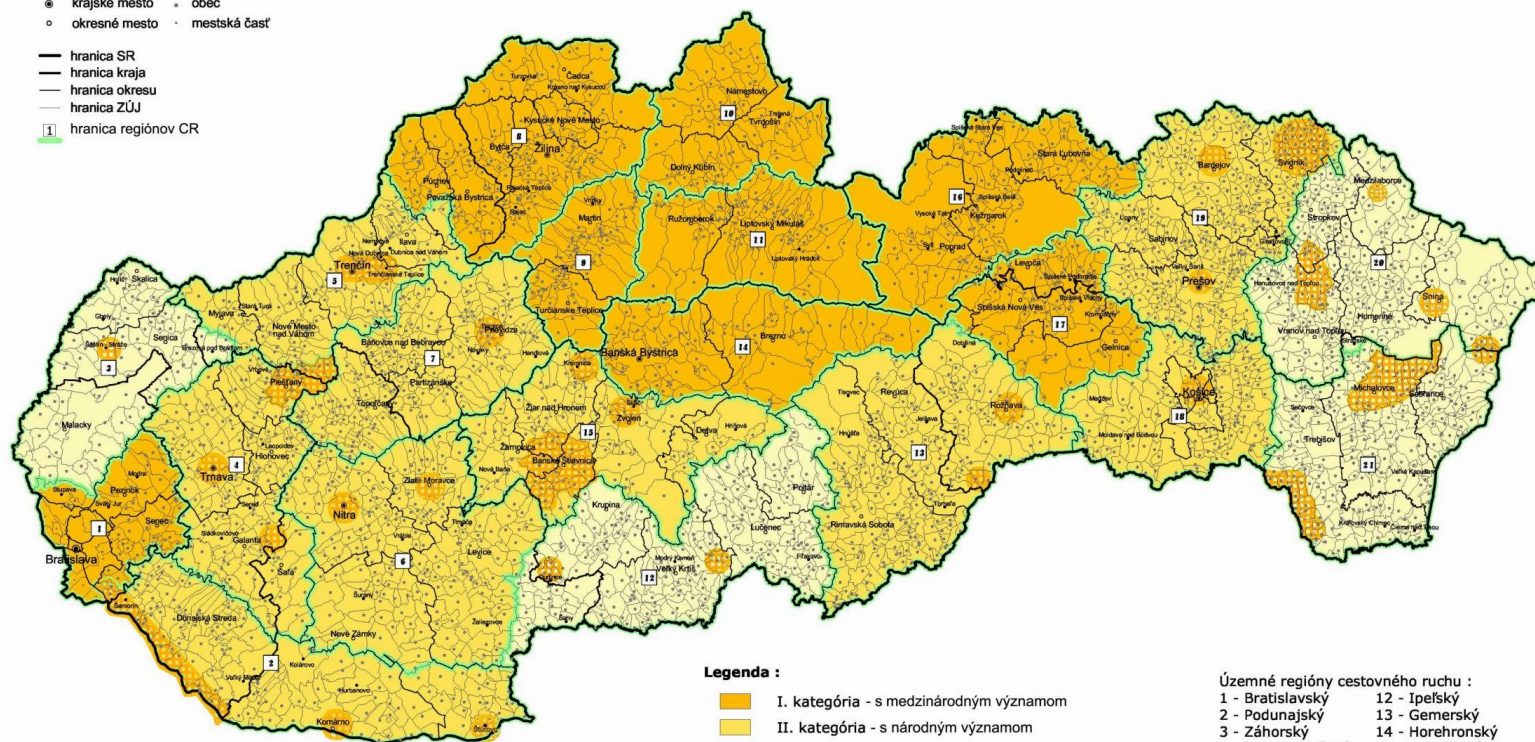
Regionalizácia cestovného ruchu v SR - Kategorizácia regiónov CR v dlhodobom horizonte



Legenda :

- hlavné mesto • mesto
- krajské mesto • obec
- okresné mesto • mestská časť

- hranica SR
- hranica kraja
- hranica okresu
- hranica ZÚJ
- 1 hranica regiónov CR



Legenda :

- I. kategória - s medzinárodným významom
- II. kategória - s národným významom
- III. kategória - s nadregionálnym významom
- IV. kategória - s regionálnym významom
- územia v regióne vyššej kategórie ako príslušný región

Územné regióny cestovného ruchu :

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 - Bratislavský | 12 - Ipľský |
| 2 - Podunajský | 13 - Gemerský |
| 3 - Záhorský | 14 - Horehronský |
| 4 - Dolnopovažský | 15 - Pohronský |
| 5 - Strednopovažský | 16 - Tatranský |
| 6 - Nitriansky | 17 - Spišský |
| 7 - Hornonitriansky | 18 - Košický |
| 8 - Severopovažský | 19 - Šarišský |
| 9 - Turčiansky | 20 - Hornozemplínsky |
| 10 - Oravský | 21 - Dolnozemplínsky |
| 11 - Liptovský | |



Based on the aforementioned document at the national level the areas of the northern part of Slovakia with their character are more suitable for mountain and winter tourism, while the south of Slovakia offers possibilities of stays near to water utilization of thermal water. Almost whole territory of Slovakia possesses numerous cultural, historical and natural attractions and curiosities, with the possibility of their utilization in tourism. There exist numerous lodging and catering facilities, as well as capacities providing additional services for tourism. However, there is still territory with the underdeveloped supportive public infrastructure, what could give support to quality of services, improve accessibility and scope of natural and cultural attractions and curiosities in the regions. That concerns mainly of the immovable infrastructure in ownership of the territorial self-governments, adjacent to the significant centres of tourism (e.g., parking places, arranged public spaces, information boards, tourist information offices, cycle lanes, etc.).

From the available data implies that the number of foreign tourists in Slovakia over the recent years is growing by higher rate and shows a higher number of overnight stays. The main departure countries according to the order are the Czech Republic, Poland, Germany and Hungary.

Table 11: Purposes of visits, shares of the purposes among the answers given by visitors, according to countries, in the year 2004

OBJECT OF INTEREST	PERCENTAGE OF ANSWERS AMONG THE VISITORS COMING FROM:			
	Czech	Poland	Germany	Hungary
Transit	18.4	19.6	51.4	33.3
Business trip / Study tour	29.4	9.6	11.6	13.0
Visit of family / visit to friends	25.1	5.0	8.7	14.2
Shopping tourism	8.3	22.4	0.0	27.6
Recreational stay	9.9	33.8	4.3	4.1
Cultural-cognitive tourism)	6.1	9.6	11.6	7.7
Healthcare stay (spa, healing, curing)	2.7	0.0	12.3	0.0

Source: Strategy of Tourism Development, Institute of Tourism, joint-stock company, 2005

The Slovak offer of products in the market of active international tourism hardly differs from offers of the neighbouring countries. In order to make targeted marketing it is important to know, what is demand of the target groups of visitors for individual attractions. The demand on the side of the visitors arriving to Slovakia is oriented mainly for recreational stays in the mountains, winter sports and stays with water. These three preferences of foreign visitors form together the prevailing majority of interest of entire demand. Then, cultural-cognitive tourism and stays in spa follows.

Table 12: Interest of foreign visitors according to individual types of tourism in Slovakia

SUBJECT OF INTEREST	2004
Winter sports	19.6
Recreation stays in mountains	17.1
Recreation stays at the water (thermal waters, water surfaces and sports)	12.0
Visits of family and visits to friends	10.0
City visits and cultural-historical stays	8.4
Shopping tourism	7.4
Transit only	7.3
Spa stays	6.3
Sightseeing tours (nature, culture and history cognition)	5.2
Agro-tourism and rural tourism	2.5
Do not consider another visit of Slovakia	4.2

Source: Strategy of Tourism Development, ME SR, 2005

As it implies from the above table, the second most significant element of tourism after visits of tourism centres (i.e., winter sports, recreation stay in mountains, recreation stay with water) are city visits and cultural-learning tourism. The potential of support, of this form of tourism, relates closely with utilization of the existing stock of immovable cultural monuments, and of repositories and cultural heritage fund institutions, which were analysed in the previous section.

Domestic tourism together with active foreign tourism represent important resources for generating gross domestic product, establishing job opportunities and accelerating regional development with multiplication effects on the activities of the linked sectors. If there were a sufficiently competitive offer within the domestic tourism activities, it would be possible to influence on the partial change in demand for passive foreign tourism activities, because an essential part of it would be absorbed by the local market. Within frame of support of domestic tourism, it is necessary to valorise natural-cultural curiosities and increase their accessibility and attractiveness.

Analysis in the field of tourism bases on the assessment of the available statistical data characterising its structure and qualitative indicators.

Main findings:

The most frequently visited are the centres of tourism with international and national significance, with the complex services used all year round.

Analyses in the field of tourism states the existence of sufficient network of tourism centres with different level, quality and size, but with lack of good-class public infrastructure and additional services.

The second most frequently represented field of tourism are town visits and cultural-learning tourism, which has in the SR conditions potential of development in the entire territory of the SR, followed by tourism linked with spa stays.

The tourism facilities often do not ensure conditions for good access of immobile clients.

The most visited regions on the Objective Convergence are the Žilina, Prešov and Banská Bystrica Regions.

3.7.8 Completion of the analysis in the field of tourism infrastructure on the basis of findings from the ROP assessment carried out in the year 2010

The consequences of global economic crisis, which were fully expressed on the Slovak economy in the year 2009 had impact also on the implementation of the ROP and on drawing of EU funds. The SR Government already adopted in this context at the turn of years 2008 and 2009 several anti-crisis measures, inter alia, aimed at intensifying drawdown of EU funds. In the case of ROP the Managing Authority focused primarily on intensive implementation of those areas of support, which represented the most significant development priorities of the municipalities with the greatest contribution to job creation, reduction of the energy consumption of buildings, and what have the biggest benefit in terms of fast and effective support of the SR economics at the time of private investment drop-out in the construction industry.

Following this fact, the first call for applications for grant assistance to the tourism infrastructure was declared only at the end of February 2010.

Strategy of ROP for tourism was set in the year 2007 in response to the document *New strategy of tourism in SR by the year 2013*, which was approved by the SR Government Resolution No. 417/2007 on May 9th, 2007. The ROP strategy is focused on areas with most important contribution to increasing in competitiveness and development of tourism in Slovakia. In the year 2008, the *New strategy of tourism in SR by the year 2013* was modified by the SR Government Resolution No. 461/2008 and supplemented by the so-called long term horizon of tourism regionalization. In consequence of this change within the frame of ROP expanded circle of potential applicants in terms of the project locality qualification for almost the entire territory of the Objective Convergence.

Initial strategy of the ROP as one of the basic assumptions of efficient and effective support to the tourism infrastructure in the context of the NSRF defines collaboration of the Managing Authority for the ROP and Managing Authority of the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth (hereinafter referred to as "OP CEG"). A demarcation line between the both two operational

programmes is defined on level of beneficiaries so, that the ROP is in tourism promoting oriented on the beneficiaries from public sector, and the OP CEG is oriented on the beneficiaries from the private sector. On the part of MA for ROP is collaboration and complementarity with the OP CEG based on exchange of information and ensuring participation of a representative of the OP CEG in the selection procedure and in the Monitoring Committee for ROP. On the other part, the Managing Authority for the OP CEG began with implementation of projects already in the year 2008, with no real involvement of the Managing Authority for ROP into implementation of support in mentioned area of the OP CEG. For that reason, the original intention to achieve significant synergy and complementarity between both two operational programmes promoting tourism in the first half of the program period was not realized.

Significant change in sphere of tourism sector is adoption of the Act No. 91/2010 Coll., on promoting tourism from March 3rd, 2010, which modifies assistance to the tourism in Slovakia, rights and duties of natural persons and legal entities involved in tourism, production of concept documents, and funding of the tourism development. This Act represents a new and first systemic arrangement for tourism sphere, because until its adoption has sphere of promoting tourism was not systematically arranged.

The above cited Act defines some basic concepts, such as tourism promotion, what for the purposes of this Act means activities aimed at increasing of the number of domestic and foreign visitors, extension of their stay in Slovakia territory, and increasing of their contribution to the economy. At the same time it defines scope of incidence of legal persons in tourism, whereby self-governing regions and municipalities play major roles particularly in the development of plans, strategies and concepts for development of tourism, as well as in creating conditions for cooperation with business subjects, and in tasks at implementation of the state policy of tourism, and so on. In the sense of cited Act there was established to municipalities an obligation, to build the infrastructure supporting tourism activities, which falls within the competence of municipality.

Hereby is regulated establishment, operation, as well as the rights and responsibilities of regional and provincial tourism organizations, whose main role is to promote and to create conditions for development of tourism within their territorial sphere of action. Regional Tourism Organisation is a legal entity established by a memorandum of foundation. Its formation requires registration into the Registry of district and regional tourism organizations. Members of the regional organizations are region self-government and at least one regional organization operating on the territory of region.

A District Tourism Organisation is a legal entity, which may be established by the memorandum of foundation with business subject at least 5 adjacent municipalities, or town districts of Bratislava and Košice. The formation of a district tourism organizations also requires registration into the registry of district and regional tourism organizations.

Adoption of the Act No. 91/2010 Coll., on the promotion of tourism, can be appreciated very positive, since with its entry into force at the end of 2011 shall be in the SR created a complex system for support of tourism development with participation of legal entities and natural persons under defined legal conditions.

Following the abovementioned facts (particularly with regard to extension of territorial concentration) focusing of tourism approach closer to the project of settlements regeneration (completion of public spaces, sidewalks, cycle paths, small architecture elements, orientation panels, bus stops, etc.). Those types of activities were supported in a half of growth-poles through the ROP interventions in the area of settlements regeneration. Therefore a call was announced in 2010 only for non-investment projects in tourism with focus on the support of tourism clusters, establishment of partnerships among actors in tourism, creation of complex information portals, marketing activities, etc. in compliance with the new national legislation.

In reference to all the mentioned facts, it is recommended to adjust accordingly the financial plan of ROP in favour of areas of the ROP support that represent the most significant development priorities of self-governments and to use the remaining allocation within the frame of tourism infrastructure for the maximisation of the (so far unsuccessful) synergy of interventions with OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, for instance through support of non-commercial public infrastructure of tourism adjacent to the most important tourist destinations supported within the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth.

Conclusion: Adaptation of the ROP strategy in the sphere of tourism to the changed legislative and socio-economic conditions in an attempt to maximise the synergy between OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth and the ROP:

- **Updating of the financial plan for ROP in favour of such areas of the ROP support, which represent the most significant development priorities of self-governments;**
- **Utilisation of the remaining allocation for the support of investment projects focused on the non-commercial public infrastructure adjacent to the most important tourist destinations with all year round utilization supported within the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth and which have identified shortcomings in term of public infrastructure.**

3.7.9 Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services

One of elementary principal public services that have been available absolutely to the all inhabitants of Slovakia regardless any difference, is assistance in emergency, provided to population by the rescue services. Increasing number of various types of crisis situations (i.e., especially natural disasters and technological accidents), as well as standard emergency situations (e.g., mainly fires and traffic accidents) in the course of the recent years points out at need to pay increased attention to support of the subjects, which significantly participate in the protection of health, property and environment. Therefore, the effectively operating rescue services are an indispensable component of the quality public infrastructure in the region.

At the beginning of new millennium, effort was devoted to establishing of appropriate legal framework for the rescue units functioning. (Especially the Act No. 315/2001 Coll., on Fire-fighting and Rescue Corps, as amended by later regulations; Act No. 314/2001 Coll., on fire protection, as amended by later regulations - Municipal Fire Brigades; Act No. 544/2002 Coll., on Mountain Rescue Service, as amended by later regulations; and Act No. 129/2002 Coll., on the integrated rescue system, as amended by the later regulations). At present the state and self-governments focuses their attention to the process of modernization of the obsolete rescue equipments. Except outfitting of several rescue services workplaces by transport vehicles, the non-commercial rescue services were not over the recent decades a part of any supporting development programmes, either national from public resources, or from other resources.

Considering high financial costingness of this process, in the past twenty years, the founders of the rescue units substantially reduced their investments into repairs and modernisation of structural buildings operated by these units. This has resulted in the unsatisfactory technical conditions, and in many cases alarming technical conditions or state of disrepair. Majority of these buildings requires reconstruction mainly due to unsatisfactory conditions for problem-free performance of the basic roles of rescue corps, and high level of energy consumption and environmental seriousness of their operation and maintenance.

In the year 2005 totally 157 fire stations covered the interventions activities on the territory of the SR (excluding the territory of the Bratislava region). These fire stations falls under the territorial administration of 48 district directorates of the Fire-fighting and Rescue Corps (hereinafter "the FRC"), and 2 Rescue Brigades of the FRC, what represented about 3,500 members of the FRC. The training infrastructure of FRC complements also training areas in Žilina and Horné Orešany. Besides these professional fire-fighting units there are in total 1,843 Municipal Fire Brigades (hereinafter "the MFB") with 16,533 members were registered in the year 2005 within the mentioned territory, meeting the requirements for intervention activity. The Mountain Rescue Service (hereinafter "the MRS") is dislocated within the Prešov, Banská Bystrica and Žilina Regions.

It implies from the given data, that the non-commercial rescue services, besides the FRC and the MFB, whose workplaces are evenly localised over the all SR territory, are localised, in particular, in the territory of the Prešov, Žilina and Banská Bystrica Regions.

Analysis of the territorial distribution of the personnel and equipments of the FRC pointed out at the almost optimal placement of individual buildings of the FRC. The town of Košice and Trnava are exceptions, where the current localisation of the FRC buildings is not satisfactory, or sufficient in terms of arrival distances into some parts of the respective intervention territory. The reason is continually growing density of transportation, ongoing growing rates of built-up areas of the territory, through that the arrival time of a rescue unit to the citizen, who falls into an emergency, is significantly prolonged. Analysis identifies necessity of support to 105 workplaces of the FRC in the Objective Convergence territory.

Table 13: Overview of the non-commercial rescue service facilities in the SR territory

REGION	NUMBER OF THE FRC FACILITIES	NUMBER OF THE MFB	NUMBER OF THE MRS
Bratislava	12	43	0
NUTS level 2 Bratislava REGION	12	43	0
NUTS level 2 West	53	596	0
Trnava	18	210	0
Trenčín	16	262	0
Nitra	19	124	0
NUTS level 2 Centre	50	688	8
Žilina	24	354	6
Banská Bystrica	26	334	2
NUTS level 2 East	54	559	3
Prešov	33	341	2
Košice	21	218	1
Territory of Objective Converge in total	157	1,843	11
SR in total	169	1,886	11

Source: Ministry of Interior of the SR, 2006

Figure 5d in the Annex 5 shows territorial distribution of the FRC facilities participating in intervention activities within the Objective Convergence territory in the conditions of the SR.

Analysis of the rescue activities of the individual rescue units, what forms the so-called integrated rescue system, clearly shown the fact that the Fire-fighting and Rescue Corps have the majority share in participating in rescue operations in case of all type of extraordinary/emergency events. For instance, in the year 2005 the Fire-fighting and Rescue Corps performed apart from the Bratislava Region territory in total 26,066 interventions. Rescue interventions of the Fire-fighting and Rescue Corps complemented especially at larger scale rescue interventions, such as flood, the Municipal Fire Brigades (in the year 2005 they performed 2,429 interventions apart from the Bratislava Region territory).

The resort of the Ministry of Interior SR elaborated a Concept of territorial distribution of the personnel and equipments of the FRC (hereinafter "the Concept"), determining competence of the fire fighting units and laying down rules of their cooperation in the interest of saving people and property salvage in cases of fires, natural disasters and other emergencies. All that is made for the purposes of providing effective aid of the fire-fighting units, with an aim to determine the basic level of guaranteed aid provided through interventions of the fire-fighting units, depending on the level and category of danger of the respective territory. The goal of the territorial distribution of the personnel and equipment is to ensure, that the arrival of the fire-fighting unit in the entire SR territory will be within 15 minutes from reporting of an event to the operational centre of the rescue service component.

However, it is not possible to achieve arrival time of 15 minutes with the current number of the fire stations and without increasing of the number of FRC personnel. Just due this reason is anticipated utilization of the MFBs, in the areas where the arrival time of FRC units within the intervention territory is longer than 15 minutes.

At the rescue operations in the inaccessible mountain areas, in the rescue operations dominated the Mountain Rescue Service (e.g., in the year 2005 the MRS intervened 1,585 times, including services and assistance to skiers). The Mountain Rescue Service, based on contractual relationships, cooperates with two civil associations: Mountain Service in Slovakia (in the year 2005 participated in 131 interventions) and the Tatra Mountain Service - Voluntary Corp (in the year 2005 participated in 14 interventions). With respect to the relatively excessive representation of mountainous areas in the territory of the Slovak Republic, activities of these rescue units are irreplaceable. In addition, the Medical Rescue Service participates significantly in the health and lives protection of the people in emergencies, support thereof provides the Operational Programme Healthcare in the programming period 2007-2013. The share of remaining rescue teams of the overall rescue interventions is either negligible by percentage, or relates to the rescue teams engaged only in the specific rather unique

types of extraordinary situations, (e.g., control chemical laboratories of the Civil defence), or what have narrowly specified territory of operations (e.g., Mining Rescue Service, enterprises' fire units), or which are active on the commercial basis.

Analysis in the field of non-commercial rescue services in the SR territory issues from the available data of the Ministry of Interior of the SR.

Main findings:

Analysis of the spectrum of the non-commercial rescue services operating in the SR territory points out to unsatisfactory conditions, in some cases almost emergency conditions of the buildings and respective equipment used.

Distribution of the FRC workplaces in the intervention territories in the SR territory in some cases does not reach arrival of rescue units within the sufficient time within 15 minutes.

Operation of the FRC within some problematic areas should be suitable substituted through the selected MFBs operations, where the Ministry of Interior of the SR will support the MFBs sustainability.

The rescue unit facilities of mountain services type are localised mainly in the territory of the Prešov, Žilina and Banská Bystrica Regions.

The Medical rescue services were not included in the analysis.

3.7.10 Completion of the analysis in the field of non-commercial rescue services infrastructure on the basis of findings from the ROP assessment carried out in the year 2010:

In the process of the ROP implementation during the period 2007-2010 there has been no change in strategic direction of the SR in area of non-commercial rescue services infrastructure, and the ROP strategy was successfully implemented. ROP through its interventions significantly contributes to the filling of nationwide strategy in area of non-commercial rescue services, and focuses on the state institutions – facilities of the Fire-fighting and Rescue Service of the Ministry of Interior of the SR and municipal facilities – facilities of Municipal Fire Brigades.

The concept of spatial deployment of personnel and equipment of the Fire-fighting and Rescue Service and Municipal Fire Brigades in the Slovak Republic territory, which is a background document for the ROP strategy in area of non-commercial services infrastructure, was not fundamentally changed from the ROP adoption in the year 2007. Facilities of the Fire-fighting and Rescue Service henceforth represent the structural part of the mentioned concept, what was developed at the national level.

In accordance with results of regular assessment of the ROP implementation up to now may be stated, that to announced calls more quickly responded those applicants who establish the Municipal Fire Brigades. Lower number of supported facilities of the Fire-fighting and Rescue Service is linked to setting of the budget rules, which prevent the Ministry of Interior of the SR developing of all, eventually of majority projects in one financial year.

The first call for support to the facilities of Mountain Rescue Service was declared only at the beginning of the year 2010, because in the year 2009 in the aftermath of the global economic crisis, the Management Authority for ROP focused intensively on the implementation of such areas of assistance, which represented the most significant development priorities of self-governments with the greatest contribution to creation of jobs, reducing energy consumption of buildings, and which had the greatest benefit in terms of rapid and effective support for economy of the Slovak Republic at the time of private investments dropout in the area of construction industry. Based on this call, a sufficient number of projects was approved in order to fulfil the planned target values of measureable indicators.

Conclusion: In connection with successful fulfilling of the specified objectives in area of the non-commercial services infrastructure, the ROP financial plan may be adjust accordingly in favour of support to the areas, what represents the most significant development priorities of the self-governments.

Conclusions from the performed assessment and from the updated analysis of situation confirmed correctness of the original settings of the ROP strategy in area of non-commercial rescue services. Nevertheless, it is necessary to increase the share of the Fire-fighting and Rescue Service facilities in the structure of supported facilities for purpose to achieve the initially set proportion of state and municipal facilities. The support of non-commercial rescue services in 2011-2015 should be in the context of achievement of the ROP targets focused exclusively on the support of Fire-Fighting and Rescue Service facilities.

3.7.11 Regeneration of settlements

The natural environment is an important factor influencing quality of life of its inhabitants. Aesthetic and function elements of the tangible infrastructure of settlements increase settlements attractiveness and influence the potential of social and economic developments of the municipality, or of the town.

The following fields are subject of analysis in relation to the thematic field of settlements regeneration:

- Structure of settlements in the SR territory,
- Tangible infrastructure of settlements (i.e., public spaces and open spaces, components of small architecture),
- Integrated strategies of urban areas development and infrastructure of housing in towns,
- Roma settlements,
- Strategic documents on the regions development in the Objective Convergence territory.

Structure of settlements in the SR territory

The settlement structure in the Slovak Republic is characterised by high level of disintegration. Of the total number 2,891 municipalities (in the year 2004), 67% are small municipalities with the number of inhabitants up to 1,000, whereby live only about 17% of the population. The urban population (with 55% portion) predominates in the current population. The core of urban structure comprises medium-sized and small towns up to 50 thousand inhabitants, comprising more than 90% of urban settlements.

Further information about the structure of settlements from the point of quantitative characteristics are analysed in section 3.2. In addition, Annex 4 titled as Territorial Concentration describes the mutual agglomeration links among the individual municipalities and towns in the SR territory, and their importance given by amenity of the diverse type of the infrastructure, within the methodology of identification of growth poles.

Tangible infrastructure of settlements

The tangible infrastructure of the towns and municipalities comprises of public-accessible spaces and concourses, squares, local roads, walkways, elements of public greenery, public lighting, public sanitary facilities, elements of small architecture, etc. The local infrastructure in the settlements comprises an integral part of public spaces that together with streets form an urban backbone of settlements and influence to the decisive extent their functional social and aesthetic-cultural value. The given components of tangible infrastructure are predominantly in ownership of towns and municipalities. Their technical conditions and aesthetic levels are important determinants of life quality of the population and of territory attractiveness not only for their inhabitants, but also for inhabitants of surrounding areas, tourists and potential investors, establishing so the pre-conditions for their further development.

Arrangements of public areas and spaces was realized in recent years particularly in settlements, what by their economic power were able to generate their own resources, or obtain foreign resources for the necessary capital investments (e.g., renewed central zones of the all regional towns, former district towns and also bigger municipalities, generally with more than 5,000 inhabitants). Since the nineties of the 20th century, the improving state of the settlements tangible infrastructure has been apparent, in particular, in the central zones of bigger towns. The given phenomenon relates with the entire process of the society transformation, where the accompanying phenomena thereof are developments of private ownership and business, and changes in functioning of local self-governments. However, lack of capital resources for more excessive investment activities into the public property of municipalities and towns furthest result, that the tangible infrastructure in ownership of municipalities does not accomplish the required functional and aesthetic features.

Limited potentialities for acquiring support of the tangible infrastructure development in municipalities (e.g., ERDF in the shortened programming period 2004-2006, PHARE, and diverse national resources) met in the past together with demands, what significantly exceeded available volume of financial resources. In the programming period 2007-2013, it is possible for the first time within the SR to provide support from the EU Structural Funds to the municipalities with the statute of town for such purposes. The MCRD SR constantly registers high interest of local self-governments in support of the given types of activities.

With respect to the diverse character of the tangible infrastructure components of settlements and their scope, it is necessary to take into account the priorities specified in the ground plans of towns and municipalities, or of their zones. From the point of view of planar support of the area, it is necessary to set priorities within the entire number of municipalities, in the interest to achieve synergic effects and sustainability of interventions.

Infrastructure of housing and integrated strategies of urban areas development

Members States acceded to the EU after May 1st, 2004 should realize support of housing through the ERDF, on ground of programming operations within frame of integrated strategies of the urban development, or of the Priority Axis for areas physically devastated or threatened by physical deterioration or social exclusion. This is in accordance with the Article 7 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and Council (EC) No. 1080/2006 of July 5th, 2006 on the ERDF, repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1783/1999.

Fundamental pre-requisite of the projects for integrated development of urban areas implementation is existence of their engaged, integrated and sustainable strategy for solution of the high concentration of economic, environmental and social problems in urban areas. The strategies considering aforesaid aspects are in the SR conditions contained in land-use planning backgrounds, town planning documents and in economic and social development programmes, what implying for the towns directly from relevant SR legislation for the field of land-use planning and regional development.

Only 138 municipalities of the entire number of 2,891 municipalities in the SR have the statute of town. It is possible to consider urban settlements as main engines of the regions development, what concentrate social and economic activities in their territories. However, within urban settlements there are areas affected or threatened by physical devastation or social exclusion. Just such areas are eligible to implement integrated strategies of urban areas development. In their frame it is possible to support also investment into housing, pursuant to the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006 of December 8th, 2006, laying down implementing rules to the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, setting general provisions on ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund, and the European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1080/2006 on the ERDF. According to the given Regulation, with respect to the diversity of situations prevailing in the new Members States, it is required to prepare a list of criteria for identification of areas affected or threatened by physical devastation and social exclusion, where the investment into housing can be eligible for co-financing. It concerns the interventions eligible for co-financing, aimed at renovation of the joint sections and joint equipment of multi-family dwelling houses, or at providing modern social housing of good quality through investing into renovation and change in utilization the existing buildings in ownership of the public authorities or non-profit operators.

Condition for providing investments into housing is their implementation within frame of integrated strategy of urban areas development, where physical devastation and social exclusion affects or threaten such urban areas. It is not possible to assess the criteria for identification of given areas in the SR conditions uniformly for the whole territory of Objective Convergence. Application of the above given issues to the SR conditions requires differentiated approach to different towns, with respect to various characteristics of individual regions of the SR (i.e., economic performance, amenity of the road infrastructure, size of settlements, etc).

Analysis of social, urban and economic characteristics aims at the towns exceeding 15,000 inhabitants, according to data of the Statistical Office of the SR of the year 2005. There are 48 such towns in the territory of Objective Convergence (Annex 8). In the towns with lower number of inhabitants, as a rule, it is not important area differentiating to a central part and to individual urban districts, where settled relevant number of inhabitants.

Issuing from the available statistic data can be state in general, that the population of seven regional towns moderately declines, however that is not due to the low birth rate. It concerns a phenomenon of

so-called concentrated de-concentration, i.e., concentration of the productive population from larger towns into surrounding municipalities. In such towns in the recent time began appear also suburban trends, where a part of inhabitants with higher incomes leave to the suburban areas, due to securing higher quality of housing comparing to multi-family housing in the residential areas with mixed ownership structure, and with differentiated income brackets of inhabitants. The given phenomenon has a consequence, that the traditional, mostly panel buildings of residential areas in the medium-sized or larger towns will be less attractive for the productive population in the closest years, with the risk of concentration of low-income and marginalised groups of the population. Decline of the population of medium-sized towns is due to aging of the population and the work force mobility for job.

Based on the assessment of available statistic data on social, economic, urban planning and physical indicators of the towns in supported area, it is not possible to define common general characteristics and trends for all towns. However, in all analysed towns were identified urban areas, which comply with the characteristics "*affected or threatened by physical devastation and social exclusion*". The reasons of given threats are differentiated, depending on the regions. Recommendation of the analysis for the strategic section of the ROP is a cognition, that for interventions to prevent arising of urban areas affected by physical devastation and social exclusion is needed individual approach, considering the conditions in the above given 48 towns of the Objective Convergence territory. For the purposes of eligible areas identification, it is necessary to elaborate explicit groups of criteria for assessing socio-demographic characteristics, as well as characteristics of economic performance of appurtenant urban area, characteristics of physical state of the urban environment, environmental characteristics, and other groups of indicators if appropriate.

It is possible to implement support of housing through the ROP exclusively as a component part of integrated strategies of the urban areas development, in terms of Article 7 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EC) No. 1080/2006 of July 5th, 2006 on the ERDF, repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1783/1999.

The housing stock of the Slovak Republic, according to the results of PHC 2001, comprised of 1,884,846 flats, of which 1,665,536 were permanently occupied (88.4%), and 219,310 were not occupied (11.6%). Flats in family houses made 49.2% of the permanently occupied housing stock, and represents the prevailing form of housing in the smaller towns and municipalities, outside of urban areas. During ten years from the last census in the year 1991, the total housing stock increased by 116,013 flats (by 6.6%), and the permanently occupied stock increased by 47,708 flats (by 2.9%).

In total 2,071,743 households underwent census what was by 244,168 households more than in the year 1991. This increase compared with the year 1991 is due primarily to faster splitting of households resulting from the increased rate of divorces, earlier separation of young family members, whereby declines average size of the households undergoing census.

The comparison of data obtained from the different censuses shows changes in the level of housing. There are some statistical proofs concerning to housing: declined number of inhabitants per a flat, increased number of permanently occupied flats per 1,000 inhabitants, increased average floorage of a flat, increased average number of rooms in a flat, decreased number of one-room and two-rooms flats, and increased proportion of flats with more rooms. According to experiences from other countries, the threshold value of satisfying essential housing needs is around 400 flats per 1,000 inhabitants. In Slovakia, there were 350.4 flats and 309.6 permanently occupied flats per 1,000 inhabitants in the year 2001. At the same time, to each 100 households that underwent census came 91.0 flats and 80.4 permanently occupied flats.

The housing situation significantly differs from the point of view of the regions and districts. The Banská Bystrica Region achieved the highest level of housing, while the Prešov Region the lowest, as far as the number of flats per 1,000 inhabitants. As for the category of flats, the highest percentage of the 1st category flats is in the Žilina and Trenčín Regions, and the lowest percentage of the 1st category flats have the Banská Bystrica region. Regulations related to the housing policy in the SR conditions define the qualitative categories of flats.

Table 14: Permanently occupied flats per regions in the year 2001

REGION	NUMBER OF INHABITANTS	PERMANENTLY OCCUPIED FLATS TOGETHER	NUMBER OF PERMANENTLY OCCUPIED FLATS PER 1,000 INHABITANTS	NUMBER OF INHABITANTS PER A FLAT
NUTS level 2 Bratislava	587,473	242,452	412.7	2.69
Bratislava	587,473	242,452	412.7	2.69
NUTS 2 level West	1,870,007	591,031	316.00	3.16
Tmava Region	551,003	168,831	306.4	3.26
Trenčín Region	605,582	191,081	315.5	3.17
Nitra Region	713,422	231,119	324.0	3.09
NUTS 2 level Centre	1,354,453	420,239	310.26	3.2
Žilina Region	692,332	202,389	292.3	3.42
Banská Bystrica Region	662,121	217,850	329.0	3.04
NUTS 2 level East	1,555,980	435,656	279.98	3.57
Prešov Region	789,968	208,319	263.7	3.79
Košice Region	766,012	227,337	296.8	3.37
Area of Objective Convergence	4,780,440	1,446,926	302.67	3.30
SR in total	5,367,913	1,689,378	317.55	3.29

Source: PHC 2001

Table 15: Structure of flats pursuant to the quality category of flats in percentage

REGION	STRUCTURE OF FLATS PURSUANT TO THE CATEGORY OF FLATS IN %			
	1 st category	2 nd category	3 rd category	4 th category
NUTS 2 level Bratislava	88.3	8.2	0.8	2.7
Bratislava	88.3	8.2	0.8	2.7
NUTS 2 level West	76.6	12.8	3.0	7.6
Tmava Region	77.8	13.0	2.6	6.6
Trenčín Region	79.6	11.2	2.5	6.6
Nitra Region	72.2	14.2	4.0	9.6
NUTS 2 level Centre	76.05	11.8	3.15	9
Žilina Region	80.3	10.3	2.1	7.3
Banská Bystrica Region	71.8	13.3	4.2	10.7
NUTS 2 level East	76.4	11.95	3.55	8.1
Prešov Region	75.8	11.9	3.6	8.7
Košice Region	77.0	12.0	3.5	7.5
Objective Convergence	76.33	12.19	3.25	8.23
SR in total	77.85	11.76	2.9	7.46

Source: PHC 2001

Analysis of the situation in the field of housing pointed out to the fact that about 49% of the SR population lives in flats within the apartment dwelling houses. Over 70% of the existing apartment dwelling houses are residential panel buildings, built up through mass housing construction using prefabricated technology (i.e., the so-called panel-houses). Despite relatively low age of the housing stock in SR, there is high level of housing amenity on the one hand in the majority of the apartment dwelling houses. That result from the used technology of construction, but on the other hand there are low qualitative features, resulting from the insufficient maintenance and repairs, occurrence of system failures, and inconvenient thermal-insulation characteristics.

Based on the analysis of state and needs for financial resources to renewal of housing stock in the period 2007-2013 is evident that 602,635 flats requires complex renovation, it means entire housing stock built by the year 1983, and 175,651 flats needs cyclic maintenance and repairs. This is totally 778,286 flats, while the expected overall costs for their maintenance, repair and renewal are calculated in an amount SKK 396,004 million.

Almost 40 % of the population lives in panel apartment dwelling houses in the SR conditions. With respect to the expected amount of financial resources needed for renewal of panel apartment dwelling

houses, establishing a part of urban residential areas, it is necessary to combine several resources. This means own resources of the flat owners, resources from the maintenance and repair funds generated by the apartment dwelling houses, private resources of financial institutions, public resources from the State Budget, and eventually the EU resources, and also cooperation of the all involved partners. Moreover, it is inevitable that renewal of the unsatisfactory housing stock will be coordinated with other supportive activities, establishing a resource of prevention of the threatening spread of social-pathologic phenomena and social degradation of the population.

Up to now there is no integrated urban development strategy performed through the EU Funds under the SR conditions. Although a number of local self-governments made progress in project preparing of given plans, until now no real resources are available for implementing projects of a larger extent. The ROP can establish conditions for implementing such projects that are becoming increasingly more frequent topical theme in context of European Development Policy through support of a broad spectrum of eligible activities.

Integration of the broad scope of the ROP activities and concurring activities of the towns strengthens in a significant way the growth of their competitiveness.

Roma settlements

Based on the socio-graphic mapping of the Roma settlements, performed in the year 2004, there were registered 1,575 settlements defined as Roma settlements. In 776 municipalities these communities live integrated, spread among the majority population. Remaining communities represent the municipal and urban concentrations (177 in the SR territory), i.e., the settlements localised on the border of town/municipality (within the Objective Convergence territory it is 333 settlements with 70,946 inhabitants), or the settlements spatially remote/separated from a town/municipality (within the Objective Convergence territory it is 278 such settlements with 50,657 inhabitants). Almost half of all dwellings in these settlements situated primarily in the rural areas are legal masonry houses (41.2%), flats in apartment houses (25.5 %). To the illegal types of dwelling belong masonry houses (12.5%), wooden houses (2.00%) and the all non-standard types of dwellings, such as shacks (15.8%), Unimo - cells (1.1%), non-residential premises (0.6%) and other buildings. As for the infrastructure amenity, in these Roma settlements is running water in 39.4% of settlements, sewage in 12.9%, electric energy in 88.9%, and gas in 15.1% of settlements. In 46 Roma settlements situated outside towns or municipalities there is almost no infrastructure, and in twelve of them, there is even no electricity.

Existence of segregated and separated Roma settlements is a significant characteristic predominantly of the rural areas of the Prešov, Košice, but also Banská Bystrica Regions. In the Prešov and Košice Regions are equally 216 separated or segregated settlements identified, but in such settlements in the Prešov Region live the most people, i.e., 54,142 persons.

Table 16: Overview of Roma settlements

Region	Number of integrated settlements in spread	Number of persons	Number of integrated settlements in concentration	Number of persons	Number of settlements on the border of the municipality	Number of persons	Number of settlements outside the municipality	Number of persons	Number of settlements in total	Number of persons in total
Košice	171	23,053	43	9,835	105	27,683	111	23,705	430	84,276
Prešov	122	25,952	27	5,202	131	33,503	85	20,639	365	85,296
Banská Bystrica	233	36,798	41	8,185	55	6,053	63	4,780	392	55,816
Žilina	18	2,212	12	1,861	5	396	5	886	40	5,355
Nitra	117	19,317	17	3,115	14	1,327	4	250	152	24,009
Trenčín	46	3,005	4	880	7	440	0	0	57	4,325
Trnava	55	8,938	27	3,468	16	1,544	10	397	108	14,347
Bratislava	14	1,607	6	1,025	5	773	6	123	31	3,528
SR in total	776	120,882	177	33,571	338	71,719	284	50,780	1,575	276,952

Source: Socio-graphic mapping of Roma settlements in the SR, 2004

The interventions into the tangible infrastructure of municipalities and into relevant segregated or separated Roma settlements cannot deliver alone the desired effect in elimination of living standard regression of their inhabitants and of social exclusion deepening. In the interest of a complex

integrated support of the marginalised Roma communities, it is necessary to perform a broad spectrum of interventions, both of investment and non-investment nature, while support of housing is possible to realize exclusively in urban areas, in terms of the rules applicable on the SF.

The identified problem in supporting Roma settlements are the difficulties related to the implementation of investment projects, due to pending property rights settlement of plots of land in the segregated and separated Roma settlements. Therefore, implementation of the projects in Roma settlements can issue from the already existing pool of projects elaborated within the grant scheme PHARE, mainly at the beginning of programming period 2007-2013. It concerns the municipalities who succeeded to elaborate project documentation for building-up water supply network, sewage network, sewage connections, bridging over creek, bitumen communications, walkways, etc. Another issue for implementation of projects, supporting improvement of life conditions of marginalised Roma communities represents the prepared projects in micro-regions, selected by the Office of Plenipotentiary of the SR Government for the Roma Communities.

Development documents

The concept-based approach to land-use planning at the level of the involved self-governing regions relates with development of territories of the SR regions. Through the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI was in sizable extent implemented support of preparation and updating of development documents for the municipalities, towns, associations of municipalities and self-governing regions (i.e., land planning backgrounds, land-use planning documents, programs of economic and social development, etc.) within the shortened programming period 2004-2006. The aforementioned operational programme supported about 400 projects of such orientation. Moreover, other options for obtaining support for the given non-investment projects with development character exist there in case of local self-governments in the SR conditions. Therefore, over the programming period 2007-2013, it appears as effective to support preparation and designing of development documents only at the level of the NUTS 3 regions, or NUTS level 2 regions. The given field of support is in context of the ROP only a marginal field, because in the current situation it concerns in case of regions mainly of updating documents, what exists during the 7-year programming period 2007-2013.

Analysis in the field of settlements regeneration was oriented on the structure of settlement in the SR territory, and to assessment of development of the settlements tangible infrastructure. But the analysis dealt with needs of implementation integrated strategies of development, including the infrastructure of housing in the towns, as well as to analysis of Roma settlements and the need to elaborate development documents at the level of regions in the Objective Convergence territory too.

Main findings:

The SR territory is characterised with the high rate of fragmentation, and in the current population prevails the urban population with proportion of 55%.

The level of the tangible infrastructure of settlements does not reach the required functional and aesthetical characteristics, what is the consequence of insufficient capital financing, mainly in the smaller settlements.

In connection with the interventions into increasing of the tangible infrastructure state of settlements, it is necessary to set priorities at the level of selected settlements with the potential to achieve synergic effects with other development impulses, and to ensure their sustainability.

The development documents at the local level specified priorities of interventions into the tangible infrastructure of settlements.

Analysis identified 48 towns in the Objective Convergence territory (with over 15,000 inhabitants) with the potential to implement integrated strategies of the urban areas development, including support of housing.

The deepening physical regression and social exclusion of urban areas has various social, demographic, economic and physical reasons in various towns.

Analysis of situation in the field of housing points out at the fact, that about 49% of inhabitants of the SR territory lives in apartment dwelling houses. More than 70% of the existing apartment

dwelling houses are “panel residential buildings” built over the mass construction after the year 1970, in the unsatisfactory technical conditions and with high consumptions of energy of buildings.

In relation to the tangible infrastructure of segregated and separated Roma settlements, analysis identifies as the biggest shortcoming the pending property right settlements of plots of land, what in terms of the SR legislation is an obstacle for implementation of investment development plans.

The analysis shows that support of preparation and updating of development documents should be given only at the level of regions, with respect to supplemental and restricted character of the Structural Funds in the programming period 2007-2013.

3.7.12 Completion of the analysis in the field of settlements regeneration based on findings from the ROP assessment carried out in the year 2010:

Interventions of ROP within frame of **settlements regeneration** are primarily focused on the improvement of material infrastructure of settlements by demand-oriented projects. Base of the ROP strategy in that area is support to the communities identified as growth poles. Implementation in this area began in March 2009, and like as in case of education infrastructure, also this area of the ROP assistance based on real demand of the municipalities represented one of the most significant development priorities of municipalities and towns in times of the economic crisis, because of significant strengthening of competitiveness and attractiveness of the supported settlements.

With regard to the system of exemptions for the support direction out of growth poles, which was defined in rather complicated manner in the form dividing lines (projects of municipalities with Roma settlements within the ROP, Rural Development Program, selected activities of the Operational Programme Environment and of the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth), the Managing Authority for ROP has taken on the basis of communication with self-governing regions, such as the IBMA for ROP a decision to direct support merely into the growth poles, with the exception for the projects implemented in the municipalities with Roma settlements.

At the same time, considering potential problems associated with the ownership, exploitation and operational relationships to water supply and sewage, there was abandoned from support for engineering networks, because their owners in most cases are not municipalities (except only for projects which are implemented in municipalities with Roma settlements, due to the nature and specifics of these projects). As of 2009, Water Companies or other entities administered 25,273 km of water network (without water connections) while municipal offices administered 2,259 km of water network only. The Association of Water Companies has been active in Slovakia since 2004, uniting 17 entities procuring approx. 95 % of water entities associated with the operation of public water supplies and public sewage in Slovakia. It is 11 combined companies (i.e. water companies, owning and operating the infrastructure) and 3 pairs of separated ownership and operating companies. Moreover, there are 4 more entities in Slovakia that procure fresh water supply and drainage of sewage water.¹⁴ With respect to the length of the water network administered by municipalities (8.2 %), higher risk rate of implementation of these activities (factors, such as time necessary for the preparation of implementation mechanism, requirement of contractual agreements between the companies and municipalities, consolidated financial analyses in the context of Article 55 of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, risk of no-connection of low-income groups of residents to the supported network of water supplies and sewage), and the remaining allocation of funds, the decision not to support the reconstruction of utilities within settlements regeneration appears to be justified even in the future. An exception to this were projects of regeneration of municipalities with Roma settlements in 2007-2010, the implementation of which expected the support of utilities based on the carried out preliminary preparation with the support of the PHARE 2002/000.610-03 aid scheme.

Settlements regeneration projects should be prepared with respect to potential extension of municipality's infrastructure even beyond the scope of the project being carried out (such as the

¹⁴ Report on Water Management in the Slovak Republic of 2009, elaborated by the Research Water Management Institute of Bratislava.

support of local roads and pavements in the project being a preparation for another construction of utilities).

In the field of **integrated development strategies of local areas** the Managing Authority for the ROP identified difficulties related mainly to legal regulations of residential buildings funding of the EU Structural Funds, as it regards infrastructure owned by natural persons. Under interpretation of the relevant EU regulations, supporting of investments into the apartment dwelling houses could disrupt the market environment, and therefore it would be possible only through of state aid schemes. This fact in connection with the issue of ownership of housing legislation in the Slovak Republic are seriously affecting the feasibility of integrated development strategies for urban areas. It is reasonable to assume, that even if the resolution of this intricate legal situation, the complicated set supporting mechanism should not been able to compete in market with a much simpler products of banks and building societies (obligations of beneficiaries under contracts for provision of grant, certifications, audits, controls).

In the course of 2009 and 2010, the Managing Authority for ROP was informed of the preparation of the evaluation study "Implementing JESSICA Instruments in Slovakia", which was ordered by the European Investment Bank. At the end of August 2010, the Managing Authority for ROP received the final version of this study. The study describes existing mechanisms to encourage housing in Slovakia (especially the State Housing Development Fund and commercial banking products) and identifies possible approaches to the creation of new support mechanisms with using the financial instrument JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas), i.e., the European Union initiatives aimed at promoting of sustainable investment in urban areas. For this purpose the study suggests involvement of the EU funds allocated in housing support operational programs (especially through ROP). The study describes in detail the state of the housing stock in Slovakia and identifies high demand for the existing mechanisms of intervention to support housing (State Housing Development Fund), see table below:

Table 17/2011: Identification of potential demand for interventions in the housing infrastructure

Source (whole territory of the SR)	Number of flats
Total number of flats for the renovation in the year 2005	808,848
Number of supported housing through the Housing Development Fund in the years 2005 - 2009	118,540
Number of supported housing through commercial bank products in the years 2005 - 2009	95,000
Remaining number of flats for the renovation in the year 2010 (in contrast to the year 2005)	595,308
Number of new flats built-up between years 2005 – 2008	29,137
Current difference compared to the year 2005 (without construction in the year 2009)	624,445
Of it flats newer than 20 years	103,155
Total number of flats for the renovation (market potential)	521,290

Source: Study „Implementing JESSICA Instruments in Slovakia“, 2010

Table 18/2011: Overview of support within the State Housing Development Fund

Year	Source	Allocated budget	Number of submitted applications	Required amount	Number of supported applications	Supported amount	Number of supported flats
2005	U5	8,298,479.72 €	102	26,669,454.95 €	48	8,298,479.72 €	1,724
2006	U5	23,235,743.21 €	152	28,297,151.96 €	112	23,018,555.40 €	4,644
2007	U5	33,758,215.49 €	228	36,423,255.66 €	193	31,759,901.75 €	8,231
2008	U5	24,895,439.16 €	291	57,820,321.32€	126	24,932,881.90 €	6,475
2009	U5	26,360,226.39 €	507	115,242,682.22 €	127	26,299,497.05 €	7,210
	GIP	71,000,000.00 €	505	97,897,558.02 €	346	70,870,807.43 €	14,775
Total		187,548,103.97 €	1,785	362,350,424.13 €	952	185,180,123.25 €	43,059

Source: State housing development fund, 2010

Explanatory notes :

U5 – reconstruction of apartment dwelling houses

GIP – government program of thermal insulation

In the SR conditions, there is still a need for housing infrastructure (residential houses, i.e. “multi-family housing”). Recommended is to implement interventions in the area of housing infrastructure in

form of a pilot approach (for example using the JESSICA initiative) with respect to recommendations of the mentioned study, communication with the European Commission, changes of regulations adopted at EU level, concerning assistance to housing infrastructure, based on a significant potential absorption capacity and pursuant to the identified difficulties with implementation of integrated urban development strategies particularly related to legislative barriers.

In the ROP strategy context, in order to carry out the pilot approach for the housing infrastructure support, interventions in the existing housing infrastructure seem to be the most appropriate in order to reduce the energetic demands of buildings, support of renewable energy sources utilisation and social cohesion, since these objectives are monitored within the ROP also in the support of all facilities of civic infrastructure. Another relevant objective could be the support of social inclusion of marginalised groups, or other objectives defined in Article 44 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1083/2006 and Article 7 of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1080/2006.

The first call focused exclusively on area of **development of the municipalities with Roma settlements** was announced in the late year 2009, namely also in relation to creation of conditions for support of sub-projects of local strategies of complex approach to the horizontal priority Marginalized Roma communities. For the projects in the area of development of municipalities with Roma settlements there has applied an exemption from the direction of support only to the growth poles. The list of eligible municipalities was defined by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the SR Government for Roma Communities in cooperation with the Managing Authority for the ROP. In connection with the absorption capacity and with demonstrated interest of potential applicants, the original setting of the development strategies for development of municipalities with Roma settlements may be considered as appropriate.

The development of regions in Slovakia is closely related also to the need of up to date **development documents** at the level of NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 regions.

In connection with the global economic crisis, whose consequences were fully reflected in the year 2009, the Managing Authority for ROP focused primarily on the intervention of ROP with investment nature in areas that represented the most significant development priorities of the self-governments. These priorities have the major contribution to the jobs creation, reduction energy consumption of buildings, as well as the biggest benefit in terms of rapid and effective support for the Slovak Republic economy at the time of failure of private investment in the construction industry.

Significant change in the area of regional development documents is adoption of the Act No. 539/2008 Coll., on promoting regional development. Upon this change is necessary to update or reconcile and synchronize existing economic and social development programs of regions, and economic and social development programs of municipalities, approved before validity of this Act, with the valid legislation and with the National Strategy for Regional Development of the SR. In this respect, the ROP has the potential to contribute through its interventions to the harmonization of regional papers with the national legislation. In this regard, non-investment activities of settlements regeneration of the ROP will be carried out in 2011-2013.

During the year 2010, in May, June and August, due to adverse weather conditions the SR hit extremely large **floods with devastating effects**, which caused material damage to property of citizens, municipalities, state and legal persons, agricultural land and production, to the country, but also losses of human life. A report was elaborated on actions taken in the area of elimination of flood damages in the Slovak Republic in May and June 2010, and on status of an application preparing for funding from the EU Solidarity Fund, approved by the SR Government Resolution No. 482/2010 dated on July 14th, 2010. Based on this report, there is an estimate of damages quantified to € 695.1 million, based on data available at the time of the report elaboration.

In the sense of the abovementioned Resolution the SR Government through the Minister of Foreign Affairs requested on July 16th, 2010 for financial assistance from the EU Solidarity Fund, which was established for the purpose of assisting to the EU Member States, which suffered a major natural disaster. The EU Solidarity Fund aims to provide quickly effective assistance in mobilizing of works and services oriented to the people's immediate needs, and for short-term repairs of damaged key infrastructure, so that the affected areas could start economic activity. These fund resources have additional character.

At the end of September 2010, the Slovak Republic provided the European Commission with additional detailed information regarding the floods, including an amended estimate of total damage. The estimated direct damage amounted to € 561,133,594. Pursuant to the draft decision submitted by

the European Commission for approval of the Parliament and the Council regarding the mobilisation of the Solidarity Fund of 14 January 2011, an aid of € 20,430,841 should be granted to the Slovak Republic. The European Parliament adopted a decision on mobilisation of the Solidarity Fund on 6 April 2011.

In connection with measures to eliminate damage caused by these floods, and with measures for flood protection there were adopted the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 of August 8th, 2010. According to this resolution, the SR Government approved an additional increase of the ROP allocation into area of settlements regeneration by € 39,448,841 (of which € 5 million for municipalities with Roma settlements). That allocation for the Slovak Republic is in accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management¹⁵. In this connection should be through the ROP supported activities aimed at renewal of the tangible infrastructure of municipalities in localities mostly affected by flooding. In connection with the extension of the ROP by allocation for removal of consequences of floods, eligible activities and operations within settlements regeneration are not extended.

Considering the large extent of flood damages and limited resources of the ROP allocated to their removal, implementation of the ROP interventions is appropriate in cadastral territory of several affected municipalities, in the most affected, respectively threatened areas. The Managing Authority for the ROP will map the situation arising after floods and select these areas (especially based on the Summary report on the course and consequences of floods in Slovakia territory from January 1st to August 31st, 2010). Recommended is to carry out activities related to elimination of the flood effects and flood-protection activities within frame of the ROP in collaboration with the Operational Programme Environment.

Conclusion: The main part of the ROP strategy of ROP in the settlements regeneration is continuous implemented.

- **ROP interventions aimed at improving of the status of tangible infrastructure in the settlements were in time of the economic crisis one of the most important development priorities of self-governments. Considering the absorption capacity and interest of potential recipients, it is recommended to strengthen the allocation ROP in this area,**
- **In the area of integrated strategies of the local areas development have been identified difficulties, related mainly to legal regulations of funding of apartment dwelling houses from the EU Structural Funds. It is recommended that the support of housing infrastructure is carried out in the form of the pilot approach (for example using the JESSICA initiative),**
- **Regarding support to preparation and updating of regional development documents to take into account requirements of national legislation related to promoting of regional development;**
- **Interventions of settlements regeneration to eliminate the effects of floods in territory of several municipalities in selected areas, most affected, respectively threatened by floods, identified based on mapping the situation arising after floods.**

3.7.13 Regional communications ensuring transport serviceability of the region

The transport serviceability of the SR regions is the fundamental factor effecting accessibility of the civil infrastructure, mobility of the population for job, but also attractiveness of the area for investors. The road and railway transport has the crucial role under the conditions existing in the SR, while the most used is the road network.

¹⁵ The European Commission officially informed the European Parliament and European Council on the technical adjustment of the financial framework for the years 2011 - 2013 in line with movements in GDP, including modify the amounts allocated from funds supporting cohesion to the Member States by the difference between estimated and actual level of GDP in period 2007-2009. In accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of May 17th, 2006 and Decision of the European Commission No. 2010/475/EU of 30 August 2010, funds available for the Slovak Republic shall be increased by € 137,711,534.

The principal aim of transport policy is to ensure sustainable development of mobility, perceived as the long-term provision of permanently growing transit needs of society (i.e., transport of goods and persons) in the required time and quality, while reducing negative impacts of transport on the environment. Ensuring of sustainable mobility requires the proportional development of all types of transport within the transport system of the SR, issuing from the principles of the common EU Transport Policy, with an aim of effectively satisfying the transfer needs of society.

Mainly the 2nd and 3rd class roads ensure accessibility of inhabitants to the settlements, where are the higher civil amenities. The level of serviceability of regions is characterised not only with the network of roads as such, but also with transit-technical conditions of the roads.

In the interest of a complex evaluation of the road network in the SR territory, the following table comprises the data not only of the 2nd and 3rd class roads.

Table 19: Regions proportion of the transport network in the year 2004 and the overall accident rate in the year 2005

Region	Total length of roads (km)	Share of length of the SR road network [%]	Length of motorway and feeders in the SR [km]	Length of the 1 st class roads in the SR [km]	Length of the 2 nd class roads in the SR [km]	Length of the 3 rd class roads in the SR [km]	Number of road accidents
NUTS level 2 Bratislava	797.247	4.48	103.097	130.817	210.431	352.902	13,433
Bratislava	797.247	4.48	103.097	130.817	210.431	352.902	13,433
NUTS level West	6,369.007	35.81	136.955	1,113.921	1,381.243	3,736.888	17,308
Trnava	1,948.186	10.95	67.439	291.187	531.469	1,058.091	5,609
Trenčín	1,865.029	10.49	69.516	308.190	349.551	1,137.772	5,820
Nitra	2,555.792	14.37	0.0	514.544	500.223	1,541.025	5,879
NUTS level Centre	5,147.037	28.94	46.534	1,106.321	1,027.229	2,966.953	15,083
Žilina	1,980.258	11.13	46.534	508.077	308.807	1,116.840	8,032
Banská Bystrica	3,166.779	17.80	0.0	598.244	718.422	1,850.113	7,051
NUTS level East	5,473.253	30.77	35.817	990.201	1,110.125	3,337.110	14,167
Prešov	3,093.965	17.38	30.492	623.550	523.685	1,916.238	6,710
Košice	2,379.288	12.8	5.325	366.651	586.440	1,420.872	7,457
Objective Convergence territory	16,989.297	95.52	219.306	3,210.443	3,518.597	10,040.951	46,558
SR in total	17,786.544	100.00	322.403	3,341.260	3,729.028	10,393.853	59,991

Source: MTPT SR, 2005, and Statistical Office of the SR, 2006

In the long-term unsatisfactory technical and qualitative conditions of regional but also local communications are considered as the main problem in this area, as well as pending legal-property relationships of the plots of land under roads (about 70%). The basic pre-condition for ensuring operational roadworthiness of the road network is conducting of regular maintenance and repairs of roads. The high deficit of road maintenance relates closely to the insufficient financing of road repairs in the past period. This state causes clear delays in the cyclic reconstruction of roads. The level of road repairs financing is still insufficient from the view of the following development of roads.

The 2nd and 3rd class roads, which ensure accessibility to the basic and higher civil infrastructures localised in the growth poles, as well as accessibility to the main transport routes, all-national and international transport network, are in ownership and competence of the self-governing regions. It is necessary to ensure improvement of transport serviceability of the regions, mainly with respect to the safety and environmental aspects. In particular, in Eastern Slovakia, where is low share of higher-class road communications, share of such roads is the highest of the entire road network.

Transport policy of the SR issues from the objective needs to modernise the road infrastructure at the all levels.

Based on the given, it is required to focus on the following to the biggest possible extent:

- Development and necessary standard of maintenance, repairs and systematic renewal of the road network,
- Increasing of technical parameters of the roads and their amenity with components of the transport infrastructure (e.g., marking, bridging, bypasses, bays, anti-noise barriers, etc.),
- Establishing conditions for bike transport separation from motor transport in the sections, where bike transport routes are lead (e.g., cycle tracks and lanes, cycle paths).

Table 20: Transport-technical conditions of the 2nd and 3rd class roads in the SR territory

Region	Conditions of the 2 nd class roads (%)			Conditions of the 3 rd class roads (%)		
	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
NUTS 2 Bratislava	55.9	0.9	43.2	45.3	3.1	51.6
Bratislava	55.9	0.9	43.2	45.3	3.1	51.6
NUTS level 2 West	73	10	16	66	14	20
Trnava	80.6	6.4	13.0	79.0	9.3	11.7
Nitra	57.7	19.9	22.4	45.7	25.1	29.2
Trenčín	85.1	1.5	13.4	81.0	2.2	16.8
NUTS level 2 Centre	63	19	18	47	25	28
Žilina	66.9	26.6	6.5	47.2	35.6	17.2
Banská Bystrica	61.7	15.1	23.2	46.3	18.9	34.8
NUTS level 2 East	58	8	34	46	13	41
Prešov	53.6	6.1	40.3	41.7	9.2	49.1
Košice	61.9	8.8	29.3	52.5	17.0	30.5
Obj. Convergence	66.7	12.1	21.2	56.2	16.7	27.1
SR In total	65.2	11.2	23.6	53.4	16.3	30.3

Sources: Slovak Road Administration, 2006

From the analysis implies, that the network of the 2nd and 3rd class roads and local communications is very dense and adequate for accessibility of the territory. However, the technical conditions of these roads and respective road constructions are unsatisfactory. In addition the analysis shows also high utilisation rate of the 2nd and 3rd class roads, mainly in the Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice Regions where network of motorways and roads for motor vehicles is not sufficiently developed. Therefore, the 2nd and 3rd class roads in this regions use not only cars and public transport vehicles, but also by freight transport, what unfavourably affects the quality of road communications and safety of road operations.

Analysis was performed on basis of data on the quantity and quality of transport network of the 2nd and 3rd class roads in the SR territory.

Main findings:

The roads of the 2nd and 3rd classes represent the main transport communications ensuring availability and accessibility of the population to the higher civil infrastructures and mobility of labour power to job.

Density of the regional roads (2nd and 3rd class roads) is sufficient in the SR conditions.

Quality of more than one quarter of the road network of the given category is unsatisfactory, in particular, in Eastern Slovakia, where the roads of the given category compensate lack of higher category roads.

About 7 % of the plots of land under roads are in the pending legal-property relationships.

3.7.14 Completion of the analysis in the field of regional roads based on findings from the ROP assessment carried out in the year 2010

Regional road infrastructure is in terms of the ROP strategy one of essential tools to ensure transport service of settlements defined as growth poles, in which are concentrated the facilities of civil infrastructure and economic activities.

Interventions of ROP in area of building-up, reconstruction and modernization of the road infrastructure significantly contributes to the strengthening of infrastructure in the territory, and for the regional self-governments represent one of the most accessible forms of financing activities in the area of regional communications development. Based on the results of regular assessments of the ROP implementation up to date, actual progress in this area is considering as appropriate.

In the year 2010, several areas of the SR territory were affected by the devastating floods. In connection with measures to eliminate damages caused by these floods, and with measures for flood protection there was adopted SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 of August 27th, 2010, by which the Government approved an additional increasing of the ROP allocation. This allocation has to ensure recovery of regional roads infrastructure in amount of € 10 million from financial resources that were allocated to the Slovak Republic under Articles 16 and 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and on sound financial management¹⁶. Through the ROP should be supported activities aimed at restoring the infrastructure of regional roads of 2nd and 3rd classes in the areas mostly affected by flooding. With respect to the extension of ROP allocation for elimination of consequences of floods, eligible activities and operations within regional roads support are not extended.

Regarding the large extent of flood damages and limited ROP resources allocated to their elimination it is appropriate to implement the ROP interventions in the cadastral territories of several affected municipalities in the most affected, respectively threatened areas. These areas will be selected by the Managing Authority for ROP, based on mapping of the situation arising after floods (especially based on the Summary report on the course and consequences of floods in territory of Slovakia from January 1st to August 31st, 2010). It is recommended to carry out these activities related to elimination of the effects of floods and flood-protection activities within frame of the ROP in collaboration with the Operational Programme Environment.

Conclusion: The objectives of the ROP in the area of regional roads infrastructure are continuously meeting.

- ROP interventions in relation to the measures for elimination effects of floods and flood-protection activities to carry out on the SR territory in areas mostly affected, respectively threatened with floods, designated by mapping the situation arising after floods.**

3.7.15 European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013

In accordance with the Decision of the European Parliament and the Council No. 1622/2006/EC of October 24th, 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture for the years from 2007 to 2019, the Ministry of Culture SR held two-round competition for a Slovak town, which will hold this prestigious title. Based on the recommendations of the International Selection Committee the SR Government by its Resolution No. 309/2009 of April 29th, 2009 approved the nomination of Košice city as European Capital of Culture in the year 2013, as well as design of supporting system for funding events.

The city of Košice was designated as European Capital of Culture for the year 2013 by the Council Decision No. 8770/09 in Brussels on April 21st, 2009.

¹⁶ European Commission officially informed the European Parliament and European Council on technical adjustment of the financial framework for the years 2011 – 2013 in accordance with the movement of GDP, including modifying of the amounts allocated from the funds supporting cohesion with the relevant Member State by the difference between estimated and actual level of GDP in the period 2007 - 2009. In accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the Inter-institutional Agreement of May 17th, 2006 and Decision of the European Commission No. 2010/475/EU of 30 August 2010, funds available for the Slovak Republic are increased by € 137,711,534.

In accordance with the SR Government Resolution No. 309/2009 the Ministry of Culture SR organized in the year 2009 a series of expert negotiations with the participation of representatives nominated by the concerned ministries, city of Košice and Košice Region self-government, with purpose to propose a procedure that would enable to the city of Košice and to participating entities financing of key investment activities of the ECOC project from the Structural Funds. At these meetings were attended also representatives of the Managing Authority for ROP, with regard to thematic affinity of partial ECOC projects with the ROP interventions in the area of settlements and cultural infrastructure regeneration.

The negotiations resulted to the finding, that the investment ECOC sub-projects may be funded by the ROP in the case, that a partial adjustment shall be made in the operational programme (e.g., settlements recovery activities will be directed to the Košice as to the regional capital, in the case of repository and fund institutions and immovable cultural monuments will be enabled construction of new facilities, etc.). Of the structural-technical and budgetary aspect the ECOC sub-projects do not represent new type of projects supported under the ROP (reconstructions of buildings, monuments and immovable cultural monuments, arrangement of public spaces). In regard to thematic affinity the partial sub-projects related to the ECOC project would be implemented within frame of existing priority themes of the ROP.

Following the abovementioned facts the SR Government Resolution No. 204/2010 of March 24th, 2010 was adopted, by which the Government approved a proposal for reallocation of financial resources in total amount of € 60 million to the ROP, to ensure financing of partial investment projects related to the ECOC project. Under this resolution was approved a proposition for reallocation of € 15 million from the Operational Programme Environment, € 15 million from the Operational Programme Transport, € 10 million from the Operational Programme Informatization of Society and € 10 million from the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth to the ROP and to the allocation of € 10 million within frame of the ROP to finance ECOC subprojects.

With the SR Government Resolution No. 443/2010 of July 7th, 2010 was repealed the SR Government Resolution No. 204/2010 regarding the allocation of funds to the Slovak Republic, under Articles 16 and 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on the budgetary discipline and on sound financial management¹⁷.

In this context, the SR Government adopted Resolution No. 546/2010 of August 13th, 2010 approving the increased allocation of the Regional Operational Programme for the programming period 2007 - 2013 from additional financial resources for the SR from the EU funds, to implement partial investment sub-projects of the ECOC project through additionally created Priority Axis in the Regional Operational Programme in the amount of € 60 million.

Following the abovementioned facts, the Managing Authority for ROP has created conditions for the implementation of selected investment projects related to the ECOC project as a national priority in the new ROP Priority Axis, and shaped adequately the ROP strategy so that it will reflect the specifics of the ECOC project. List of partial investment projects related to the ECOC project, which will be financed through the ROP, is listed in a separate annex to the ROP.

Project of the city of Košice is based on an innovative approach to culture, his intention is to generate a creative environment, where will be interaction between traditional art forms with innovative solutions and with the latest trends in this area. The project concerns of modernization and reconstruction of the existing cultural infrastructure, with emphasis on the multi-functionality, completion of existing tourism infrastructure in the city and its surrounding areas, and valorization of the territory facilities. In the city of Košice, as the second largest city of the Slovak Republic, held a series of festivals with a long tradition (e.g., International Jazz Festival, Festival of Sacral Art, Art Dance, Cassovia Folkfest, Festival

¹⁷ European Commission officially informed the European Parliament and European Council on technical adjustment of the financial framework for the years 2011 – 2013 in accordance with the movement of GDP, including modifying of the amounts allocated from the funds supporting cohesion with the relevant Member State by the difference between estimated and actual level of GDP in the period 2007 - 2009. In accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the Inter-institutional Agreement of May 17th, 2006 and Decision of the European Commission No. 2010/475/EU of 30 August 2010, funds available for the Slovak Republic are increased by € 137,711,534.

of Contemporary Art, and others) and the city has infrastructure of repository and heritage fund institutions – e.g., State Philharmonic Orchestra Košice, East Slovakian Gallery in Košice, Romathan Theatre, Slovak Technical Museum, Museum of Vojtech Löffler, and others. Implementation of the ECOC project, nature of the scheduled events and activities, and diffusion of cultural-social infrastructure also outside the city center and traditional spaces requires reconstruction, respectively redevelopment of relevant infrastructure.

Despite reductions of the allocation to the Priority Axis 3 ROP, thank to the Priority Axis 7 ROP, comprehensive fulfilment of the priority themes 58 *Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage*, 59 *Development of cultural infrastructure* and partly 61 *Integrated projects of regeneration urban and rural areas* will be kept. Achieving of the amount initially set fulfilling of allocations to these priority themes enables additional ROP budget increase, and the same, respectively relate content targeting of the ECOC on the culture area.

Conclusion: to create conditions for implementation of sub-projects of the ECOC Košice-2013 project in the special ROP Priority Axis and to adequately extend the ROP strategy in order to implement the selected investment projects of the ECOC Košice-2013.

3.8 RESULTS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2004-2006

3.8.1 Basic information - Local infrastructure 2004-2006

The ROP for the programming period 2007-2013 in an extended manner links to the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI implemented in the shortened programming period 2004-2006. The Managing Authority for the OPBI (2004-2006) as well as for the ROP (2007-2013) was the MCRD SR. Act No. 37/2010 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on the organization of government activity and central state administration, as amended by later regulations, effective from July 1st, 2010 abolished the MCRD. Tasks of the MCRD SR as the Managing Authority for ROP fulfils the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development. The name of the Managing Authority for ROP changes from the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR (hereinafter "MARD SR") with effect from November 1st, 2010, in terms of the Act No. 372/2010 Coll., which amends and complete the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organization of government activity and the central state administration, as amended by later regulations.

The following table gives a comparison of the programme structures in the area of the civil infrastructure and territory amenity in the individual programming periods under the conditions existing in the SR.

Table 21/2011: Comparison of the structure of operational programmes relevant for the area of regional infrastructure in the programming periods 2004-2006 and 2007-2013 under the conditions existing in the SR

2004-2006	2007-2013
Operational Programme Basic Infrastructure (OPBI)	Regional Operational Programme (ROP)
3 priorities Priority 3 - Local Infrastructure comprising of 4 measures: 3.1 Building up and development of the civil infrastructure in the regions 3.1.1 Building up and development of educational infrastructure 3.1.2 Building up and development of healthcare infrastructure 3.1.3 Building up and development of the social infrastructure 3.1.4 Building up and development of cultural infrastructure 3.2 Building up and development of information society for public sector 3.3 Building up and development of institutional infrastructure in the area of regional policy 3.4 Renovation and development of municipalities	6 Priority Axes: 1. Educational infrastructure 2. Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship 3 Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and development of tourism 3.1 Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions 3.2 Infrastructure of tourism 4 Regeneration of settlements 4.1 Regeneration of settlements 4.2 Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services 5 Regional communications ensuring transportation serviceability of

		regions
		6. Technical assistance
		7. European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013
Allocation from the ERDT for 4 measures:	€ 95.16 million	Allocation from the ERDT for 7 areas: € 1,544,503,927

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2011

SR obtained access to withdrawal from the EU Structural Funds for implementation of development plans for the first time in the shortened programming period 2004-2006. The first call for submitting projects within the Priority Local Infrastructure was publicized on January 19th, 2004. This call was concurrently the first call for submitting projects within frame of the EU Structural Funds in Slovakia. Based on the recent process of implementation of the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI, performed under responsibility of the MCRD SR, we can state, that in the course of years 2004 and 2005 a functioning system was established for implementation of individual measures. The given system was continually modified, with respect to the continuously acquired practical experience, legislation amendments, performed audits and other influences, for the purposes of increasing effectiveness of the relevant implementation procedures and reducing their administrative and time demands.

Already in the course of the shortened programming period 2004-2006, one of the four measures of the Priority 3 of the OPBI (i.e., measure 3.4 Renovation and development of municipalities) was implemented partially in the decentralised manner, i.e., in cooperation with the self-government regions.

About 50 employees of diverse departments within the MCRD SR participated in implementation of the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI, ensuring the following implementation procedures:

- Programming and managing of the OPBI,
- Preparing and declaring calls for proposals,
- Receiving and registering applications for grant,
- Appraisal, selection and approving applications for grant,
- Financing projects and fulfilling tasks of the Paying Unit for the Priority 3 of the OPBI,
- Control and monitoring at the level of projects, measures and programme,
- Publicity and information.

In addition, in total 11 personnel of the self-governing regions participated in implementation within the frame of measure 3.4 Regeneration and development of municipalities of the OPBI.

Performed internal and external audits in relation to the MCRD SR stated, that the system of implementation procedures in relation to the operational programme is functioning and set up effectively. However, the persisting negative phenomenon is the under-dimensioning of administrative capacities. With respect to the extent of the ROP, comparing to the OPBI it is obvious, that the management and implementation of the ROP requires simplification of the implementation procedures and increasing of administration capacities concurrently.

Table 22: Evaluation of the recent demand and absorption according to measures (June 2010)

OP	Priority	Measure		Allocation 2004-2006 (EUR)	Demand %	Coverage by contracts %	Withdrawal %	
Operational Programme Basis Infrastructure	3	Local Infrastructure	3.1	Building up and development of the civil infrastructure in the regions	65,055,228	1,102.18	110.19	110.73
			3.2	Building up and development of information society for public sector	12,897,578	303.17	119.92	103.51
			3.3	Building up and development of institutional infrastructure in the area of regional policy	4,338,716	139.40	121.29	101.24
			3.4	Renovation and development of municipalities	33,907,569	656.23	123.14	102.03

Notes:

- **demand for measures** is expressed as share of the total eligible costs of received applications for grant of the total allocation for the measure

- **absorption of measures** is expressed as:
 - state of contracting, calculated as share of the value of approved applications for grant of the total allocation for the measure,
 - state of financial resources withdrawal of the measure, expressed as share of paid financial resources of the total allocation for the measure.

Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

Table 23: Evaluation of the number of received and supported projects (June 2010)

OP	Priority		Measure		Number of submitted application for grant	Number of approved applications for grant
Operational Programme Basis Infrastructure	3	Local Infrastructure	3.1	Building up and development of the civil infrastructure in the regions	1,418	209
			3.2	Building up and development of information society for public sector	143	55
			3.3	Building up and development of institutional infrastructure in the area of regional policy	139	122
			3.4	Renovation and development of municipalities	1,132	499

Source: Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

It results from the given data of the shortened programming period 2004-2006, that the additional resources from the ERDF and from the SR State Budget represent under the conditions existing in the SR the significant tool for reducing impacts of the long-term investments under-dimensioning in the concerned areas. Substantiation of the support directing into civil infrastructure facilities results from the analyses of present situation and it is linked to the oversize interest in given types of activities in the shortened programming period 2004-2006. Then the demand for capital investments on the part of founders of a wide spectrum of the civil infrastructure facilities exceeded several times the disposable resources.

In the course of year 2006, the MCRD SR summarised a large stock of project plans aimed at the field of the civil infrastructure, in particular, for the educational infrastructure. Because of large number of project plans, it was not possible to support all of them within frame of the Priority 3 OP Basic Infrastructure during the shortened program period 2004-2006. These projects established starting points for their successful implementation in the programming period 2007-20013 (i.e., elaborated construction and technical documentation, validly issued building permits, identified need of property-legal settlements regarding to immovable assets, practical experience of potential beneficiaries, etc.). Intention of the MCRD SR as the Managing Authority for the ROP is to supports moreover such prepared project plans, what due to limited volume of available resources from the ERDF and the SR State Budget was not possible to support in the shortened programming period 2004-2006. Thereby will establish continuity between individual programming periods and expended financial resources for preparation of the large amount of projects which could not be supported within the programming period 2004-2006 shall fertilize.

3.8.2 Evaluation of reached effectiveness and efficiency of the implemented projects

Within the individual measures of the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI in the programming period 2004-2006, the Managing Authority monitored three levels of indicators, i.e., the indicators of output, result and impact. At the level of the OPBI programme for every such level was set one specific indicator. Values of output indicators at the level of individual projects are determined based on the monitoring reports sent to the Managing Authority by the beneficiaries quarterly. From the final monitoring reports and subsequently during five years after a project finishing from the abbreviated monitoring reports were obtained values of indicators of results and impacts.

Measure 3.1 - Building up and development of the civil infrastructure in the regions

Whereas this measure 3.1 comprises of four sub-measures, every of them monitored by the same indicators, and difference is only in the set values. In general, this applies to the following indicators:

Table 24: Evaluation of the measure 3.1 of the OPBI

Type of indicator	Name of indicator	Target values of individual sub-measures pursuant to Programme Complement of the OPBI					Achieved values of indicators				
		3.1.1	3.1.2	3.1.3	3.1.4	3.1	3.1.1	3.1.2	3.1.3	3.1.4	3.1
Output	Number of reconstructed buildings	25	10	10	10	55	177	29	21	40	267
Result	Number of users of the supported infrastructure (in thousands)	150	150	75	75	450	394	394	297	551	1,912
Impact	Gross/net employment	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	-	-	2%	-	-

Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

Measure 3.2 - Building up and development of information society for the public sector

Table 25: Evaluation of measures 3.2 of the OPBI (state to June 2010)

Type of Indicator	Name of indicator	Target values of measure pursuant to Programme Complement of the OPBI	Achieved values of indicators
Output	Number of public access points	10	1,465
Output	Number of schools interconnected to Internet	5	51
Output	Number of hospitals interconnected to Internet	5	9
Result	Number of users of supported infrastructure (in thousands)	50,000	2,032,017
Impact	Gross/net employment	N/A	N/A

Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

Measure 3.3 - Building up and development of institutional infrastructure in the area of regional policy

Table 26: Evaluation of measures 3.3 of the OPBI (state to June 2010)

Type of Indicator	Name of indicator	Target values of measure pursuant to Programme Complement of the OPBI	Achieved values of indicators
Output	Number of supported self-governing regions	7	7
Result	Number of employees with managing abilities and IT knowledge	70	40
Impact	Number of active partnerships in the regions	14	5

Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

Measure 3.4 - Renovation and development of municipalities

Table 27: Evaluation of measures 3.4 of the OPBI (State to June 2010)

Type of Indicator	Name of indicator	Target values of measure pursuant to Programme Complement of the OPBI	Achieved values of indicators
Output	Number of citizens living in improved rural environment	420,000	683,152
Result	Number of supported municipalities	167	650
Impact	Gross/net employment	2%	0

Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

Concerning the fact, that it was the first shortened programming period 2004 – 2006 we may conclude, that selection and setting of individual indicators were not optimal, therefore it was complicated to interpret some indicators at the level of projects, and state of some indicators was markedly higher than the values planned in the Programme Complement of OPBI. Most problematic in terms of evaluating on the project level was the indicator "gross / net employment".

Table 28: Overview of support of individual regions within the Priority 3 of the OPBI in the programming period 2004-2006 according to measures and by total eligible costs of projects

Region	3.1		3.2*		3.3		3.4	
	Number of projects	Percentage of allocation in EUR	Number of projects	Percentage of allocation in EUR	Number of projects	Percentage of allocation in EUR	Number of projects	Percentage of allocation in EUR
NUTS 2 WEST	92	43	24	47	51	41	165	47
Trnava	25	15	10	6	10	6	55	16
Trenčín	20	7	3	7	20	18	40	11
Nitra	47	21	11	34	21	17	70	20
NUTS 2 Centre	47	29	13	23	35	34	85	19
Žilina	24	14	5	6	20	19	40	5
Banská Bystrica	23	15	8	17	15	15	45	14
NUTS 2 East	70	28	18	30	36	25	249	34
Prešov	44	18	10	12	17	11	146	20
Košice	26	10	8	19	19	14	103	14
Objective Convergence	209	71,683,988	55	7,586,799	122	3,980,328	499	34,305,188

Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

Table 29/2010: Overview of completed projects within Priority 3 of the OPBI in the programming period 2004-2006

OP Basic infrastructure	Allocations for years (ERDF + State budget)	Completed projects – Number of contracts and Amount of drawn-off grant															
		Banská Bystrica Region		Košice Region		Nitra Region		Prešov Region		Trnava Region		Trenčín Region		Žilina Region		Total	
		Number	ERDF + ŠR	Number	ERDF + ŠR	Number	ERDF + ŠR	Number	ERDF + ŠR	Number	ERDF + ŠR	Number	ERDF + ŠR	Number	ERDF + ŠR	Number	ERDF + ŠR
Priority 3	116,199,091	91	15,646,373	156	12,723,582	149	23,209,931	217	17,479,953	100	15,001,558	83	8,896,548	89	9,251,182	885	102,209,127
3.1	65,055,228	23	9,676,400	26	6,567,457	47	13,743,583	44	9,168,621	25	9,864,337	20	4,100,551	24	6,387,073	209	59,508,022
3.1.1	28,114,627	8	1,683,669	12	1,860,506	25	8,445,395	22	6,406,235	15	4,597,671	10	2,142,120	13	3,160,834	105	28,296,430
3.1.2	21,564,627	4	5,745,837	4	2,112,282	3	954,114	4	387,227	3	3,081,409	1	359,016	5	2,473,887	24	15,113,770
3.1.3	7,369,237	6	1,966,568	4	1,229,462	2	822,127	2	220,339	3	945,415	7	962,643	2	229,949	26	6,376,504
3.1.4	8,006,737	5	280,326	6	1,365,206	17	3,521,947	16	2,154,820	4	1,239,843	2	636,772	4	522,402	54	9,721,317
3.2	12,897,578	8	978,438	8	1,285,539	11	2,281,068	10	818,628	10	422,112	3	474,798	5	429,607	55	6,690,190
3.3	4,338,716	15	449,316	19	377,918	21	655,062	17	678,956	10	161,143	20	649,702	20	698,037	122	3,670,134
3.4	33,907,569	45	4,542,219	103	4,492,668	70	6,530,218	146	6,813,748	55	4,553,966	40	3,671,497	40	1,736,466	499	32,340,781
Total OPBI	516,185,214	149	216,501,466	185	61,337,342	186	44,955,033	262	107,453,978	132	47,365,211	102	23,359,477	121	42,545,763	1,137	543,518,270

Source: Final report on OPBI implementation in programming period 2004-2006, MA OPBI, Office of SR Government, 2010

Within frame of Priority 3 Local infrastructure completed in total 885 projects to the date June 28th, 2010. According to the Final report on the implementation of OPBI for the programming period 2004 - 2006, to the date June 28th the total drawings of EU funds under Priority 3 of the OP BI (Local Infrastructure) after counting of the amount of irregularities and paid backs achieved € 101,667,078.48, which represents in percentage 106.84% share of spending commitment 2004 - 2006. Entire programming period 2004 - 2006 can be in terms of the OPBI characterized as highly beneficial.

Specific objective for the priority 3 OPBI was: Building and developing of the local infrastructure - focusing on improvement and development of civil infrastructure and information society as an important factor of economic development in the region. Civil infrastructure means for the purposes of this document infrastructure in the areas of education, health, social services and culture. Within frame of the civil infrastructure development, OPBI focused on reconstruction of objects, increasing of their standards and restoration of their facilities. This objective also aimed at support of local infrastructure in the area of regional policy. Each of the supported projects fulfilled this given specific objective.

The task of particular measures Priority 3 - Local infrastructure was to promote balanced regional development by enhancing of the regions competitiveness. The contributions from implementation of the particular measures Priority 3 - Local infrastructure to the filling of the global objective may be evaluating very positive at the programme completing with the time lapse and on basis of experience with implementation. Although in the case of structure and focus of particular measures of Priority 3 does not go on direct impact to the achievement of this goal. Most of the measures, respectively sub-measures are focused on the public sector and above all on the reconstruction of existing facilities of public services (schools, cultural centres, social homes, retirement homes, and to elaborating plans for further economic and social development, and not least on local roads, with associated issues). Largely has been achieved one of the partial objectives of the local infrastructure, "reinforcing of the system of regional policy on regional and local level as a prerequisite for assuring vertical and horizontal coordination of the regional development and enhancing their absorption potential". There was registered significant number of applications, which required synergistic cooperation of several entities of the regional policy (collaboration of self-governing regions, as well as smaller units of the regional policy in the production and sharing results of project documentation. Especially collaboration in the measure 3.2 Building and development of the information society for public sector, and in the measures 3.3 Building and development of the institutional infrastructure in area of regional policy. Moreover, there has been adopted also projects that required close cooperation of several municipalities in the region, what have created interest associations of municipalities in meeting the strategy and objectives of the regional policy, what is evaluated very positive from the view of the management authority and implementation of individual projects in the measures).

In terms of received project assessment decisive was in particular the qualitative aspect of the submitted grant applications, as well as considerable regional principle of funds distribution within the frame of approved projects. Concept of creation, execution and implementation of the priority 3 Local infrastructure is mainly unfolded from its main objective, and that is mitigation of regional disparities among regions what succeed achieve to large extent.

The highest number of accepted applications is from the Prešov self-governing Region (612), what was mainly due to large number of received applications (305 what is about twice comparing to other regions) within the measure 3.4 Renovation and development of municipalities. Numbers of submitted grant applications under other measures, respectively sub-measures within frame of individual regions were well balanced.

Considering the results achieved within the priority 3 OPBI would be concluded, that the system of implementation was functional, and it created good preconditions for successful implementation in the future period.

Final report on the Operational Programme Basic Infrastructure 2004-2006 implementation was not approved by the European Commission to date February 2010. Therefore, the provided updated figures are not final.

3.8.3 Best practice from the shortened programming period 2004-2006

- The strategy of OPBI identified correctly the priority areas of support, related with under-dimensioned capital financing of the civil infrastructure. The high interest in obtaining supplementary resources from the ERDF, from the part of the local and regional self-

governments confirmed, that the OPBI aimed at their actual thematic priorities in the area of investment financing (while the negative point was insufficiently targeted strategy, see section 3.7.4).

- It was not possible to support large part of the project plans within the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI with respect to the disposable allocation. However, many plans of the organisations in the founders' competence of the self-governments were processed and prepared in form of concrete building-technical projects, in the interest of obtaining support from the SF, as well as they have issued building permits, and from the part of self-governments were completed in several cases property-legal settlements of the real estates in questions.
- The shortened programming period 2004-2006 enabled for the MCRD SR as the Managing Authority for the OPBI to establish implementation and control structures, functioning thereof was ongoing arranged based on the findings and recommendations of the internal and external mechanisms of audit and control. The functioning and verified system of the OPBI implementation established after simplification and enhancing effectiveness of certain processes, a ground for setting of implementation and control procedures for the ROP in the programming period 2007-2013.
- The measure Renovation and development of municipalities of the OPBI, implemented over the shortened programming period 2004-2006 through the decentralised system, enabled to the representatives of the self-governing regions to achieve experiences useable also for implementation of the ROP in the programming period 2007-2013.

3.8.4 Lessons learned for the programming period 2007-2013

- Structural funds perceive many of self-governments in Slovakia as the only alternative for implementation of inevitable investment plans, in spite of their complementary character. On the one hand the high demand for supported types of operations, and on the other hand complementary and restricted character of the SF resources establish inevitably need of precise defining of the operational programme strategy. Therefore the ROP strategy for the programming period 2007-2013 should define precisely territorial and thematic directing of support in such way, that the potential beneficiaries can consider based on the clear information, whether their project plans are relevant for the ROP strategy. The given approach prevents from ineffective spending of resources for preparation of non-supportable project plans, concurrently reducing administrative demands of the implementation process. Precisely defining of the strategy is the requisition for effective management of the operational programme and fulfilment of its goals.
- One of the most important elements for enhancing quality of implementation is to define in advance distribution of disposable allocations for the ROP for the involved NUTS 3 level regions, and through it also for the NUTS 2 level regions. Disposable allocation is one of the most relevant data for all entities involved into the implementation of ROP (i.e., the EC, the Managing Authority for the ROP, the IBMA, beneficiaries, non-governmental sector, etc.). Based on the experience from the preceding programming period, it is necessary regularly and often updates information about withdrawal of resources at the level of individual ROP measures and individual regions. The most sought sources of such information for the given entities are the Internet pages of managing authorities and the joint information portal for the SF and the CF.
- In connection with the need of a large number of grant applications processing, it is necessary to establish the implementation environment with IT applied to the maximum possible extent. Enhancements in this area expressive contribute to increasing of transparency and mainly to objectivity of the processes. It concerns predominantly the provision of smooth and continuous processes of reception and registration of applications for grant, partially in computerised form as well.
- The appraisal process of projects in the shortened programming period 2004-2006 was administrative and time demanding within frame of the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI, what related with the several-grades controlling mechanisms set up due to insufficient experiences in the area of the SF. The adjusted system of ROP implementation in the programming period 2007-2013 anticipates objective appraising of documentation of the

applications in the primary stages of appraisal through a set of measurable “yes-no” quantifiable criteria for each thematic area of support.

- Collective bodies, comprising socio-economic partners (so-called selection commissions) adopted in the final stage decisions on approval of the projects. Activity of selection commissions in the programming period 2004-2006 was based on appraisal of the project plans, which were qualified based on the preceding appraisal in the selection process. The following shortcomings are identified in connection with the selection process:
 - The selection commissions based on the partnership principle took decisions based on consensus among all members, what resulted to reduction of action-ability of the selection commissions in event when some of their member set a veto on decision of the other members. In the programming period 2007-2013, it is necessary to select a functioning mechanism of decision taking, while composition of the selection commission represents in terms of the partnership principle the national, regional and local levels, the non-governmental sector, the level of horizontal priorities, etc.
 - The selection commissions in the shortened programming period 2004-2006 respected the partnership principle. Despite this fact, in case of the measures implemented in the decentralised way, the composition of appointment of the selection commission members was exclusively in competence of the respective region, and subsequently the Managing Authority for the OPBI formally approved it, based on assessment of professional qualification of the individual members. Non-observance of directions from the Managing Authority for the OPBI by some selection commissions of self-governing regions had in several cases the consequence of the selection process repeating, or taking remedy measures from the part of the Managing Authority for the OPBI. From experience emerged the necessity to define accurately strategy at the level of the operational programme, to determine the binding selection criteria approved by the Monitoring Committee for the ROP. The Managing Authority for the ROP has to set binding benchmarking at the level of individual measures of the ROP, for selection process within frame of all the ROP measures in the programming period 2007-2013. Appliance of the Geographic Information System appears as suitable element for application of the principles of territorial concentration in the selective process. It is necessary from the part of the Managing Authority for the ROP and the Monitoring Committee for the ROP to set up mechanisms ensuring observation of the defined rules.
 - In case of certain thematic areas of support, it is suitable to perform in the programming period 2007-2013 also the pre-selection of projects, in particular, in such events when their preparation is demanding in terms of organisation and time (e.g., integrated strategies of urban areas development and interventions into the sections of the 2nd and 3rd class roads)
- The ITMS appears as the simplest tool and the least demanding way in terms of administration for keeping documentation and monitoring of achieved progress. The ITMS arranged on basis of the experiences from the preceding period, represents the significant source of information for the processes of monitoring and evaluation of the programme. Based on the experience from the shortened programming period 2004-2006 and on basis of recommendations from the conducted audits, the Managing Authority for the ROP adopted a series of technical measures to simplify and shorten the processes of receiving, registration, appraisal and approval of projects, conclusion of contracts, financing, controlling and monitoring. Administrative and time demands of the implementation processes represented in the previous period the most serious shortcoming and to reduce them is the highest challenge for the ROP.
- Experience from the period 2004-2006 confirmed, that the ongoing and frequently updated information of the public about the progress achieved in implementation is the key factor for transparent implementation of the operational programme. The most spread and the most wanted way of acquiring information is to publish it at the Internet pages of the managing authorities and at the joint information portal for the all operational programmes.

Internal Procedures Manuals of the involved entities contains the implementation procedures for the ROP in the programming period 2007-2013.

3.9 SWOT ANALYSIS IN THE AREA OF REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE OBJECTIVE CONVERGENCE TERRITORY UNDER THE CONDITIONS EXISTING IN THE SR

With respect to the fact that the situation in many analysed thematic areas is approximately identical, the colour-highlighted boxes with the relevant regions depict the most characteristic regional disparities.

Table 30: SWOT analysis of the regional infrastructure in the Objective Convergence territory under the conditions existing in the SR

Strengths	Regional projection							Opportunities	Regional projection						
Settlement structure	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Settlement structure	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Development poles are evenly located in the all SR territory	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Concentration of financial resources into the development poles delivers higher efficiency of investments	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Demographic development	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Demographic development	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Positive values of natural increase of the population in the regions		x		x		x	x	Movement of the population from towns to the surrounding municipalities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Advantageous age structure of the population						x	x								
Infrastructure of education	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of education	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Sufficient number of the facilities of elementary school system facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Establishing of economically effective elementary schools with capacity over 200 pupils and adequate quality level	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Growing tendency of establishing Associated secondary schools	x		x	x	x		x	Increasing quality and interest in secondary vocational schools	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Broad spectrum of the all types of secondary schools	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Integration of preschool facilities with the elementary education facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Number of beds in social services facilities per 10 000 inhabitants is above the SR average	x	x	x		x			Increasing standards of provided services in the social infrastructure facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Excessive interest of the population in the social infrastructure facilities for adults	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Development of multi-type facilities of the social infrastructure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
								Removing barriers in the social infrastructure facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
								Improvement of living conditions of children	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
								Provision of availability of community services, enabling persons to participate in every-day life, in order to fulfil the rights established in international human-legal conventions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Infrastructure of cultural facilities and monument stock	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of cultural facilities and monument stock	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO

Sufficient network of memory fund facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Accessing of historically and socially valuable depositories to the public and improvement of their preservation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Large number of unexploited monuments	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	New use of revitalised monuments	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
								Realisation of the project European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013						x	
Tourism	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Tourism	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Large number of significant tourism centres with all-year utilisation				x	x		x	Increasing of attractiveness and competitiveness of the localities sought by tourists	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Great natural and cultural potential for development of tourism	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Extending of seasonal tourism to the all-year tourism	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Presence of UNESCO world heritage localities				x	x	x	x	Improvement of the regions promotion in the area of tourism and establishing of partnerships	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Evenly representation of all types of rescue services in the entire SR territory	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Reducing mortality of the population and reduction of damages on property due to natural elements	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sufficient human potential for conducting of rescue services	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Achieving of arrival time at intervention of non-commercial rescue services under 15 minutes in the all SR territory	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
								Reduction of intervention time in the difficult accessible areas				x	x	x	x
Regional communications	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Regional communications	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Time accessibility of the cohesion growth poles within 30 minutes from other settlements	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Accessibility of the cohesion growth poles within 25 minutes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Suitable interconnections of the 2 nd and 3 rd class roads to express communications and international transport corridors	x	x		x				Improving of traffic safety on the 2 nd and 3 rd class roads	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dense network of the 2 nd and 3 rd class roads		x	x		x	x	x								
Settlements	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Settlements	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Existing development and planning documents of towns and municipalities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Integrated development strategies of urban areas	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
								Creation of an implementation mechanism supporting housing infrastructure from the EU funds	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
High density of inhabitants in complexes of residential buildings with the civil amenities in urban agglomerations	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Increase of attractiveness and competitiveness of settlements	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Prepared conditions for regeneration of Roma settlements	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Prevention from urban areas arising affected by material devastation and social exclusion	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
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Weaknesses	Regional projection							Threats	Regional projection						
Demographic development	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Demographic development	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Reduction of natural increase	x	x	x		x			Growth of post-productive component of the population	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Aging of the population	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								
Infrastructure of education	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of education	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Lack of preschool facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Insufficient utilization of the rooms of elementary and secondary schools	x	x	x	x	x		
Unsatisfactory structural-technical conditions of buildings and internal equipment of educational facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Lack of options to harmonise family life and working life	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
High economic demands of schools with less than 200 pupils/students	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Stagnation or decline of the quality of educational process, lagging behind the EU countries	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Lack of equipped classrooms for teaching specialised subjects at secondary schools	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Low application of graduates of vocational schools in labour market	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Insufficient number of social services infrastructure facilities for adults	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Increase of post-productive component of the population establishes an increased need of utilization social services facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Unsatisfactory technical conditions of building providing social services (low energy efficiency, lot of barriers, low area per one client, etc.)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Deepening of social exclusion due to the lack of certain types of the social infrastructure facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Low rate of de-institutionalization of existing facilities (low utilized services on daily basis)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								
Low interest in facilities of the social infrastructure of daily and weekly types	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								
Infrastructure of cultural facilities and monument stock	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of cultural facilities and monument stock	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Lack of satisfactory rooms for publishing depositories of memory and heritage fund institutions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Following deteriorating of monuments up to their devastation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Unsatisfactory technical conditions of buildings where resides the repository	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Unsatisfactory technical conditions of heritage and repository stock facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

and heritage fund institutions								resulting into deterioration of collection and book stock							
Fragmentation of unexploited cultural monuments in the territory	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								

Tourism	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Tourism	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Non-used potential of cooperation among self-governments and the private sector	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Damaging of significant monuments of the cultural heritage	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Insufficient public infrastructure to the tourism centres with all-year utilisation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Low level of provided services and to it related lack of interest of tourists	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Insufficient marking of curiosities of tourism	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								
Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Unsatisfactory technical conditions of buildings and obsolete equipment of non-commercial rescue units	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Threatening of the environment due to insufficient environmental protection of buildings of non-commercial rescue units	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Unsatisfactory equipment and technical conditions of buildings of the mountain service				x	x	x	x	Threat of human lives and property in difficult accessible areas, where the intervention time is longer than 15 min.				x	x	x	x
Regional communications	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Regional communications	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Bad technical conditions of the 2 nd and 3 rd class roads	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Arising of critical sections from the view of permeability and safety	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Overloading of the 2 nd and 3 rd class roads			x	x	x	x	x								
Accessibility in some localities to the cohesion growth poles longer than 45 minutes				x	x	x	x								
Settlements	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO	Settlements	TN	TT	NR	ZA	BB	KE	PO
Significantly ramshackle and degrading panel constructions in urban areas, low energy efficiency of apartment houses	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Continuing lack of interest of the urban areas inhabitants in valorisation of public spaces, greenery and parking places	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Complicated legislation of the housing support from the EU funds and complicate set conditions for integrated strategies of urban areas development								Legislative and other barriers restraining implementation of integrated strategies of the urban areas development	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Insufficient conditions of the tangible infrastructure of settlements (i.e., public spaces, etc.) in the municipalities included among the	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Lack of parking places, greenery and relaxation zones in the municipalities and elements increasing attractiveness of settlements	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Source: MCRD SR, 2007 and complements 2011

4. STRATEGY OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

4.1 STARTING POINTS FOR STRATEGY DETERMINING OF THE REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

In the process of the ROP strategy determination for the period 2007-2013 it is inevitable to take into consideration the followings issues:

- Bases of the NSRF for the ROP,
- Strategies at the Community level, at the national, regional and local levels and outputs from application of the principle of partnership,
- Results of analyses and the issues for thematic concentration of the interventions within the individual areas of assistance,
- Starting points for territorial concentration.

Based on the ROP revision in the mid-term of programming period it is necessary to take into account, in addition also the effects of external environment related to:

- Changed economic and social environment, in relation to the economic crisis after the year 2008,
- Changes in legislation in the years 2007-2010,
- Changes of priorities at the national, regional and local level, particularly in relation to the eligible key applicants within frame of the ROP.

4.1.1 Basis of the National Strategic Reference Framework for the Regional Operational Programme

The NSRF is a basic framework strategic document at the all-national level, setting out the development priorities co-financed from the SF and the CF in the programming period 2007-2013, in relation to the Community Strategic Guidelines, defining the frameworks for Funds interventions at the European level.

The NSRF as the first of its strategic priorities identifies the strategic priority *Infrastructure and Regional Availability*, the global goal thereof is to **“increase amenities density of the regions with infrastructure and increase effectiveness of public services related to it”**. The given goal reaches through the implementation of individual specific priorities of the NSRF. The ROP is an operational programme, for which is relevant the specific priority 1.1 *Regional infrastructure* of the NSRF. Its goal defines as to **“increase availability and quality of the civil infrastructure and the territory amenity in the regions”**. Starting point of the NSRF for determining the ROP strategy is that the goal of specific priority 1.1 of the NSRF achieved mainly through the ROP implementation.

Table 32: Hierarchic system of the priorities and goals of the NSRF relevant from the view of the ROP

Hierarchy	Goal
NSRF	Significantly increase competitiveness and performance of the regions and of the Slovak economy and employment while respecting sustainable development by the year 2013
Strategic priority 1 Infrastructure and Regional Availability	Increase density of amenities of the regions with the infrastructure and increase of effectiveness of the public services related to it
Specific priority 1.1 Regional Infrastructure	Increase availability and quality of the civil infrastructure and of the territory amenity in the regions

Source: MCRD SR, 2007

The strategic priorities of the NSRF and their goals are specified at the lower level into the specific priorities and goals, including the key structural indicators for every of the topic areas worked out within the given priority.

4.1.2 Strategies at the community level, and at the national, regional and local levels, and the outputs from application of the partnership principle

Evaluation of the current state of the regional infrastructure in the individual thematic areas of the ROP assistance and expected development in the following years was assessed on the basis of the following concept and strategic documents:

Community Strategic Guidelines (CSG) - the ROP reflects Guideline 1 of SCG, i.e., “to make Europe and its regions more attractive place for investments and job”, and concurrently Guideline 3 of SCG, i.e., “to establish more and better quality jobs”.

Lisbon strategy/National Development Plan (LS/NDP) - the ROP contributes to the increasing competitiveness and attractiveness of the regions through support of the regional infrastructure development in the growth poles

National Sustainable Development Strategy / Action Plan of Sustainable Development (NSDS/APSD) - the ROP through increasing of the life quality in the regions (i.e., strengthening of the innovative and cohesion growth poles) supports polycentric all-national development of the SR territory, through what support of the regional infrastructure in the cohesion growth poles contributes to the reduction of intraregional disparities.

Slovakia Spatial Development Perspective 2001 (SSDP 2001) - the decisive issuing document for determination of the ROP strategy defines the structure of the SR settlements and hierarchy of its centres and core areas, that are issues for determination of the innovative and cohesion growth poles as priorities of territorial concentration for the NSRF.

Economic and Social Development Programmes of Self-governing regions (ESDP Regions) - specify in more details the priorities of the self-governing regions in the individual areas of support at the NUTS 3 level regions.

The key strategic documents at the national level for the area of the civil infrastructure and the territory amenity:

- State Policy Perspective on Children and Youth until 2007,
- Integrated Education of Roma Children and Youth Perspective,
- Action Plan Employment 2004-2006,
- Action Plan Social Inclusion 2004-2006,
- Join Memorandum on Inclusion of December 18th, 2003,
- Museums and Galleries Development Strategy of the SR until 2010,
- Strategy of State Cultural Policy and Action Plan of Introduction Stage of Cultural Policy Implementation,
- Slovak Libraries Development Strategy until 2006,
- Libraries Electronization Programme,
- Community Social Work Programme,
- Transport Policy of the SR until 2015,
- Housing Development Perspective,
- State Housing Policy Perspective until 2010,
- Buildings Renewal Perspective with Emphasis on Housing Stock Renovation,
- Housing Development Programme,
- Long-term Perspective of Housing for Marginalised Groups of the Population and Model of its Financing,

- New Tourism Development Strategy of the Slovak Republic until 2013, as amended by later changes and completions,
- National Action Plan on the Prevention of Violence 2009 – 2012.

A broad spectrum of social and economic partners participated in preparing and approving the ROP, enforcing projection of the approved sector or profile strategies into the ROP strategy. Annex 3 gives the conclusions of application of the partnership principle in the process of the ROP preparing.

In the course of the programming period 2007-2013, through cooperation in elaborating of calls for individual measures of the ROP, participation in selecting operations, participation in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP, and cooperation in activities of information and publicity, etc., ensures participation of the socio-economic partners in implementing the ROP. Chapter 9 gives description of the given partners involvement into the ROP implementation.

Representatives of the social and economic partners represented in the Monitoring Committee for ROP participated also in the preparation and approval of the ROP revision in the middle of the programming period. The Managing Authority for ROP realized a series of bilateral meetings with the key partners. The ROP Monitoring Committee discussed the revised ROP on October 26th, 2010. Draft of the ROP revision was also the subject of the screening for assessment of its environmental impacts.

4.1.3 Analysis results in the area of the regional infrastructure

The regional infrastructure in context of the NSRF and the ROP comprises area of the civil infrastructure and of the territory amenity with the transport and settlement infrastructure and the infrastructure of tourism. The analytical section of the ROP was aimed at individual areas of the regional infrastructure, in subdivision of priority themes in terms of Article 4 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council (EC) No. 1080/2006 of July 5th, 2006 on the ERDF, repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1783/1999. The following pieces of generalised knowledge imply for determination of the ROP strategy from analysis of the regional infrastructure:

- The network of the civil infrastructure facilities is sufficient in the all-Slovak average as far as to quantitative aspects, and in case of several facilities a rationalisation of this network is undergoing, due to reasons to ensure their economic sustainability and also with respect to demographic trends,
- Analysis proved that the numbers of facilities and their localisation copy the deployment of population in the actual structure of settlement, what is the consequence in the past applied support of centre system of settlement,
- There are certain regional differences in amenity with the civil infrastructure facilities, mainly between the more developed west and the less developed east of the territory,
- In relation with tourism there is still absence of the quality public infrastructure as a part of the more significant tourism centres, and potential of the tangible cultural monuments stock is not utilised,
- The building stock of the civil infrastructure facilities, including their technical equipment, is materially deteriorated and morally obsolete, and it does not meet the current standards for energy efficiency of buildings,
- Current demographic development, as well as the prognosis of the population indicates that due to changes in the age structure of the population there will rise to diverse demands for scope and types of the civil infrastructure facilities between the individual NUTS 3 level regions, but also between the NUTS 4 level regions,
- High fragmentation of the settlement structure in the SR (e.g., municipalities with the number of inhabitants by 1,000 are almost 67% of the overall number of municipalities, and only 17% of inhabitants of the SR live there),
- Objective need to support the municipalities, providing certain types of the infrastructure not only to their inhabitants, but also to the inhabitants of their gradient territory, and what are able to ensure sustainability of the interventions,
- 49% of the SR population live in the apartment dwelling houses, and 40% live in apartment dwelling houses built-up from panel-prefabricated elements, while it is necessary to stabilise

and maintain the structural-technical conditions of the apartment dwelling houses in order of prevention of arising areas supporting social exclusion,

- Roma settlements in the rural areas and in towns (i.e., segregated and separated settlements) are equipped with an insufficient or no infrastructure, what is deepening their social exclusion,
- The 2nd and 3rd class roads network ensuring transport serviceability of the territory is sufficient in the SR territory, however more than one quarter of its entire length is characterised by unsatisfactory transport-technical conditions,
- The 2nd and 3rd class roads have determining importance mainly in the regions, where absent a network of the higher categories roads (e.g., Eastern Slovakia and a part of Central Slovakia).

Based on the ROP revision in the mid-term of the programming period there are for determining the ROP strategy important also the following facts:

- In connection with changes in legislation at the national level, as well as on the EU level, with the floods in the year 2010, as well as with changes in priorities at the national level, it is necessary to modify the ROP strategy in area of regional infrastructure,
- Following the change in demographic trends of the society (an increase in the age group of 0-4 years) compared to the situation and expectations during the preparation of the ROP, and in conjunction with a change of legislation in the area of education, particularly in terms of individual school-classes capacities, are increasing demands on the educational infrastructure. Assumed is increasing of capacity of the school infrastructure facilities without increasing of their number,
- Interventions ROP in the area of education infrastructure were in time of the economic crisis the top development priority for regional and local self-governments, and they contribute in significant way to the reduction of energy consumption of buildings, introduction of ICT to education, and to the lifelong learning,
- Current European trends and changes of the national legislation in the social area highlight the need to promote humanization and de-institutionalization of large-scale residential social infrastructure facilities and their transformation to the facilities of "family type", and building-up new facilities,
- In the area of cultural infrastructure remains a need for support of the most important and most visited facilities, or unused immovable cultural monuments, with the potential to contribute to the strengthening of tourism development (in particular of the cultural-cognitive tourism),
- In connection with the decision of the European Union Council No. 8770/09, by which town Košice has been designated as the European Capital of Culture for the year 2013, and following the relevant resolutions of the SR Government, it is necessary to ensure financing of sub-projects of the project ECOC - Košice 2013 within frame of the ROP,
- In the area of tourism is still a need to assure support of the strategic non-investment development projects (to encourage establishment of clusters, elaboration of developing strategies of tourism on regional and micro-regional level, marketing activities and comprehensive information services on regional and micro-regional level) in accordance with the new legal regulations in this area,
- In the area of non-commercial rescue services infrastructure are created appropriate presumptions for fulfilling objectives of the ROP, but a lower share of state facilities was identified,
- ROP interventions aimed at improvement of the physical infrastructure state in the settlements were in time of the economic crisis one of the most important development priorities of the local self-governments. In connection with the floods in the year 2010, and considering the high absorption capacity there henceforth remains a need of measures in this area in this field in selected territories identified as the most affected by floods in the year 2010,

- In the area of housing infrastructure, in respect of the identified difficulties with the implementation of integrated development strategies for local areas is recommended to apply the new approach, with utilization of the JESSICA initiative, and to take into account changes in the EC/EU directives in this area (intervention in the sphere of energy efficiency),
- In connection with the floods in the year 2010, it is necessary to ensure renewal of the infrastructure of regional 2nd and 3rd class roads the in areas mostly affected by flooding, designated on basis of the national analysis.

4.1.4 Conclusions for thematic concentration of interventions within frame of individual areas of support

Based on the listed results of the analysis, inclusive its completions in the mid-term of the programming period, it is possible to define the following starting points for thematic aiming of the interventions within the frame of individual areas of the regional infrastructure support:

- Interventions to the civil infrastructure facilities have to be aimed at improvement of their structural-technical conditions and modernisation of their equipment, increasing of energy efficiency of buildings, removing barriers, in some areas also into building-up new facilities, with priority concentration on the education infrastructure facilities,
- In directing interventions into the civil infrastructure facilities to apply the criteria of sustainability (i.e., demographic trends, capacity and economic criteria, settlement of property-legal relationships, compliance with legislation rules),
- Interventions into reinforcement of the cultural potential of regions have to be directed to the most significant cultural, repository and heritage fund institutions established by the territorial self-governments, and to the immovable culture monuments in ownership of public sector with big attractiveness for tourism (with exception of some selected projects within the Priority Axis 7 ROP),
- Interventions within frame of tourism have to be directed after all to the complex promotion of the core forms of tourism, i.e., mainly to the cultural-cognitive tourism and urban tourism,
- Strengthening of the culture potential and tourism in the region NUTS 2 level East has to be realized also in form of support of selected investment projects in connection with the adopted project European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013,
- Interventions into the tangible infrastructure of settlements have to be directed to the central sections of settlements, or to their zones, to the regeneration of Roma settlements in terms of running implementation of local strategies of complex approach, and concurrently contribute to the elimination of damages caused by floods,
- Create mechanism for promotion of housing infrastructure from the EU Funds, with potential for its wider use after the year 2013,
- Direct the interventions into the regional roads at reconstruction of the 2nd and third class roads, which ensure improving accessibility (i.e., reduction of time accessibility) of the population to the civil amenities.

4.1.5 Summary of findings of regular evaluation of the ROP from 2010 and their impact on the topical concentration of interventions within individual areas of support from 2011

In the course of 2007-2010, there was a change of background based on which the topical concentration of support within individual areas of ROP support was determined. These are mainly the impacts of the global economic crisis and changes of priorities at the national and regional level, changes of legislation at the national and European level, impacts of destructive floods of 2010. These facts did not affected all areas of ROP support equally, just to the contrary, in 2008-2010 individual areas of ROP support were materially unequally implemented; some overall objectives of certain areas of support were fulfilled within extremely short period of time, whereas the performance of other areas of support was connected with difficulties. Although the change of background did not endanger the achievement of original objectives of the operational programme, the regular evaluation of the ROP of 2010, related analyses as well as requirements of socio-economic partners of the Managing Authority of the ROP pointed out the risks and the need to consider the changed situation through a partial amendment of strategy and financial plan for some areas of support.

Based on findings of the regular evaluation of the ROP of 2010 and related analyses, following backgrounds for topical direction of interventions may be summarized within individual areas of regional infrastructure support:

- In connection to the change of demographic development of society (increase in the category of 0-4 years of age) against the situation and expectations at the time of ROP preparation and in conjunction with the change of legislation in the sphere of education, in particular from the point of view of capacity of individual classes, demands on the education infrastructure are growing. It is expected that the capacity of education infrastructure capacities will rise without increasing their number.
- Interventions in the field of education infrastructure were the highest development priority of regional and local self-governments at the time of the economic crisis and significantly contributed to the reduction of energetic demands of buildings, implementation of ICT and to education and lifelong education. Original objectives specified for this area of support were successfully met in the first half of the programming period. In 2011-2015, it is necessary to create conditions for a successful realisation of projects supported in 2008-2011.
- A reasonable reduction of allocation and transfer of funds to the most requested and most effective areas of support may be done in certain areas of support, without contravening the global objective of the ROP and objectives of individual priority axes.
- Present European trends and changes of national legislation in social area refer to the need to change the strategy of the social infrastructure support and to use the remaining allocation in 2011-2015 exclusively for the support of deinstitutionalisation projects of social infrastructure facilities and support of community centres in relation to social inclusion of marginalised groups of residents (in particular the Roma community).
- To apply sustainability criteria (demographic trends, capacity and economic criteria, settled ownership-legal relationships, compliance with legislative rules) in directing interventions to civic infrastructure facilities, taking into account the specifics (deinstitutionalisation, facility specialisation and the like).
- To focus interventions in the strengthening of cultural potential of regions on the most important and touristically most attractive cultural, monument and fund institutions established by territorial self-governments and immovable cultural monuments owned by the public sector (except for the selected projects in Priority Axis 7 of the ROP).
- Changes in the field of tourism and the existing development of support of tourism infrastructure within NSRF refer to the need to concentrate the remaining ROP resources in this area in order to strengthen the synergy of interventions between OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth and ROP (such as the support of non-commercial public infrastructure of tourism adjacent to tourist destinations supported within the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth).
- Interventions focused on the improvement of state of material infrastructure of settlements were at the time of the economic crisis one of the most important development priorities of local self-governments. In connection with floods in 2010, there is an acute need of implementation of these interventions in selected territories mostly affected by the flood, including municipalities with Roma settlements.
- To concentrate the interventions in material infrastructure of settlements in central parts or settlements or their zone (save for municipalities with marginalised Roma communities in rural environment and elimination of flood consequences).
- In connection to identified difficulties with implementation of integrated strategies of development of urban areas, a mechanism of housing infrastructure support from EU funds, with an option of its wider utilisation after 2013, has to be created in the field of housing infrastructure, by way of a pilot approach (e.g. the financial tool JESSICA).

- A lower share of supported state facilities was identified in the field of non-commercial rescue services in 2008-2010 as compared with municipal facilities; the focus of support in 2011-2015 on Fire-Fighting and Rescue Service facilities only would be appropriate in the context of achievement of objectives of this area of support.
- In connection with Decision of European Union Council No. 8770/09, determining the town of Košice to be the European Capital of Culture of 2013 and in connection with the relevant resolutions of the Government of the Slovak Republic, the funding of sub-projects of the ECC- Košice 2010 projects has to be provided within the ROP.

4.1.6 Bases for the territorial concentration of the interventions

As stated in the NSRF, from the view of national issues of regional projection of the NSRF strategy, for the SR is important the fact, that it has available an evenly developed system of settlement centres, where around the most significant centres are established polarised and agglomeration areas, the so-called core settlement centres. These towns together with their agglomerations are able to meet the role of the so-called **accelerators of development**, or said otherwise, the **growth poles** of individual areas.¹⁸

For the purposes of territorial concentration in the NSRF is recommending future concentration of activities into the **innovative and cohesion growth poles** in accordance with the polycentric concept of the settlement development.

The innovative and cohesion growth poles were specified within the preparation of the NSRF, based on the in advance selected socio-economic and town-planning criteria and statistic evaluations of the all municipalities in the whole SR territory. Relevant professional units of all self-governing regions (i.e., units involved in spatial planning and regional development at the regional self-governing offices) discussed and commented individually the draft of the growth poles determination, in the form of a precise list of municipalities. The given process ensured refining of the resulting list of municipalities and their classification into the growth poles. Annex 4 gives description of the methodology of the growth poles determination and the resulting list of municipalities classified into the relevant categories. The internet page of the MCRD SR <http://www.ropka.sk/dokumenty-na-stiahnutie/> discloses for every NUTS 3 level region a precise list of the municipalities included into the individual categories and graphical depiction in the map of respective region.

Classification of municipalities into the innovative and cohesion growth poles resulted mainly from presence of individual facilities of the civil and economic infrastructure and effects of the activities of such facilities on the municipalities in the surrounding territory. The innovation cycle of these facilities is in principle of long-term character, counting for decades up to a century. Due to these reasons there are not expected any more significant changes in municipalities classification into the growth poles in the course of the programming period 2007-2013, nor any need of its revision. Possible changes can occur sporadically in the situation, when a significant development of economic activities comes into being in a municipality, which is not in a growth pole (e.g., accentuated influx of investments). The subsequently induced economic and social development can necessitate also development in the area of facilities for the basic amenity in such scale, that such facilities will prevail with their importance over the facilities in the adjacent cohesion growth poles. In the course of programming period 2007-2013, the ongoing assessment aimed at evaluation of effectiveness of the selected territorial concentration, and at evaluation of effect from implemented interventions and overall development of the SR economy on the list of innovative and cohesion growth poles is also a part of the ongoing evaluations at the NSRF level. With respect of need to observe a point of time for the manifestation of interventions effects manifestation, such assessment may be consider earliest in the year 2010. The results of assessment are presented to the National Monitoring Committee, who based on them, will adopts a resolution concerning to a possible modification of the selected approach to the territorial concentration.

The innovative growth poles comprise of the most significant towns within the SR settlement. As the innovative growth poles are specified all the towns ensuring the higher and specific civil amenity, and they are concurrently the centres of jobs of the regional, supra-regional up to the all-national significance. The current regional towns are included among such centres based on the recent

¹⁸ National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013

development and current development trends. Moreover, the towns meeting function of district centres, towns meeting the former function of district centres, and some other more significant towns, which were added based on regional specific considerations after individual professional consultations with the territorially relevant self-governing regions are included among such centres. Agglomeration linkages have developed with the municipalities in their background around the most significant towns specified as the innovative growth poles in consequence of their influencing on surroundings. The Slovakia Spatial Development Perspective 2001 (hereinafter "the SSDP 2001") identified these areas as the so-called core settlement centres. For the purposes of the NSRF and in accordance with the SSDP 2001, the interest areas of the innovative growth poles are specified, what are immediately and strongly influenced by the central towns (i.e., by the innovative growth poles) and where are appearing suburbanisation tendencies with the phenomena of the so-called concentrated de-concentration. It means that new economic and social activities tend into these territories, and together with the central towns are establishing one function aggregate. Within these areas, there are or can be other innovative growth poles, which are interconnected each other through intense agglomerative relationships, cohesion growth poles and other municipalities, not specified closer from this point of view. Significance of the municipalities within the specified interest areas of the innovative growth poles is an equally important element for decision making about directing of investments into their territories. From the view of ensuring activities and services provided by the civil infrastructure facilities, what is the thematic area of the ROP support, also in these areas are preferred mainly the cohesion growth poles.

The cohesion growth poles comprise of the municipalities meeting or having the best assumptions to fulfil the criteria of ensuring the basic serviceability functions as for inhabitants living in municipalities, as for inhabitants in their close background. The innovative growth poles meet concurrently also the function of cohesion growth poles.

The cohesion growth poles are demarcated based on the criteria, reconsidering the following indicators:

- Presence of facilities of the basic amenity (i.e., school facilities and their scope, presence of the social infrastructure facilities),
- Position of the municipality from the view of meeting of some public functions (e.g., registry office, existing joint building offices),
- Size of the municipality given by the number of inhabitants in the year 2004,
- Historical development of the municipality and its position within the system of settlement (i.e., in relation to the previous centre system of settlement applied in the SR territory),
- Locating of municipality in the territory, and accessibility of the proposed cohesion growth pole from other adjacent municipalities.

Table 33: Number of growth poles and proportion of the population living in the growth poles in the year 2004

Region	Number of all municipalities in the region	Number of growth poles in the region	Number of innovative growth poles	Number of cohesion growth poles	Number of municipalities which are not growth poles		Number of people living in the growth poles	Percentage of people living in the growth poles
					In the interest territory of the innovative growth poles	Outside the interest territory of the innovative growth poles		
NUTS 2 Bratislava	73	37	4	33	22	14	571,811	95.1
Bratislava	73	37	4	33	22	14	571,811	95.1
NUTS 2 West	881	366	29	337	77	438	152,535	83.2
Trnava	251	106	7	99	26	119	453,251	81.9
Trenčín	276	104	12	92	23	149	504,801	83.9
Nitra	354	156	10	146	28	170	594,483	83.8
NUTS 2 Centre	831	264	24	240	148	419	1,107,933	81.8
Žilina	315	139	11	128	82	94	602,321	86.8
Banská Bystrica	516	125	13	112	66	325	505,612	76.8
NUTS 2 East	1,106	306	25	281	168	632	1,230,376	78.5
Prešov	666	176	13	163	93	397	615,371	77.2

Košice	440	130	12	118	75	235	615,005	79.8
Objective Convergence	2,818	936	78	858	393	1,489	3,890,844	81.45
Total SR	2,891	973	82	891	415	1,503	4,462,655	82.87

Source: Aurex, 2007

Approximately one third of the all municipalities lying in the Objective Convergence territory are the innovative growth pole or cohesion growth pole. About 83 % of inhabitants of the all Objective Convergence territory in the SR conditions live there. The lowest proportions of inhabitants living in the growth poles have the Banská Bystrica and Prešov Regions, mainly due to the fragmented structure of settlement (i.e., a large number of small municipalities). The NSRF territorially concentrates the thematic priorities from the view of achieving the strategic goal into the territory through the projects implemented:¹⁹

- Primarily in the innovative and cohesion growth poles,
- In specific cases into the areas outside the growth poles.

The previously mentioned means that the interventions concerning to the individual strategic priorities of the NSRF directs as follows:

- Strategic priority *Infrastructure and regional accessibility*: preferential direction to the innovative and cohesion growth poles, depending on the concrete types of infrastructure,
- Strategic priority *Knowledge-based economy*: preferential concentration into the innovative growth poles (except the areas of increased accessibility to the broadband Internet), where are establishing conditions for arising and development of the most significant resources of growth, based on exploitation of knowledge, growth of effectiveness and efficiency of decisive economic and social processes affecting development in the remaining territory of the SR,
- Strategic priority *Human resources*: interventions are not subject to the principle of territorial concentration, whereas linkage of the education contents to the needs of labour market, acquiring basic skills and key competences, as well as increase of the quality of life-long education requires a comprehensive and uniform approach in the whole SR territory (including the Bratislava Self-governing Region).

In case of extraordinary effective and efficient interventions, with respect to the achieving of goals defined in the NSRF and its relevant priorities, which are not possible to implement in the priority-preferred areas, it is efficient to direct the contributions also towards the areas outside the growth poles. The given approach can be applied mainly in cases of support of activities with horizontal type character, how social inclusion is (e.g., segregated and separated Roma settlements). In addition, in cases of support of the civil infrastructure facilities, located besides the growth poles, but significant from the view of the function, type of services in the structure and capacities of the given region, in cases of support of selected projects in the area of the environment, and support of tourism.²⁰ Chapter 5 of the ROP describes the rate of application of the territorial concentration principle within every Priority Axis of the ROP.

In the conditions of market economy, the concentration principle of development and localisation of economic activities corresponds to the concentration tendencies, in particular, in the production sectors and market services sectors. The ROP should represent, under the conditions existing in the SR, a balanced concept with utilization of elements of the concentration and balancing approach. **Assistance directed to the innovative growth poles contributes to balancing of the interregional differences, and assistance directed to the cohesion growth poles contributes to balancing of the intraregional differences.** Supporting growth poles results not only into support of balancing of the unwanted regional differences, but it contribute to the development and maintenance of the rural area as well. Through supporting of the innovative and cohesion growth poles is ensured the basic and higher civil amenity of the territory through an "all-area" way, increasing so the quality of

¹⁹ National Strategic Reference Framework SR for the years 2007 - 2013

²⁰ National Strategic Reference Framework of the SR for the years 2007 - 2013

service of the rural area, too. Thus, the rural area becomes equivalent territory to the urbanised areas, contributing so to the significant extent also to the higher activity of urbanised areas as such.

The principle of territorial concentration of the ROP respects the polycentric concept of the settlement development in the SR, and is based upon the theory of innovative and cohesion growth poles, identified already at the level of the NSRF. Application of the given approach represents the significant element of effective utilization of limited and additional resources for support of regional development through the ROP. Assistance directed to the innovative growth poles contributes to balancing of the interregional differences, and assistance directed to the cohesion growth poles contributes to balancing of the intraregional differences.

4.2 GLOBAL OBJECTIVE OF THE REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

In terms of the given issues for the strategy establishing, the global goal of the ROP defines **“Increasing of accessibility and quality of the civil infrastructure and amenity of the territory in the regions”**.

Achieving of the specific goals of the ROP fulfil the global goal of the ROP. Fulfilment of specific goals is measurable at the level of the ROP Priority Axes. **The specific goals of the ROP are determined as follows:**

1. **Enhancing of the services level provided in the area of education**
2. **Enhancing of the scope and level of services provided in the social area**
3. **Strengthening of the cultural potential of the regions and tourism development**
4. **Strengthening of competitiveness of the settlements and enhancing the quality and safety of public spaces**
5. **Enhancing of the level of transport serviceability of the regions**
6. **Effective managing and implementation of the ROP**
7. **Strengthening of the cultural potential and competitiveness of the region NUTS 2 - East in connection with the implementation of the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013**

Through the ROP Priority Axes replenishes the specific goals of the ROP. These Priority Axes are established on the base of the structure of priorities defined in Article 4 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council (EC) No. 1080/2006 of July 5th, 2006 on the ERDF, repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1783/1999 as amended by later changes and complements. They are summarised in the following table:

Table 34/2011: Structure of the ROP Priority Axes in the programming period 2007-2013

Priority Axis of the ROP	Detailed description of the area of assistance
Infrastructure of education	Selected kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools
Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship	Selected social services facilities, facilities for conduction of the measures of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship
Strengthening of the cultural potential of the regions and the infrastructure of tourism	Selected important repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels, immovable cultural monuments (cultural-learning and urban tourism) Tourism
Regeneration of settlements	Material infrastructure of settlements Infrastructure of housing Infrastructure of the municipalities with the separated and segregated Roma settlements

	Infrastructure of the non-commercial rescue services Development documents of the regions
Regional communications ensuring transport serviceability of the regions	Interventions into the selected sections of the 2 nd and 3 rd class roads
Technical assistance	Support of management and implementation of the ROP
European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013	Selected investment projects related to ECOC Košice 2013 (cultural infrastructure)

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2011

The Priority Axes and relevant operations for achieving specific goals, including measurable indicators describes in more details content of the Chapter 5.

4.3 STRATEGY FOR THE GLOBAL GOAL ACHIEVING OF THE REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

Financial resources from the SF, in spite of their additional and restricted character, represent in the conditions of the SR the significant resource for support of the regional development. Their effective utilization requires targeted directing of support in such a way, to achieve the highest possible effect of realized operations, ensuring sustainability and availability of the interventions, establishing synergy with support from other operational programmes co-financed from the SF (i.e., mainly in the area of horizontal priorities), or from other development resources.

The most effective way to achieve the global objective “Enhancing availability and quality of the civil infrastructure and amenity of the territory in the regions” is through the joint application of thematic and territorial concentration of interventions.

4.3.1 Strategy of the regional operational programme: Application of thematic and territorial concentration

The structure of strategy of the ROP described in this section is in terms of thematic areas of the ROP assistance. Within the individual areas of support there is set thematic direction of interventions, where are further projected the principles of territorial concentration.

Infrastructure of education

The mass construction of schools and school facilities in the second half of the 20th century ensured uniform and accessible distribution of the given facilities of the civil infrastructure in the all SR territory. Relatively excessive network of schools and school facilities is however at present affected by the bad structural-technical conditions, excessive physical deterioration and moral obsolescence. The arisen situation is due to insufficient capital financing from the part of founders in the recent years, which is an accompanying phenomenon of the transformation process in the area of school system. Transfers of the founders' competences, changes in ownership relationships, and changes in the system of financing schools and school facilities resulted into the insufficient level of maintenance and repairs of the used structural buildings, deepening debts of renovation and modernisation of buildings. The given buildings moreover do not comply with the current structural and technical standards, mainly from the view of energy efficiency of the buildings.

With respect to importance of the quality of education for competitiveness of individuals and entire society, it is reasonable to reassess also the spatial and capacity design of schools and school facilities. The current trends aiming at transformation of the traditional school into the modern school require a larger number of smaller classrooms, in contrast to history, while demands for technical equipment of classrooms are growing, mainly as far as to ICT equipment.

The excessive network of schools and school facilities, characterised by high operational costs, generate stress on the founders to rationalize the network of the existing facilities, in effort to ensure economic effectiveness, but also the required level of conditions for the educational process realization. Outcomes of the rationalisation of the schools and school facilities network are long-term sustainable perspective facilities, which are able to ensure besides the good quality educational process also other complementary activities, activities of life-long education, leisure time activities, educational courses, sport activities, etc. Interventions into the education infrastructure with focusing mainly on the elementary schools represent the priority area of the support from the ROP.

The specific category represents the kindergartens and special schools. In relation to the preschool facilities, there was identified the fact, that the number of kindergarten classrooms will be insufficient in the following years in everyone region, what relates with the need to ensure optimal capacities of children in classrooms. The highest deficiency expects primarily in the Prešov Regions, followed by the Trenčín, Žilina and Košice Regions. However from the view of territorial concentration, it can state, that in the growth poles there are almost 60% of the kindergartens. However, in spite of it the support of the kindergartens has a specific importance also in the areas with a smaller concentration of inhabitants, in particular, in relation to support of marginalised Roma communities (hereinafter “the MRC”). Support of the kindergartens in relation with the MRC is one of the most important instruments for support of their social inclusion.

Applying of the principle of thematic and territorial concentrations is **the strategy of directing interventions at the educational infrastructure through the ROP**, defined as follows:

- Eligible group of activities is: the reconstruction, extension and modernisation of selected kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, and related procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment.
- The aim of these interventions is to eliminate unsatisfying construction-technical condition of objects, elimination of unsatisfying conditions for immobile users and reduction of high energetic demands of operation in the case of all types of schools, while observing the environmental sustainability principles.
- These interventions support the reconstruction, modernisation, extension and procurement of the relevant equipment of elementary and secondary schools in growth poles with a number of pupils of more than 200 or with a potential of creating conditions for lifelong education, in order to fulfil the quality and quantity standards of the educational process with focus on the increase of quality of the educational process; with focus on the increase of expertise and competitiveness of their graduates on the labour market in the case of specialised secondary schools. In the case of kindergartens identified in local development strategies in growth poles, the support is implemented by way of capacity extension of existing facilities and their extension by crèches, including procurement of relevant equipment. In the case of all types of schools, interventions should consider trends of rationalisation of the network of facilities (e.g. joining schools).
 - Through these interventions, the inclusion of children with limited mobility is concurrently supported (in particular by removing construction barriers). Special types of schools and school institutions mainly for disadvantaged groups are supported as a tool of support of equality of opportunities, mainly facilities with marginalised Roma communities significantly represented, without applying the principles of territorial concentration as the tool of support of social inclusion of Roma communities.

Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship

Analysis identifies the field of the social infrastructure as one of the most differentiated thematic areas of the support within frame of ROP. To ensure sustainable and high quality of the provided services and performed measures relates directly with the economic sustainability of the given facilities.

The broad spectrum of facilities for the various target groups of inhabitants has different capacity and structural-technical characteristics, starting from the family type (i.e., facilities for children) up to facilities with several decades of clients (e.g., houses of social services, facilities for seniors). As in majority of areas, a rule applies in principle also in the social sphere that the economic effectiveness of operation is increased in the case of facilities with higher number of clients. However, from the point of view of this support area it is not appropriate to give precedence to the economic effectiveness

approach over the social effectiveness and purposefulness approach, which applies in particular in the case of selected types of facilities for children and seriously disabled people.

According to analyses of the individual types of facilities representation, it can state, that the highest share have the pensioners' houses (21.2%), houses of social services for adults (20.8%), nursing service facilities (19.1%), and houses of social services for children (8.5%), which have the highest capacity of clients. The analysis of demographic development of SR residents indicates an increasing demand for services and measures for children as well as for adults, including seniors.

Based on the results of analysis (mainly increasing demand for services and measures for children as well as for adults, including seniors), the support of social infrastructure **in 2007-2010** was focused on the support of reconstruction, extension and building of facilities with larger scope of investments, i.e. facilities with larger capacity. It was presumed that the mentioned approach would enable the founders of all types of facilities to use own funds for less demanding capital investments in facilities or objects with smaller capacity. Interventions in construction objects were focused on elimination of unsatisfying construction-technical condition or building of new objects and for the provision of their equipment, including ICT equipment in order to eliminate the unsatisfying conditions for immobile users and reduction of high energetic demands of operation. It was a humanization and elimination of barriers of existing facilities and building of new facilities in compliance with the economic sustainability principle, while the supported facilities included mainly the types of pensioners' houses, houses of social services for adults, houses of social services for children, nursing service facilities with a capacity of more than 50 clients, observing the minimum areal standards (8 square metre per person) and observing assumptions for ensuring the provision of quality services with focus on facilities combining several types of services or providing services to several target groups, or combining institutional, daily and weekly care. Conditions for the support of community centres were created as well in the case of facilities focused on the strengthening of social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities.

In the case of completion of strategy for area of social infrastructure at the national level, the option to update the strategy of social infrastructure support during the programming period 2007-2013 based on a preliminary evaluation at the level of the operational programme or Priority Axis was kept in the ROP strategy directly.

Based on the completion of analysis in the middle of the programming period (in particular, in compliance with the new strategic concept of deinstitutionalisation at the level of EU and SR), the remaining ROP allocation for the social infrastructure support will be used **from 2011** to start the deinstitutionalisation process of existing facilities in Slovakia. In connection with social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities, the need for support of so-called community centres persists for 2011-2015.

Application of the principle of thematic and territorial concentration is the **strategy of directing interventions into the infrastructure of social services and socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship through the ROP from 2011, defined as follows:**

- Eligible groups of activities are:
 - Support of pilot approach of deinstitutionalisation of existing facilities of social services and the support of deinstitutionalisation of existing facilities of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship through building, reconstruction, extension and modernisation of construction objects, used facilities and related provision of equipment, including ICT equipment;
 - Building, reconstruction, modernisation and equipment of community centres as facilities of civic infrastructure focused on the strengthening of social inclusion, mainly of the marginalised Roma communities.
- The objective of interventions focused on deinstitutionalisation of social services is the support of transformation of existing facilities with the aim to procure the availability of community services, observing the human rights and equality of opportunities principles. This pilot approach can provide valuable experience and background for social-economic partners of in preparation of the national concept of deinstitutionalisation of social services. The objective of interventions focused on deinstitutionalisation of facilities of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship is the support of transformation of the existing facilities (children's homes, crisis centres, re-socialization centres and other facilities) in order to complete the mutually complementing system of substitute care in compliance with UN Directive on

substitute care in the context of EU policy in the area of deinstitutionalisation. Interventions carried out within ROP require complementarity with ESF interventions carried out within OP Employment and Social Inclusion in connection with the support of deinstitutionalisation of nursing services (improvement of qualification and the like).

- The objective of interventions focused on the support of community centres is mainly the strengthening of social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities within a complex approach (selected local self-governments with approved local strategies of complex approach) pursuant to definition of so-called community centre²¹, even outside the growth poles under the precondition of economic and operational sustainability of facilities.

Infrastructure of cultural, repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels and revitalisation of immovable cultural monuments

Facilities performing activities in the field of culture represent another group of facilities, assigned largely within the decentralisation process into the founders' competence of the local and regional self-governments.

From the view of preserving the cultural and social values, primarily the repository and heritage fund institutions, i.e., galleries, museums and libraries meet important functions. Except of libraries, they are localised almost exclusively in the growth poles. The number of galleries and museums of local significance in the Objective Convergence territory enables in the programming period 2007-2013 to support the majority of the given facilities.

With respect to the plans of libraries digitalisation through the ICT instruments, it is possible to anticipate, that in the future rationalisation of the network of libraries occurs. However, reduction of the number of public libraries, with respect to the digitalisation of library stock, does not mean reduction of the number of their clients. From the view of long-term sustainability, it is effective to support the libraries in the innovative growth poles, which concentrate the professional and educational institutions, and which have the potential to ensure availability of book stock to the population of a broader territory.

The culture houses and community cultural centres are highly represented in the all supported territory, mainly in the growth poles. However, support of their infrastructure does not represent any significant benefit to the growth of competitiveness of the regions, and due this view, it is effective to aim at other types of facilities with the higher benefit.

The SR disposes of the rich cultural heritage in form of the stock of immovable cultural monuments. Their analysis aimed at assessment of structural and technical conditions, ownership structure and opportunities of their long-term utilization in a broader context (e.g., cultural and educational activity and use in the cultural-learning tourism). One of pre-conditions for sustainability of the ROP investment is to assign of a monument building in ownership of the self-government into the administration/use of the already existing culture facility (e.g., museum, gallery, cultural and social centre, etc.) in the founder's competence of the public sector, which will further remain the owner of such real estate. Another pre-condition of sustainability is utilization of supported immovable cultural monuments in relation to the extension of the existing or arising cultural-learning routes. The non-used or unsuitable utilized monuments of the types of castle, mansion, burgher house, etc. are suitable to use in context of the ROP in accessing of the collection stock and presentation of cultural heritage of the respective region. Preference have the significant immovable cultural monuments and the monuments in UNESCO localities in ownership of the self-governments in poor technical conditions and with the advantageous localisation in relation to the existing or arising cultural-learning routes, primarily in the areas with international or supra-national significance, and in areas of the region of a higher category than the respective region.

²¹ According to § 82 paragraph 3 of the Act No. 448/2008 Coll., on social services, and on amendment and completion of the Act No. 455/1991 Coll., on trades (Trades Act) as amended, for performance of community rehabilitation may be established community centres. Community rehabilitation is coordination of the entities activity, which are mainly family, municipality, educational institutions, employment service providers, social service providers and healthcare providers. The aim of the community rehabilitation is restoration or development of physical skills, mental skills and working ability of a natural person in unfavourable social situation and support of its integration into society. The community centre may also carry out other activities pursuant to special regulations, such according to § 10 of the Act No. 305/2005 Coll., on socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, and amendment and completion of certain Acts, as amended by later regulations.

In the year 2010 was identified at the national level the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 as a national priority in the area of funding cultural infrastructure and cultural-cognitive and urban tourism. Following the relevant Resolution of the Slovak Republic Government can be key investment projects aimed at promoting of cultural heritage, cultural-cognitive and urban tourism in the context of the European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 funded through a separate Priority Axis additionally created within frame of the ROP.

Through application of the principle of thematic and territorial concentrations (with respect to the regionalisation of tourism), **the strategy of directing interventions into the area of reinforcement of cultural heritage through the ROP is defined as follows:**

- Eligible groups of activities are:

- Reconstruction, extension and modernisation of repository and fund institutions at local and regional level (galleries, libraries and museums) and related procurement of equipment, including equipment.
- Revitalisation of important unused or inappropriately used immovable cultural monuments in the territory owned by the public sector, with utilisation for extension of activity of repository and fund institutions and their application in cultural-cognitive tourism, in justified and special cases for cultural-social and public education purposes, and related procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment.
- Renewal, reconstruction, extension and modernisation of construction objects in relation to the ECC project in order to use them for cultural-social purposes, development of culture, art and cultural-cognitive tourism and related procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment.

- Interventions to construction objects are focused on elimination of unsatisfying construction-technical conditions, unsatisfying conditions for immobile users and reduction of high energetic demands of operation with respect to the specifics of immovable cultural monuments, and for procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment in all types of supported facilities.
- Through these interventions, the development of cultural-cognitive routes and urban cultural tourism is concurrently supported in the areas defined as territories of international and national importance and areas in region of higher category than the relevant region under the New Strategy of Tourism Development in the SR until 2013.
- Supported repository and fund institutions are public libraries in the establishment competence of the public sector, located in the innovation growth poles, galleries and museums in the establishment competence of the public sector, located in the innovation growth poles. Revitalisation of immovable cultural monuments is focused on unused important repository objects characterised by adverse construction-technical condition, which however have the potential of utilisation within repository and fund institutions, or cultural-cognitive tourism (e.g. extension of expos of galleries and museums in the establishment competence of regional self-governments, establishment of cultural-cognitive routes, restoration of technical monuments and their accessibility to public, etc.). In justified cases, support of important immovable cultural monuments in growth poles owned by public sector for their alternative utilisation for cultural-social and representation halls, expos of municipal and regional history and memorabilia, picture galleries or exposition halls, local archive or cultural centre, facilities for interest-artistic activity and layman activities may be allowed.

Interventions in connection with the European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013 project are focused on the support of cultural heritage, cultural-cognitive and urban tourism through the implementation of investment projects of the approved project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 under a separate Priority Axis additionally created in the mid-time of the programming period. In this exceptional case, support of important immovable cultural monuments need not concern just the unused objects, which are owned by the public sector, however the recipient must have relevant long-term right of use of the property to the object in question.

The inevitable pre-condition for acquiring support of the unused or improper used cultural monuments in the territory is to demonstrate compliance with the existing strategies at the regional and local levels. The monuments have to meet the applicable legislation conditions for putting the concrete type of facility into operations, proving long-term financial sustainability of the facility, and undertaking of commitments to maintain the long-term purposeful use of the intervention. The ROP interventions do not aim at preservation alone of the cultural monuments without any subsequent utilization. The aim of

the ROP is to support renovation and protection of immovable cultural monument stock through the durable and active use in favour of the respective region.

Infrastructure of tourism

Based on the SR Government Resolution No. 1005/2006, the tourism promotion of the SF in the programming period 2007-2013 is realizing separate, for the beneficiaries of the public sector through the ROP, and support to private sector through the OP CEG. That distribution is also the dividing line between the two operational programs.

In general, the ROP strategy for the area of tourism identifies the following priorities for the beneficiaries from the public sector:

- a) From the thematic point of view:
 - Support of public infrastructure of the most important tourism centres with the all-year utilisation,
 - Support of cultural-cognitive and urban tourism,
 - Support of activities aimed at promotion of the regions and tourism centres, support of creating partnerships and regional clusters among the actors of tourism, etc.
- b) From the territorial aspects:
 - Areas with international significance,
 - Areas with national significance,
 - Areas in the region of a higher category, than the respective region.

The previous section, "Infrastructure of repository and fund institutions at local and regional level and revitalization of immovable cultural monuments" describes implementation of support to the cultural-cognitive tourism through the ROP. Strengthening of the urban and cultural-cognitive tourism is carried out via the European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 projects.

Strengthening of competitiveness of tourist destinations and cultural-cognitive tourism cannot be limited to interventions in the public or private sector only. Actors of tourism are representatives of both sectors and therefore the strategy of both operation programmes is complementary (support of the public and the private sector).

OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth contribute to the increase of quality of provided services in tourism, to their extension and strengthening of their all-year-round character and to creation of jobs in tourism. Except for the tourist facilities owned by entrepreneurs, a significant factor of competitiveness is the adjacent public infrastructure owned by regional self-governments (orientation tables, car parks, pavements, public areas, social facilities, cycle routes, resting places, tourist and information offices and the like). Elements of the mentioned infrastructure do not generate profit directly, but provide additional services in tourism, improve the provision of information of visitors and increase the attractiveness and availability of the place. Based on the mentioned strategy, conditions for support of regional self-governments are created within ROP in connection with public infrastructure and within OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, conditions for support of entrepreneurs as the operators of facilities in tourism.

The above-mentioned thematic and territorial priorities are decisive for the area of tourism for the ROP strategy and OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth. Realisation mechanisms of coordination of public and private sector support through both programmes are based on selection of particular centres of tourism. Their competitiveness will be supported by coordinated interventions for beneficiaries from public and private sector.

Cooperation of both MAs is based on the preparation of common calls for submission of projects, exchange of information and mutual participation of representatives of both MAs in the procedure of selection of supported operations. The support of projects fulfilling the priorities pursuant to the New Strategy of Tourism Development of the Slovak Republic until 2013 will be a major contribution to the utilisation of potential of the SR and its regions in this area.

Additional activities carried out individually within ROP are represented by the support of territorial regional self-governments by way of presentation of tourism at regional level, strengthening of cooperation and partnership of individual actors in tourism, support of creation of partnerships and regional clusters, etc.

With respect to the unsuccessful fulfilment of complementarity with OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, the Managing Authority for the ROP in **2007-2010** focused on the support of individual additional activities of a more complex propagation of regions, clusters (partnerships), products, important tourist centres and creation of partnerships among the actors of tourism and regional clusters.

Based on the completion of analysis in the middle of the programming period, the **strategy of directing interventions to the area of tourism through the ROP from 2011 is defined as follows:**

- Eligible group of activities is: the support of non-commercial public infrastructure of tourism adjacent to the most important tourism centres with all-year-round utilisation.

Interventions are focused on the most important complex tourist destinations with all-year-round utilisation supported within OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, located in areas defined as territories of international and national importance and territories in region of higher category than the relevant region and which have deficiencies concurrently identified from the point of view of non-commercial public infrastructure.

Infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services

Deployment of workplaces of the FRC into the intervention areas should ensure arrival time of these units within 15 minutes in the entire SR territory. On the identified so-called "black areas", to which it is not guaranteed the given condition of accessibility within 15 minutes within the cadastre territory, activity of the FRC can be replaced by activities of the selected MFB. The Concept of the Ministry of Interior SR identified besides 105 workplaces of the FRC also 70 selected MFBs, which support towards to the meeting of demands for professional skills of the Corps ensures arrival of the units for any place in the entire SR. In terms of the Concept, the department of Ministry of Interior of the SR. supports sustainability of the given MFB units. The support is realized through subventions for outfitting of the reconstructed MFB buildings with fire-fighting equipment so, that there will be secured first drive out of fire-fighting unit in places, where this is not possible to ensure within arrival time within 15 minutes by the FRC units.

Based on such identified strategy, it is required in the Objective Convergence territory under the SR conditions to ensure interventions primarily into structural and technical valorisation of buildings and their outfitting/equipment, expect transport vehicles, mainly in relation to the given number of workplaces with run out.

In relation to the effective functioning of rescue services, two specific cases were identified within analyses, where the quality of provided services cannot be ensured or increased only through reconstruction of the existing buildings of the given rescue component. In case of the firehouse in Trnava, the current locality of this firehouse is absolute inconvenient from the view of driving distances within its intervention district, due to traffic with still more and more heavy density of built up areas. Therefore it is not possible to ensure through a reconstruction improvement of quality of services provided (i.e., to reduce driving distances, further extend rooms of the firehouse so, that it meet the standards of minimum outfit of such type of firehouse, etc.). The only solution of this situation is to build-up a new firehouse in the locality, what ensures adequate driving distances into the all areas in the respective intervention district so, warranting so to every citizen the right for providing assistance in distress. The second case is the town Košice, where the FRC provides services from the only one building. With respect to the size of the town Košice, its density of traffic and rates of built up, the only one such station serving for such large territory is not sufficient. The reasons vest in too big driving distances. Without building up of a further firehouse and the following demarcation of the current intervention district, there is a risk that the assistance to a citizen will not eventuate within 15 minutes.

In support from the ROP, it is necessary simultaneously to distinguish share of individual rescue components of the performed rescue operations, as well as morphological conditions of the SR at the special rescue components (e.g., Mountain Rescue Service), which facilities are localised in the

Prešov, Žilina, Košice and Banská Bystrica Regions. Within frame of the Mountain Rescue Service, supported will be renovation of buildings serving solely for the purpose of drive out stations of rescue services.

In **2007-2010**, interventions in construction objects of FRC, MFB and MRS facilities were supported, with focus on the elimination of unsatisfying construction-technical condition and provision of equipment (including ICT equipment, except for the means of transport), in order to reduce the high energetic demands of operation; in two special cases also for construction of new objects. Support was directed to territories identified based on the Concept of Spatial deployment of Forces and Resources of FRC, in the case of Mountain Rescue Services into cohesion and innovation growth poles, in justified cases based on the morphological features of the territory also outside growth poles (e.g. alpine environment). Based on the structure of facilities supported in 2008-2010, the additional support has to be focused on Fire and Rescue Brigade facilities in order to achieve the originally set ratio of state and municipal facilities.

Based on the completion of analysis in the middle of the programming period, the **strategy of directing interventions into the infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services through the ROP from 2011 is defined as follows:**

- Eligible group of activities is: the reconstruction, extension and modernisation of facilities of non-commercial rescue services (FRC) and in two cases specially specified beforehand also the construction of FRC facilities in compliance with the Concept of Spatial deployment of Forces and Resources of FRC, and related procurement of equipment of facilities of non-commercial rescue services, including ICT equipment (save for means of transport).
- Interventions into structural buildings of FRC aimed at elimination of unsatisfactory structural-technical conditions in order to reduce the high energetic demands of operation of facilities and procurements of their equipment (including ICT equipment, excluding transportation vehicles), and in two specific cases also into building of new FRC buildings is enabled.

Regeneration of settlements

In the interest of aesthetisation of the environment and enhancing of its attractiveness for the inhabitants, visitors and investors, it is necessary to aim support to the improvement of conditions of the tangible infrastructure of settlements (e.g., public spaces and premises, squares, elements of public greenery, local communications, etc.). In the interest of achieving synergic effects, it appears as efficient to direct the interventions towards the tangible infrastructure of such towns and municipalities, which have the biggest potential of following development, ensuring sustainability of interventions and accumulation of further connecting social and economic activities. Such development activities can interconnect to support of the given settlements, which contribute to social and economic development of the municipalities in their background. The given approach is in accordance with the principle of territorial concentration.

Based on the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 was determined utilization of the amount € 39.4 million from resources allocated to the Slovak Republic under Articles 16 and 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management. These resources aim at ensuring recovery of material infrastructure of settlements through the ROP, with the aim to mitigate partially the consequences of the floods from the year 2010. Support of activities focusing on renewal of physical infrastructure of settlements will direct to the area most affected by flooding, given in advance by the Managing Authority for ROP based on mapping the real situation of the most affected areas. In connection with the increase of ROP allocation intended for elimination of consequences of the floods, the scope of eligible activities, as well as the eligible area is not extended, with one exception: The uneven floods impact is in this exceptional case a reason for directing interventions also into the more affected/vulnerable municipalities, not all of which must be growth poles. It is appropriate to synchronize the ROP interventions in area of the physical infrastructure renewal of municipalities in connection with elimination after-effects of floods with the systematic flood-protective measures implemented within frame of the OP Environment.

Following the Resolution of the Slovak Republic identifying the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 as a national priority, and enabling its funding within frame of the ROP, it is able to

finance revitalization and aesthetization of the public infrastructure of settlements also in connection with the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013 through the separate ROP Priority Axis.

In SR conditions, the need for support of housing infrastructure (residential houses) still persists. In connection with the identified difficulties with implementation of integrated strategies of development of urban areas, it is necessary to create a mechanism of support of housing infrastructure from EU funds by way of a pilot approach (e.g. using the innovative financial tool JESSICA). With respect to the advanced stage of implementation of the programming period 2007-2013, an allocation has to be specified, corresponding to the successful realisation of a smaller number of projects, with emphasis on the creation of implementation mechanism in the context of existing supporting tools of housing in the SR so that the acquired experience could be utilised to a larger extent in the next programming period.

Through application principle of the thematic and territorial concentration, **the strategy of direction interventions into the area of settlements regeneration through the ROP is defined as follows:**

- Eligible groups of activities are:
 - Separate demand-oriented projects via restoration and partial construction of tangible settlements infrastructure.
 - Support of housing infrastructure.
 - Support of development of municipalities with Roma settlements in rural area via restoration and partial construction of tangible settlements infrastructure with segregated and separated Roma settlements.
 - Development documents at the level of NUTS 2 and 3 regions.
 - Modification and revitalisation of public places, elements of minor architecture, public greenery and reconstruction and completion of local transport infrastructure (local roads, pavements, cycle routes, transport sub-systems etc.) in functional connection with ECC - Košice 2013 project.
- Interventions for support of the tangible infrastructure of settlements are implemented in the areas of growth poles in accordance with the spatial/zoning planning documentation of these settlements, with orientation towards central zones of settlements. Separate demand-oriented projects of the settlements regeneration are not determined for regional towns, with exception of the regional capital Košice, its urban parts and surroundings in relation with revitalization and aesthetization of the public infrastructure of settlements within the separate Priority Axis European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013 additionally created in mid-term of the programming period,
- Support of housing infrastructure (residential houses - so-called multifamily housing) is carried out by way of pilot approach (e.g. using the financial tool JESSICA).
- Interventions implemented in relation with renovation of the physical environment in municipalities without the town status, with separated and segregated Roma settlements also outside growth poles, even within frame of a complex approach. Implementation of projects in Roma settlements issues from the already prepared selected micro-regions and settlements with the elaborated project documentation within the grant scheme PHARE. In these municipalities, support goes to the elaboration of project documentation for development of water supply network, sewerage connections, bridging over a brook, bitumen communications, walkways, etc. Pre-condition of the investment projects implementation is property-legal settlement of real properties, which are place of implementation of projects. In these special cases, support of utilities based on preliminary preparation was carried out in 2007-2010 within projects.
- Interventions to support the physical infrastructure of settlements implemented in order to mitigate partially the consequences of the floods of the year 2010 are implemented in the cadastral territory of several municipalities (not necessarily the growth poles) exclusively in selected areas which were the most affected, respectively threatened by floods, namely also in municipalities with segregated and separated Roma settlements, pursuant to SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010.

- Support of elaboration and updating of development documents at the NUTS 2 and 3 level regions is focused on spatial/zoning planning groundwork documents, spatial/zoning planning documents, economic and social development programmes, etc.

Regional communications ensuring the transport serviceability of the regions (the 2nd and 3rd class roads)

In the interest of increasing accessibility and availability of the civil infrastructure concentrated mainly in the growth poles, it is necessary to improve their transport-technical conditions, which ensure serviceability of the territory. Support through the ROP is suitable to direct at the sections of the 2nd and 3rd class roads interconnecting municipalities, which are not the growth poles, with the municipalities identified as cohesion growth poles. With respect to large extent of potential sections of the given categories of roads, it is necessary that the regions (i.e., as the relevant entities in terms of competence), during process of the ROP implementation, define the priority sections with respect to the transport-technical conditions of roads and their significance from the view of serviceability of the territory.

It is advisable to aim the supported activities besides reconstruction, renovation and modernisation of the 2nd and 3rd class roads also at enhancing their safety and transport permeability. Except interventions aimed at the quality of surface of roads, it is simultaneously required to support also other elements of transport infrastructure, as bike lanes along the roads, bridging, bays, lay-bys, quality traffic marking, etc. It is justified to develop bio-corridors on the selected sections, traffic noise barriers and other elements considering environmental aspects.

With respect to the decentralised system of implementation at the NUTS level 3, it is necessary to ensure linkage of individual projects in cases when the respective road sections overlap the boundary of a region. It is required to apply the given principle also to the event of sections overlapping the state frontiers.

The SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 established utilization of € 10 million from funds allocated to the Slovak Republic under Articles 16 and 17 of the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management. This amount has to ensure recovery of regional road infrastructure 2nd and 3rd classes through the ROP, in order to mitigate partially the consequences of the floods of year 2010. Support to activities aimed at reconstruction and rehabilitation of regional roads will direct to areas mostly affected by flooding, predetermined Managing Authority for the ROP based on the analysis. In the connection, it is appropriate to coordinate the mentioned intervention of the ROP with the systematic flood-protection measures implemented under OP Environment. In connection with the increase of ROP allocation for elimination of consequences of the floods, the scope of eligible activities is not extended.

Through application of the principle of thematic and territorial concentrations **the strategy of direction interventions into the area of regional roads through the ROP is defined as follows:**

- Eligible group of activities is: the reconstruction, modernisation and in special cases also construction of new sections of the 2nd and 3rd class roads in the area of the Convergence Objective, including the reconstruction and construction of transport sub-systems procuring the increase of level of transport, safety and environmental aspects.
- Interventions are focused on increasing the level of transport-technical conditions of the 2nd and 3rd class roads, which are in bad or unsatisfactory conditions, ensuring transport serviceability of municipalities in the area to the cohesion growth poles, enhancing accessibility of the higher civil amenity for the citizens outside the cohesion growth poles" establishing conditions for improving mobility for job, and support of complementary elements of the transport infrastructure to the 2nd and 3rd class roads, which will enhance safety and permeability of transport and reduce its impacts on the environment. Construction of new sections of the 2nd and 3rd class roads may be done only in provably justified cases due to procurement of transport serviceability of an area and in order to eliminate identified system deficiencies in the road network with respect to the environmental and safety aspect. Interventions in regional communications concurrently partially eliminate the consequences of destructive floods, which affected the SR in 2010, in selected areas that were mostly affected

by floods in 2010 pursuant to SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 without modification of original strategy for the field of regional communications.

4.3.2 Measuring of efficiency of achieving the global objective of the regional operational programme

Efficiency of achieving the global objective of the ROP is assessing based on a system of measurable indicators at the level of the programme. From the level of projects, through the level of measures and Priority Axes, up to the level of the operational programmes and the NSRF these indicators are continually monitored and aggregated.

The target values of indicators at the level of the programme are set in accordance with the strategies at the level of thematic areas of the ROP support, applying to the following:

- Principle of territorial concentration (support of the innovative and cohesion growth poles),
- Criteria of sustainability (i.e., material, capacity, economic, and other criteria).

In determining the target values, it was taken into consideration also assessment of demands in the separate areas of support within implementation of the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OPBI within the shortened programming period 2004-2006, that was rather relative with the ROP in terms of theme.

In mid-ter of the programming period was at updating of originally set indicators and their target values at level of the ROP, as well as at the level of Priority Axes taken into account the following facts:

- Partial adjustment of the ROP strategy and changes of the ROP financial plan initiated on the basis of recommendations made by the assessment/analyses of the ROP implementation up to now,
- Recommendations of the European Commission,
- Demands assessment in different areas of the ROP support during the intense period of implementation in the years 2007-2010, when were announced calls for submission of grant application within frame of all ROP Priority Axes (totally 21 calls),
- Changed price level of construction works, goods and services over the years 2007-2010, which affects the amount of project budgets and utilization of available allocation of the ROP,
- Adoption of the euro as common currency in the Slovak Republic on January 1st, 2009. During the year 2008 the exchange rate SKK / EUR was significantly changed compared to official estimates and expectations existing at the time of preparation the NSRF and individual operational programs. That only strengthen SKK in the year 2008 (modification of exchange rate from 32.600 SKK/EUR to 30.126 SKK/EUR) resulted in a real reduction in the total amount of available financial allocation ROP of more than 4 billion SKK. This may lead to assistance of less than expected number of projects,
- Change in average amount of a project (increased average amount of project budget in almost all areas of the ROP support than originally expected).

Updated indicators of the ROP and their target values are listed in the following table:

Table 35/2012: Indicators at the level of the ROP

Indicator type	Indicator name	Measure unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value y.2015	Definition	Note
Output	Number of supported civil infrastructure facilities	Number	2006	0	1 652	Number of civil infrastructure facilities, which were supported under Priority Axis 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 of ROP through reconstruction, expansion, modernization or construction of buildings and procurement of equipment. Note: Indicator includes also all projects reported within "Number of education projects", "Number of projects in risk prevention area" and "Number of information society projects" indicators	Including revitalized immovable cultural monuments and facilities of non-commercial rescue services, excluding tourism projects and supported apartment dwelling houses
Result	Number of new and	Number	2006	0	1 997	Number of new and improved services provided to	Including revitalized

	better quality services providing by supported facilities of civil infrastructure					users of civil infrastructure, resulting from projects implemented under the Priority Axes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 ROP Note: Indicator defines the number of provided services in connection to the "Number of supported civic infrastructure facilities" indicator	immovable cultural monuments and facilities of non-commercial rescue services, excluding tourism projects and supported apartment dwelling houses
Core No. 36	Number of educational projects	number	2006	0	815	Number of completed investment projects under Priority Axis 1 ROP Note No. 1: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator; all education projects are concurrently reported within the "Number of supported civic infrastructure facilities" indicator Note No. 2: Available resources within Priority Axis 1 are able to cover approximately 684 supported projects (among them 37 projects can be covered following the transfer of savings within ROP in January – May 2012). Savings within Priority Axis 1 ROP can cover 24 projects.	Includes all projects supported above the allocation of the Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education
Core No. 37	Number of students utilizing support	number	2006	0	217 000	Number of pupils, students and children using structures and equipment installations of the educational infrastructure supported under Priority 1 ROP Note: The value of the indicator is 182.400 students in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.	In case of ROP, the indicator is itemized on basis of the maximal capacity of a facility
Core No. 34	Number of projects in area of tourism	number	2006	0	50	Number of realized investment and non-investment projects aimed at improving tourism in the region Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within "Number of projects of information society"	
Core No. 39	Number of projects assuring sustainability and enhancing attractivity of towns and megapolises	number	2006	0	484	Number of implemented projects focused on improving state and restore elements of the physical infrastructure of settlements and support of the housing infrastructure under Priority Axis 4 ROP	
Output	Number of projects of settlements regeneration aimed directly at improving situation of marginalized Roma communities	Number	2006	0	48	Number of projects for settlements regeneration aimed at improving the living conditions of marginalized Roma communities by supporting the physical infrastructure of communities with separated and segregated Roma settlements	
Output	Number of projects aimed at housing infrastructure support	Number	2006	0	48	Number of projects for settlements regeneration aimed at the housing infrastructure support	
Core No. 31	Number of projects in area of risks prevention	number	2006	0	140	Number of projects aimed at preventing the risk of disasters and incidents adversely affecting the population, i.e., number of reconstructed, expanded and modernized facilities of the non-commercial rescue services (including acquisition of equipment) within the Priority Axis 4 ROP Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within "Number of projects of information society"; all projects in the field of risk prevention are concurrently reported within the "Number of supported civil infrastructure facilities" indicator	
Core No. 13	Number of projects for transportation	number	2006	0	60	Number of completed projects aimed at intervention in the regional communications under ROP Priority Axis 5	Projects under Priority Axis 4 ROP, which includes reconstruction of local roads, are not included in the indicator value.
Core No. 14	New roads km	km	2006	0	60	Length of the road sections built-up under the ROP Priority Axis 5, which did not exist before the project implementation	Projects under Priority Axis 4 ROP, which includes reconstruction of local roads, are not included in the indicator value.
Core No. 16	Reconstructed roads km	km	2006	0	1 030	Length of reconstructed and modernized sections of roads (regional and local roads) under the Priority Axes 4 and 5 ROP, for which the intervention was systemic in nature and contributed to reducing accidents, increase traffic carrying capacity, etc.	

Core No. 11	Number of projects of information society	Number	2006	0	689	Number of realised projects focused on the provision and use of ICT equipment or implementation of innovation e-services within Priority Axes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 of the ROP. Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within "Number of education projects", "Number of projects in area of tourism" and "Number of projects in the field of risk prevention" indicators; projects of information society are concurrently reported within the "Number of supported civil infrastructure facilities" indicator	In the case of ROP, i.e. completed projects with identified contributions to horizontal priority Information Society
Core No. 23	Number of renewable energy projects	Number	2006	0	74	Number of projects aimed to increase the using of renewable energy. Note No. 1: Renewable energy = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy Note No. 2: The value of the indicator is 46 projects in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.	
Core No. 24	Increased installed performance of devices using renewable sources of energy	MW	2006	0	2,5	Increase of performance of production of thermal and electric energy by installing technologies using renewable energy sources in civil infrastructure facilities within Priority Axes 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the ROP. Note: Renewable energy sources = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy	If a new device is installed, the installed performance of the energetic technology is a part of technical documentation delivered by the manufacturer. In the case of reconstruction of existing device, data about the installed performance of the energetic technology are issued by the supplier of the reconstruction.
Output	Thermally insulated area	Square metre	2006	0	2 919 000	Thermally insulated area in square metres of peripheral walls and roof of reconstructed objects of civil infrastructure facilities, including technical facilities (area of replaced windows or adjusted windows, etc.) within Priority Axes 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the ROP.	
Impact	Energy saving	GJ/Year	2006	0	1 539 000	Annual saving of thermal energy and electricity incurred based on realisation of project in civic infrastructure facilities within Priority Axes 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the ROP converted to GJ/year, measured by heat gauge at the entry to building by electric energy or gas gauge.	
Impact	Average reduction of energy consumption of building utilized by the supported facilities of civil infrastructure	%	2006	0	27	The average percentage reduction in energy demand for heating of buildings occupied by the civil infrastructure facilities supported under Priority Axis 1, 2, 3, and 4 ROP Note: Value of indicator at the level of programme is an average summation of values of indicators at the level of individual Priority Axes	It contributes to enhancing quality of conditions provided in the civil infrastructure facilities and efficiency of their operations.
Core No. 1	Created new jobs	Number	2006	0	1 290	The total number of permanent jobs in the frame of ROP Priority Axes that would not come into existence without the project	The indicator represents a summation of created jobs for men and women
Core No. 2	Created new jobs for men	Number	2006	0	510	The total number of permanent jobs for men in the frame of ROP Priority Axes, that would not come into existence without the project Note: All created jobs for men are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator	
Core No. 3	Created new jobs for women	number	2006	0	780	The total number of permanent jobs for women in the frame of ROP Priority Axes, that would not come into existence without the project Note: All created jobs for women are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator	

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2012

After the operational programmes approval by the European Commission, the Managing Authority for ROP is responsible for preparing values of directive output and impact (i.e., for benchmarking). The benchmarks are set forth as proportion of financial resources allocated for the given measure to the key indicator of output or to the result given in the ROP.

Concurrently, the NSRF identifies four horizontal priorities, which fulfilment providing the contributions from individual operational programmes co-financed from the SF and the CF in the programming

period 2007-2013. Contribution of the ROP to the fulfilment of given horizontal priorities of the NSRR is described in more details in Chapter 6.

5. PRIORITY AXES

5.1 PRIORITY AXIS 1 OF THE ROP - INFRASTRUCTURE OF EDUCATION

5.1.1 Objective and focusing of the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP

Objective of the ROP Priority Axis 1 is ***“Enhancement of the provided services level in the area of education”***

Fulfilling of the purpose of the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP performs through the following group of activities:

- Reconstruction, expansion and modernisation of selected kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools and related procurement of equipment inclusive of ICT equipment.

Detailed description of the activities groups gives the contents of the ROP Programme Manual.

Table 36/2011: Indicators at the level of the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP

Indicator type	Indicator name	Measure unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value y.2015	Definition
Core No. 36	Number of educational projects	Number	2006	0	815	Number of completed projects under Priority Axis 1 ROP Note No.1: Indicator includes also all projects reported within the “Number of information society projects” indicator within Priority Axis 1. Note No. 2: The financial resources within the Priority Axis 1 ROP are able to cover approximately 684 supported projects (among them 37 projects can be covered following the transfer of savings within ROP in January –May 2012). Savings within Priority Axis 1 ROP can cover 24 projects.
Core No. 37	Number of students utilizing support	Number	2006	0	217 000	Number of pupils, students and children utilizing structures and equipment installations of educational infrastructure supported under Priority 1 ROP Note: The value of the indicator is 182.400 students in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Core No. 11	Number of Informative society projects	Number	2006	0	435	Number of completed projects aimed at acquisition and utilization of ICT equipment, respectively introduction of innovative e-services Note No. 1: All information society projects within Priority Axis 1 are concurrently reported within the “number of education projects” indicator Note No. 2: The value of the indicator is 365 projects in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Result	Number of new and better quality services provided in supported educational infrastructure facilities	Number	2006	0	1 195	Number of new and better quality services provided to users of educational infrastructure facilities, resulting from completed projects (new vocational classrooms, ICT classrooms, gymnasiums, etc.) Note: The value of the indicator is 1,003 new and better quality services in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Core No. 23	Number of renewable energy projects	Number	2006	0	55	Number of projects aimed to increase the using of renewable energy. Note No. 1: Renewable energy = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy Note No. 2: The value of the indicator is 46 projects in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.

Core No. 24	Increased installed performance of devices using renewable sources of energy	MW	2006	0	1,8	Increase of performance of production of thermal and electric energy by installing technologies using renewable energy sources in civil infrastructure facilities. Note No.1: Renewable energy sources = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy Note No.2: The value of the indicator is 1,55 MW in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Output	Thermally insulated area	Square metre	2006	0	2 170 000	Thermally insulated area in square metres of peripheral walls and roof of reconstructed objects of civil infrastructure facilities, including technical facilities (area of replaced windows or adjusted windows, etc.). Note No.1: The value of the indicator is 1,824,000 m2 in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Impact	Energy saving	GJ/year	2006	0	1 085 000	Annual saving of thermal energy and electricity incurred based on realisation of project in civic infrastructure facilities converted to GJ/year, measured by heat gauge at the entry to building by electric energy or gas gauge. Note No.1: The value of the indicator is 912,000 GJ/year in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Impact	Average reduction of energy consumption of buildings utilized by supported educational infrastructure facilities	%	2006	0	35	The average percentage reduction in energy demand for heating buildings used by the supported educational infrastructure facilities
Core No. 1	Created new jobs	Number	2006	0	870	The total number of permanent jobs that would not come into existence without implementation of projects under Priority Axis 1 of ROP Note No. 1: The indicator represents a summation of created jobs for men and women Note No.2: The value of the indicator is 729 jobs in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Core No. 2	Created new jobs for men	Number	2006	0	325	The total number of permanent jobs for men that would not come into existence without implementation of projects under Priority Axis 1 of ROP Note No. 1: All created jobs for men are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator Note No.2: The value of the indicator is 273 jobs in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.
Core No. 3	Created new jobs for women	Number	2006	0	545	The total number of permanent jobs for women that would not come into existence without implementation of projects under Priority Axis 1 of ROP Note No. 1: All created jobs for women are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator Note No.2: The value of the indicator is 456 jobs in the case of 684 projects financed from available sources within Priority Axis 1 ROP.

Note: Increased values of indicators based on the mid-term evaluation include data of all projects supported 'above-quota' within the Priority Axis 1 Infrastructure of Education.

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2012

Interventions within the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP aim at improvement of the conditions of services providing in the area of education in the selected kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, in terms of the strategy proposed in the ROP, Chapter 4.

Intention of the interventions within the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP is to meet the current requirements for the quality of the conditions level, on which the educational process performs, and to meet the current quantitative (capacity) standards of the given types of facilities. The inevitable assumption for the quality of educational process is also modern equipments, and therefore in connection to technical valorisation of buildings, the interventions within the Priority Axis 1 ROP aim at procurement of equipment for the given facilities, including ICT equipment and elimination of unsatisfactory conditions for disadvantaged users as tool of support of equality of opportunities.

Interventions within the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP contribute to improvements of energy efficiency of the buildings, and through this to the reduction of economic demands of their operations as well to reduction of environmental burdens.

Character of eligible interventions given by the ROP strategy for the educational infrastructure is as follows:

The aim of these interventions is elimination of unsatisfactory construction and technical condition of buildings, elimination of inconvenient conditions for disabled users and to reduce high energy intensity of operations, including procurement of equipment, ICT equipment in all types of schools, while respecting the principles of environmental sustainability.

These interventions support reconstruction, modernization, expansion and procurement of relevant equipment of primary and secondary schools in the growth poles, which have over 200 students or with potential of creating conditions for lifelong education, with the aim to meet the qualitative and quantitative standards of the educational process. In the case of secondary schools with vocational focusing also with the aim to increase skills and competitiveness of their graduates in the labour market.

In case of the kindergartens identified in local development strategies and in the growth poles, support is realized in the form of capacity expansion of existing kindergartens and their extension by the children's nurseries, including acquisition of relevant equipment.

Through these interventions is also supported inclusion of children with limited mobility (especially by removing of structural barriers in buildings). Facilities of special types of schools and educational institutions for disadvantaged groups as a tool of support of equality of opportunities are supported, mainly facilities in areas with significant representation of marginalized Roma communities, without application of the territorial concentration principles as a tool for support of social inclusion of Roma communities.

5.1.2 Eligible areas within the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP

Interventions within the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP aim in the Objective Convergence territory at the following:

1. Innovation and cohesion growth poles,
2. Outside of the growth poles as an exception, in the following cases:
 - a. Where it is related to the existing facilities of educational infrastructure, significant and important or unique from the view of functions, types of services in structure and capacities of the relevant region (e.g., special schools for handicapped pupils, forestry and agriculture secondary schools, etc.),
 - b. Where relates to the facilities significant from the view of their availability and serviceability of the gradient area,
 - c. Where relates to the facilities significant from the view of support of the marginalised Roma communities.

The condition of aiming interventions outside the growth poles is to prove sustainability and meeting of all legislation conditions for implementation of the given project.

5.1.3 Eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP

Eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP are the founders of pre-school facilities, elementary and secondary schools from the public sector and from the private sector in terms of the applicable legislation of the SR. The detailed list of eligible entities in links to the relevant legislation is a component part of the ROP Programme Manual.

5.1.4 Substantiation of the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP

The Priority Axis 1 of the ROP aims at ensuring of the required qualitative and quantitative levels of facilities in the area of education and levels of their accessibility in the supported territory of the Objective Convergence under the conditions existing in the SR.

As it implies from the analytical part of the ROP, the situation in providing public services in the area of education is at present affected by the long-term under-dimensioning of capital investments on the part of founders of relevant types of facilities, or their predecessors. The consequence of the given state is non-satisfactory technical condition of utilized buildings, and in many cases of moral and physical obsolescence of internal outfit and relevant technical equipments. Non-readiness of individual entities to introduce systems of quality into practice relates to the lack of modern technologies.

Based on the analysis of the current state, we can state that there is rationalisation of facilities network from the part of the founders of relevant educational infrastructure facilities. This state is a result of demographic trends and of objective need to increase economic effectiveness of operations through the structural-technical adaptations of the relevant buildings.

Substantiation of the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP proves also excessive interest in this type of interventions during the programming period 2004-2006 within the measure 3.1 Building up and development of the civil infrastructure OPBI. In the given period, demand for additional resources from the Structural Funds exceeded several times the available volume of resources. The Priority Axis 1 of the ROP establishes assumptions moreover for support of projects what could not get support in the shortened programming period 2004-2006 due to the lack of financial resources, even though they met the required technical, financial and regional criteria. Compliance with the ROP strategy defined for the programming period 2007-2013 is condition for their implementation.

Implementation in 2007-2010 referred to the fact that the support to the education infrastructure facilities (especially primary schools) through ROP represents the most significant development priority of self-governments in the areas of civil infrastructure in the supported territory in the programming period 2007-2013. Especially the enormous demand from the municipalities and towns in connection with the so-called modernisation debt of school facilities shows that at present it is concerned absolutely the highest development priority of self-governments among all areas of the ROP support. Despite defining the thematic and territorial concentration of support, the Managing Authority for ROP met in the announced calls for grant applications with the demand representing more than 350% of the allocation of Priority Axis 1 ROP. In addition, this fact proves the extreme absorption capacity in the field of educational infrastructure support.

Table 37/2012: Overview of existing PO1 implementation (EU funds + SR public funds)

Priority Axis 1	Initial total allocation of the PO in EUR	Number of received applications for grant	Number of applications for grant recommended for approval	Amount of applications for grant recommended for approval in EUR	New PO allocation after ROP revision in EUR (after reallocations consideration)	Indicative remaining total allocation after ROP revision in EUR
Total	552 894 776,00	1,688	815	692,088,600.00	599 727 717,00	0.00
Kindergartens		178	64	29,079,929.00		
Elementary schools		1,214	660	573,679,597.00		
Secondary schools		296	91	89,329,074.00		

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2013

In the year 2009, when impacts of economic crisis were fully manifested, the governing bodies in relation to measures of the SR Government, in connection with the impacts of the economic crisis, intensified focusing on implementation of the most effective areas of intervention from operational programmes. Self-governments as eligible beneficiaries were focused on those areas of support, which had in terms of their development priorities the maximum benefit (reduction of energy consumption of buildings, jobs creation, support for education, ICT introduction into schools, restoration of the material environment and safety of settlements, etc.). Association of Towns of Municipalities of Slovakia (ZMOS) concurrently formulated a nationwide request to eliminate the so-called "upgrading debt for schools".

Intensification of drawings from the EU funds in times of the economic crisis also had important collateral benefits, as substitution of private investment dropout in the SR economy, support to maintain employment in the construction industry, importance of financial resources from the EU funds as a component of state budget revenues, etc.

Based on ROP evaluation in the middle of the programming period, reallocation of funds between Priority Axes of ROP was made in favour of strengthening of Priority Axis 1 of ROP. Changes in the Priority Axis 1 ROP respond to the reasons listed in Article 33, paragraph 1, letters a) and b) of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006. It is a matter of significant changes in socio-economic environment (economic crisis, adoption of common currency EUR with a lower conversion ratio) and change of priorities at the national, regional and local level, following which the educational infrastructure was profiled as the highest development priority in the area of civil infrastructure.

Based on persisting facts and reasons falling under letters a) and b) of the Article 33 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 and in accordance with the approved principle of transfer of savings from carried out ROP projects into Priority Axis 1 ROP a modification of financial allocation of the Priority Axis 1 ROP via revision at the beginning of the year 2012 has been carried out.

5.2 PRIORITY AXIS 2 OF THE ROP - INFRASTRUCTURE OF SOCIAL SERVICES, SOCIO-LEGAL PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND SOCIAL GUARDIANSHIP

5.2.1 Objective and focusing of the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP

Objective of the ROP Priority Axis 2 is ***“Increasing of extent and levels of services provided in social area”***.

Meeting the objective of the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP in **2007-2010** was performed through the following group of activities:

- Reconstruction, extension and modernisation of the social service facilities and facilities for performing socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship,
- Building-up new social service facilities and facilities for performing the measures of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship,
- Procurement of equipment, inclusive of ICT equipment of the social services facilities and facilities for performing socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, in connection to their reconstruction, extension, modernisation and building-up.

Since 2011, the meeting the objective of the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP is performed through the following group of activities:

- Support of pilot approach of deinstitutionalisation of existing social services facilities and support of deinstitutionalisation of existing facilities for performing socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship through building, reconstruction, extension and modernisation of construction objects used by the facilities and related procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment,
- Building, reconstruction, modernisation and equipment of so-called community centres as civil infrastructure facilities, aimed at strengthening of the social inclusion (mainly of the marginalized Roma communities).

Detailed description of the groups of activities contains content of the ROP Programme Manual.

Table 38/2012: Indicators at the level of the ROP Priority Axis 2

Indicator type	Indicator name	Measure unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value in 2015	Definition
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Output	Number of technically valorised facilities of the social infrastructure	number	2006	0	70	Number of the social infrastructure facilities supported through reconstructions, expansion and modernisations of construction objects and procurement of equipment in 2007-2010 Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 2
Output	Number of new built-up facilities of social infrastructure	number	2006	0	40	Number of new built-up and equipped facilities of the social infrastructure in 2007-2010 Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 2
Output	Number of technically valorised facilities or new built-up community centres in order to enhance the MRC social inclusion	number	2006	0	45	Number of technically valorised facilities or new built-up community centres in order to enhance the MRC social inclusion Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 2
Output	Number of supported pilot deinstitutionalisation projects	number	2006	0	18	Number of supported pilot deinstitutionalisation projects of social services and deinstitutionalisation projects of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship in connection with conceptual and strategic documents made by MLSAF SR. Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 2
Result	Number of new and higher quality services provided in the supported facilities of the social infrastructure	number	2006	0	365	Number of new and higher quality services provided to the users in the facilities, which results from the implemented projects within Priority Axis 2
Core No. 23	Number of renewable energy projects	Number	2006	0	9	Number of projects aimed to increase the using of renewable energy. Note: Renewable energy = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy
Core No. 24	Increased installed performance of devices using renewable sources of energy	MW	2006	0	0,3	Increase of performance of production of thermal and electric energy by installing technologies using renewable energy sources in civil infrastructure facilities. Note: Renewable energy sources = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy
Output	Thermally insulated area	Square metre	2006	0	273 000	Thermally insulated area in square metres of peripheral walls and roof of reconstructed objects of civil infrastructure facilities, including technical facilities (area of replaced windows or adjusted windows, etc.).
Impact	Energy saving	GJ/year	2006	0	182 000	Annual saving of thermal energy and electricity incurred based on realisation of project in civic infrastructure facilities converted to GJ/year, measured by heat gauge at the entry to building by electric energy or gas gauge.
Impact	Average reduction of energy demands of buildings utilized by supported facilities of the social infrastructure	%	2006	0	25	Average percentage reduction of energy consumption for heating in buildings utilized by supported facilities of the social infrastructure within Priority Axis 2
Core No. 11	Number of projects of the information society	number	2006	0	90	Number of completed projects aimed at acquisition and utilization of the ICT equipment, respectively at introduction of innovative e-services Note: All projects of information society within Priority Axis 2 are concurrently reported within "Number of technically valorised social infrastructure facilities", "Number of newly built social infrastructure facilities", "Number of technically valorised or newly built community centres in order to enhance the MRC social inclusion" and "Number of supported pilot deinstitutionalisation projects" indicators.
Core No. 1	Created new jobs	number	2006	0	275	The total number of permanent jobs that would not be created without implementation of projects under the ROP Priority Axis 2 Note: The indicator represents a summation of created jobs for men and women
Core No. 2	Created new jobs for men	number	2006	0	120	The total number of permanent jobs for men that would not be created without implementation of projects under the ROP Priority Axis 2 Note: All created jobs for men are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator
Core No. 3	Created new jobs for women	number	2006	0	155	The total number of permanent jobs for women that would not be created without implementation of projects under the ROP Priority Axis 2 Note: All created jobs for women are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator

Source: MCRD SR, 2012

Based on the results of analysis, the support of social infrastructure **in 2007-2010** was focused on the support of reconstruction, extension and building of facilities with larger scope of investments, i.e. facilities with larger capacity. It was presumed that the mentioned approach would enable the founders of all types of facilities to use own funds for less demanding capital investments in facilities or objects with smaller capacity. Interventions in construction objects were focused on elimination of unsatisfying construction-technical condition or building of new objects and for the provision of their equipment, including ICT equipment in order to eliminate the unsatisfying conditions for immobile users and reduction of high energetic demands of operation. It was a humanization and elimination of barriers of existing facilities and building of new facilities in compliance with the economic sustainability principle, while the supported facilities included mainly the types of pensioners' houses, houses of social services for adults, houses of social services for children, nursing service facilities with a capacity of more than 50 clients, observing the minimum areal standards (8 square metre per person) and observing assumptions for ensuring the provision of quality services with focus on facilities combining several types of services or providing services to several target groups, or combining institutional, daily and weekly care. Conditions for the support of community centres were created as well in the case of facilities focused on the strengthening of social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities.

In the case of completion of strategy for area of social infrastructure at the national level, the option to update the strategy of social infrastructure support during the programming period 2007-2013 based on a preliminary evaluation at the level of the operational programme or Priority Axis was kept in the ROP strategy directly.

Based on the completion of analysis in the middle of the programming period (in particular, in compliance with the new strategic concept of deinstitutionalisation at the level of EU and SR), the **character of eligible interventions given by the strategy for infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship from 2011** is defined as follows:

The objective of interventions focused on deinstitutionalisation of social services is the support of transformation of existing facilities with the aim to procure the availability of community services, observing the human rights and equality of opportunities principles. This pilot approach can provide valuable experience and background for social-economic partners of in preparation of the national concept of deinstitutionalisation of social services. The objective of interventions focused on deinstitutionalisation of facilities of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship is the support of transformation of the existing facilities (children's homes, crisis centres, re-socialization centres and other facilities) in order to complete the mutually complementing system of substitute care in compliance with UN Directive on substitute care in the context of EU policy in the area of deinstitutionalisation. Interventions carried out within ROP require complementarity with ESF interventions carried out within OP Employment and Social Inclusion in connection with the support of deinstitutionalisation of nursing services (improvement of qualification and the like). The intention is to transform the conditions under which social services are provided and measures of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship are carried out. Interventions are focused also on provision of required equipment of facilities, including ICT equipment.

The objective of interventions focused on the support of community centres is mainly the strengthening of social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities within a complex approach (selected local self-governments with approved local strategies of complex approach) pursuant to definition of so-called community centre²², even outside the growth poles under the precondition of economic and operational sustainability of facilities.

²² According to § 82 paragraph 3 of the Act No. 448/2008 Coll., on social services, and on amendment and completion of the Act No. 455/1991 Coll., on trades (Trades Act) as amended, for performance of community rehabilitation may be established community centres. Community rehabilitation is coordination of the entities activity, which are mainly family, municipality, educational institutions, employment service providers, social service providers and healthcare providers. The aim of the community rehabilitation is restoration or development of physical skills, mental skills and working ability of a natural person in unfavourable social situation and support of its integration into society. The community centre may also carry out other activities pursuant to special regulations, such according to § 10 of the Act No. 305/2005 Coll., on socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship, and amendment and completion of certain Acts, as amended by later regulations

With respect to the character of planned interventions, the implementation of the Priority Axis 2 in 2011-2015 by way of national projects (such as the national project of the Labour Head Office with respect to deinstitutionalisation of children's home or establishment of community centres) may be considered.

5.2.2 Place of projects implementation under the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP

Interventions under the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP are in the Objective Convergence territory aimed at:

1. Innovation and cohesion growth poles,
2. In case of building-up new facilities in the years 2007-2010 into the growth poles with number of inhabitants exceeding 5,000,
3. As exception, outside the growth poles, in the following cases:
 - a. Where the existing facility is significant and important or unique from the view of functions, types of services in the structure and capacities of the relevant region (e.g., existing economic sustainable social service facilities, that were in the past localised outside the towns and municipalities),
 - b. Provided that it is concerned facilities significant from the view of their type, availability and serviceability of the gradient area,
 - c. Where the facilities are significant from the view of support of the marginalised Roma communities (e.g., community centres at the segregated and separated Roma settlements).

The condition of aiming interventions outside the growth poles is to prove sustainability and meeting all legislation conditions for implementation of the project.

5.2.3 Eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP

During the years 2007-2013, eligible beneficiaries under the Priority Axes 2 were the founders of social service facilities and facilities for performing the measures of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship from the public sector and from the private sector.

From the year 2011 eligible beneficiaries under the Priority Axes 2 are:

- a) the founders of social service facilities and facilities for performing the measures of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship from the public sector and from the private sector in terms of relevant legislation, in which deinstitutionalisation and transformation of care to community or substitute family care is done,

Detailed list of the eligible entities in connection to the relevant legislation is a part of content of the ROP Programme Manual.

5.2.4 Substantiation of the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP

Priority Axis 2 of the ROP focuses to the provision of the required qualitative and quantitative levels of social service facilities and facilities for performing measures of social-legal protection of children and social guardianship in terms of the valid national legislation and levels of their accessibility in the supported Objective Convergence territory in the conditions existing in the SR.

Substantiation of the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP proves also excessive interest in this type of interventions during the programming period 2004-2006 within the measures 3.1 Building up and development of the civil infrastructure of the OPBI. In the given period, demand for additional resources from the Structural Funds exceeded several times the available resources. Priority Axis 2 of the ROP moreover establishes assumptions for support of the projects that could not get support in the shortened programming period 2004-2006 due to the lack of financial resources even though they met the required technical, financial and regional criteria. Condition for their implementation is compliance with the ROP strategy, defined for the programming period 2007-2013.

In the extensive implementation period in years 2007 – 2010 was announced six calls for submitting applications for non-repayable grant under the Priority Axis 2 ROP elaborated in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR as a professional guarantor in this area. Based on it can be stated, that assumption of high demand for interventions into the existing social service facilities was not confirmed, which were in sense of the original settings of the ROP strategy constitute the core of support. Significantly opposite trend reflects in the area of construction new facilities for adults and seniors, where the demand of applicants was approximately 450% of the available allocation for the given area of support.

Table 39/2012: Overview of existing implementation PO2 (EU funds + SR public funds)

Prioritná os 2	Pôvodná celková alokácia v eur	Počet prijatých žiadostí o NFP	Počet žiadostí o NFP odporučených na schválenie	Suma žiadostí o NFP odporučených na schválenie v eur (bez zohľadnenia úspor)	Nová alokácia PO po revízii ROP v eur (po zohľadnení realokácií a úspor)
celkom	239 147 040,00	356	136	209 344 307,34	217 789 393,00

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2013

The reasons of described state could be found in the development in area of social infrastructure. During years 2008-2010 in this area were realized some substantial legislative changes, whose main character is a trend towards deinstitutionalisation of residential facilities. Since the ROP strategy in 2007-2010 was focused mainly on the support of such institutions, the mentioned changes caused a decrease in the number of potential investment-intensive projects aimed at facilities with larger capacity, realization of which was foreseen under the initially set strategy of ROP. The new legislation also set construction and technical regulations (legislative capacity and hygiene standards of facilities), what require additional resources of applicants for the projects implementation.

Among other reasons of lower interest in that area of support is certainly the economic crisis, that has dampened investment activities of the local self-governments as the major beneficiaries under Priority 2 ROP, and caused a change of their development priorities in the possibility of co-financing projects in several areas of the ROP support.

The reason for lower interest compared to other Priority Axes of the ROP is also the high probability of generating so-called net revenue from the project (Article 55 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006) with regard to direct payments from clients in these facilities, resulting in a lower provided grant assistance, or a higher risk of the grant refunding, respectively a part of grant refunding in future.

In connection with support to the social infrastructure it must be also noted, that the average amount of a project significantly exceeded the assumptions upon which were set target amounts for indicators. It turns out that the projects of social infrastructure implemented within frame of the ROP are more complex and demanding nature than projects of OPBI in this area, especially on the basis of which was estimated average size of a project. This fact will result in promotion of smaller number of projects from the disposable allocation for this area of support. This finding is reflected in the updating indicators for the Priority Axis 2 of the ROP.

Based on completion of the analysis in the middle of the programming period and in compliance with the new strategic direction at the EU and SR level, preconditions were made for the utilisation of the remaining allocation for support of social infrastructure after 2010 only for support of deinstitutionalisation processes in Slovakia and support of social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities.

Based on the ROP assessment in mid-term of the programming period, there was carried out an internal reallocation of resources among groups of activities under Priority Axis 2 ROP, a slight decrease in the allocation of the Priority Axis 2 ROP in favor of strengthening the Priority Axis 1 ROP, and partial adjustment of the ROP strategy for the Priority Axis 2. Changes in the Priority Axis 2 ROP respond to the reasons listed in Article 33, paragraph 1, letter a), b) and d) of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006. These are significant changes in socio-economic environment (economic crisis, adoption of common currency EURO with a lower conversion ratio), and changes of priorities at the

national, regional and local levels, partly based on the change of legislation and partly on a false assumption regarding the development priorities of key beneficiaries. Moreover, in the case of social infrastructure for children, there were identified objective serious difficulties in implementation (due to permanently lower interest of applicants, and legislative barriers).

5.3 PRIORITY AXIS 3 OF THE ROP - STRENGTHENING OF CULTURAL POTENTIAL OF THE REGIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE OF TOURISM

5.3.1 Objective and focusing of the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP

The objective of the ROP Priority Axis 3 is “***Strengthening of the cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism***”

Fulfilling of the objective of the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP in **2007-2010** was performed through the following group activities:

- Reconstruction, extension and modernisation of repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels (e.g., libraries, museums, galleries, etc.),
- Revitalization of unused or unsuitable utilized immovable cultural monuments within the territory in ownership of the public sector with their exploitation for extending activities of repository and heritage funds institutions, and their utilization in cultural-cognitive tourism. It is possible to utilize revitalized monuments for cultural-social and community purposes in reasonable and extraordinary cases.
- Procurement of equipment of repository and heritage funds institutions at local and regional level, and cultural-social and community facilities in connection with their reconstruction, extension and modernisation, including ICT equipment,
- Support for non-commercial public infrastructure (public spaces, parking, orientation signs, walkways, rest areas, public toilets, etc.) adjacent to the most important and complex tourist resorts with all year-around utilization in territories of international and national importance, and in territories in a region of higher category than the relevant region.
- Support for presentation of tourism at regional and local level, creation and support for existing tourist-information offices, creation of partnerships at the level of self-governments and private sector and regional clusters
- Support for comprehensive offer of products of tourism, aimed at efficient utilisation of natural and cultural potential through preparation of cultural-cognitive tourist routes in territories of international and national importance, and in territories in a region of higher category than the relevant region,

Fulfilling of the objective of the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP **from 2011** is performed through the following group activities

- Reconstruction, extension and modernisation of repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels (e.g., libraries, museums, galleries, etc.), and related procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment,
- Revitalization of important unused or unsuitable utilized immovable cultural monuments in ownership of the public sector within the territory with their exploitation for extending activities of repository and heritage funds institutions, and their utilization in cultural-cognitive tourism. It is possible to utilize revitalized monuments for cultural-social and community purposes in reasonable and extraordinary cases, and related procurement of equipment, including ICT equipment.
- Support for non-commercial public infrastructure adjacent to the most important and complex tourist resort with all year-around utilization.

Detailed description of the investment and non-investment groups of activities is in content of the ROP Programme Manual.

Table 40/2012: Indicators at level of the Priority Axes 3 ROP

Indicator type	Indicator name	Unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value in y. 2015	Definition
Output	Number of technically improved repository and fund institutions at local and regional level	Number	2006	0	40	Number of repository and fund institutions at local and regional level, supported by reconstruction, expansion and modernization of buildings and by acquisition of equipment. Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 3
Output	Number of revitalized immovable cultural monuments in order to preserve the cultural heritage or their utilization in the cultural-cognitive tourism	Number	2006	0	60	Number of unused, respectively. inappropriately utilized objects registered in the Registry of immovable cultural monuments of the Ministry of Culture SR, supported by interventions into buildings and equipment with purpose to maintain the cultural heritage or to utilize in the cultural-cognitive tourism Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 3
Core No. 34	Number of projects in tourism	Number	2006	0	50	Number of implemented projects intent on improvements of tourism in the region (including investment and non-investment projects) Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 3
Core No. 11	Number of information society projects	Number	2006	0	80	Number of completed projects within Priority Axis 3 aimed at the acquisition and utilization of ICT equipment, respectively at introduction of innovative e-services Note: All projects of information society within Priority Axis 3 are concurrently reported within "Number of technically improved repository and fund institutions at local and regional level", "Number of revitalized immovable cultural monuments in order to preserve the cultural heritage or their utilization in the cultural-cognitive tourism" and "Number of projects in tourism" indicators.
Result	Number of new and improved services provided in supported repository and fund institutions at the local and regional level	Number	2006	0	80	Number of new and improved services provided to users of repository and fund institutions at local and regional level, resulting from the implemented projects. Note: Increasing quality of services (digitization and computerization) for those types of institutions may result in the rationalization of the facilities network equipment, while concurrently increasing number of users.
Result	Number of new and improved services provided in supported immovable cultural monuments	Number	2006	0	120	Number of new and improved services in relation to the conservation of cultural heritage and cultural-cognitive tourism, resulting from the implemented projects
Result	Number of new and improved services provided in tourism	Number	2006	0	50	Number of new and improved services provided to the applicants (or to member of partnerships) and to the public in relation with investment and non-investment projects in tourism
Core No. 23	Number of renewable energy projects	Number	2006	0	5	Number of projects aimed to increase the using of renewable energy. Note: Renewable energy = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy
Core No. 24	Increased installed performance of devices using renewable sources of energy	MW	2006	0	0.2	Increase of performance of production of thermal and electric energy by installing technologies using renewable energy sources in civil infrastructure facilities. Note: Renewable energy sources = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy
Output	Thermally insulated area	Square metre	2006	0	140,000	Thermally insulated area in square metres of peripheral walls and roof of reconstructed objects of civil infrastructure facilities, including technical facilities (area of replaced windows or adjusted windows, etc.).
Impact	Energy saving	GJ/year	2006	0	80,000	Annual saving of thermal energy and electricity incurred based on realisation of project in civic infrastructure facilities converted to GJ/year, measured by heat gauge at the entry to building by electric energy or gas gauge.

Impact	Average reduction in energy intensity of buildings used by the supported repository and fund institutions	%	2006	0	15	The average percentage reduction in energy demand for heating of buildings utilized by the supported repository and fund institutions
Core No. 1	Created new jobs	Number	2006	0	100	The total number of permanent jobs, that would not be created without implementation of projects under Priority Axis 3 ROP Note: The indicator represents a summation of created jobs for men and women
Core No. 2	Created new jobs for men	Number	2006	0	45	The total number of permanent jobs for men, that would not be created without implementation of projects under Priority Axis 3 ROP Note: All created jobs for men are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator
Core No. 3	Created new jobs for women	Number	2006	0	55	The total number of permanent jobs for women, that would not be created without implementation of projects under Priority Axis 3 ROP Note: All created jobs for women are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2012

Interventions under the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP aim at strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and at tourism development. That happens through support of repository and heritage fund institutions, stock of unused or non-suitable utilized immovable cultural monuments in terms of the ROP strategy suggested in Chapter 4. With respect to the unsuccessful fulfilment of complementarity with OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, the Managing Authority for the ROP in **2007-2010** focused on the support of individual additional activities of a more complex propagation of regions, clusters (partnerships), products, important tourist centres and creation of partnerships among the actors of tourism and regional clusters. Based on completion of analysis in the middle of the programming period, **since 2011** interventions in the field of tourism are focused on the support of non-commercial public infrastructure of tourism adjacent to the most important and complex tourist resort with all year-round utilization in terms of the ROP strategy suggested in Chapter 4.

In the previous years, the transformation process influenced also the institutions conducting activities in the area of culture. Their number is lower comparing to other facilities of civil amenity, but despite of it, lack of capital investments affected this area. As well as at the facilities of the civil infrastructure analysed in preceding sections, the issues of the structural-technical conditions of individual facilities in the field of culture as well. Many of the given facilities have to ensure technical conditions for preservation of collection or books stocks, and many of them reside in the mentioned protected cultural monuments.

The potential of tourism in Slovakia is widespread, covering almost all decisive forms and types of tourism. The territory of Objective Convergence has available non-used potential of cultural and natural heritage utilization, mainly in economically less developed regions.

Interventions within frame of the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP contribute to preservation of cultural heritage and uniqueness of regions, and to strengthening of their promotion and attractiveness for visitors.

Since 2011, the character of eligible interventions given by the strategy of the ROP for reinforcement of the cultural heritage through support of infrastructure of repository and heritage fund institutions and revitalisation of immovable cultural monuments and for the area of tourism is defined as follows:

Interventions into construction objects of repository and fund institutions at local and regional level and important immovable cultural monuments are aimed at elimination of unsuitable construction and technical condition, elimination of unsatisfactory conditions for disabled users, and reduction of high energy consumption of operations with respect to the specifics of immovable cultural monuments and to the acquisition of equipment, including ICT equipment for all types of supported facilities.

Through these interventions, the development of cultural-cognitive routes and urban cultural tourism is concurrently supported in the areas defined as territories of international and national importance and areas in region of higher category than the relevant region under the New Strategy of Tourism Development in the SR until 2013.

Supported repository and fund institutions are public libraries in the establishment competence of the public sector, located in the innovation growth poles, galleries and museums in the establishment competence of the public sector, located in the innovation growth poles. Revitalisation of immovable cultural monuments is focused on unused important repository objects characterised by adverse construction-technical condition, which however have the potential of utilisation within repository and fund institutions, or cultural-cognitive tourism (e.g. extension of expos of galleries and museums in the establishment competence of regional self-governments, establishment of cultural-cognitive routes, restoration of technical monuments and their accessibility to public, etc.). In justified cases, support of important immovable cultural monuments in growth poles owned by public sector for their alternative utilisation for cultural-social and representation halls, expos of municipal and regional history and memorabilia, picture galleries or exposition halls, local archive or cultural centre, facilities for interest-artistic activity and layman activities may be allowed.

There are inevitable pre-requisites of grant receiving for support of unused, respectively for inappropriate utilized monuments within the area, such as demonstration of compliance with existing strategies at regional and local levels, meeting of the applicable legal conditions for the particular type of the facility operating, demonstration of long-term financial sustainability of the facility, and acceptance of the obligation to maintain long-term purpose-made utilization of the intervention. The ROP interventions are not intended to separate conservation of immovable cultural monuments, without their subsequent utilization. Purpose of the ROP is to promote restoration and preservation of the immovable cultural heritage fund through permanent and active utilization for development of the region.

In the case of support of non-commercial public infrastructure of tourism adjacent to the most important complex centres of tourism with all year-round utilization, interventions focused on the most important complex centres of tourism with all year-round utilization are supported within OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, located in areas defined as areas of international and national importance and the territories in the region of higher category than the relevant region, and which have concurrently deficiencies in terms of non-commercial public infrastructure identified.

5.3.2 Place of projects implementation under the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP

Interventions within frame of the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP are in the Objective Convergence territory directed to the growth poles:

1. In case of libraries into the innovation growth poles, in case of galleries and museums into the innovation and cohesion growth poles,
2. outside growth poles in the following case:
 - a) in the case of a non-used, or unsuitable utilised immovable cultural monument, with potential of its utilization through activities extension of repository and heritage fund institutions (territories with international and national significance, and area of the region of a higher category than the respective region, in terms of the New Tourism Development Strategy of the SR until 2013),
 - b) in the case of projects aimed at public infrastructure adjacent to important tourist centres, the localisation of which outside the growth poles is given by the utilisation of natural conditions in the territory (territories with international and national significance and areas in regions of a higher category than the respective region in terms of the New Tourism Development Strategy of the SR until 2013). Note: Since the year 2011, interventions are directed into territories supported within OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth.

Condition for directing interventions outside the growth poles is demonstration of sustainability and compliance with all legislation conditions for the project implementation.

Assistance should direct to the historically most important and most attractive tourist areas, which have the potential to enhance economic growth of regions.

5.3.3 Eligible beneficiaries under the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP

Eligible beneficiaries within frame of the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP are founders of the repository and heritage fund institutions, owners of non-used or unsuitable utilised immovable cultural monuments and the actors of tourism from the public sector.

5.3.4 Substantiation of the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP

The Priority Axis 3 of the ROP aims at strengthening of cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism in the Objective Convergence territory under the conditions existing in the SR.

As it implies from the analytic section of the ROP, the situation in the given field at present is a result of the long-term under-dimensioning of capital investments on the part of founders of relevant types of facilities, or their predecessors. Consequence of the given state is that the technical conditions of the used buildings are non-satisfactory, unsuitable for preservation books and collection stock, and in many cases moral and physical obsolesce of internal equipment and respective technical equipments.

Based on the analysis of current state, we can state that in future the infrastructure of repository and heritage fund institutions will be aimed at digitalisation and accessing of the library and collection stock through ICT. For this reason, support of building-up new facilities will not perform through the ROP. However, it is necessary to stabilise structural-technical conditions of the buildings utilised at present, and to accentuate removal barriers in them as well.

Enhanced cultural and historical heritage in form of the revitalised immovable cultural monuments in the territory is an important factor influencing the quality of life of citizens and attractiveness of areas of the individual regions. It is necessary to direct interventions, in particular, at the non-used or unsuitable utilised monuments that in the past met significant economic, social and cultural functions as castles, mansions, burgher houses etc., as well as at renewal and regeneration of adjacent historic parks. With respect to the transformation process of the SR economy, the unused buildings in ownership of public sector did not represent a priority in allocating of limited capital resources for repair and maintenance. There is intention to improve technical and operational conditions of buildings, emphasising application of traditional technologies and procedures.

Revitalisation of the mentioned monuments relates with their utilisation as extended expositions of the repository and heritage fund institutions, with option to connect them to the cultural-learning routes. Alternative utilisation of the given buildings is connected to the cultural-social functions of such type, as concert and representative halls, expositions of municipal and regional history and notabilities, art galleries or exhibition halls, local archives or culture centres, community educational facilities, etc.

Tourism is perceived as a factor of economic and social development of the regions, granting options for establishing jobs and resources of budget incomes of the local self-governments. It is actually very specific segment with a space for many diverse activities. Interventions of the ROP aim at the implementation of projects with emphasis on additional services in tourism, whether by way of non-investment (support in 2007-2010) or investment projects (support in 2011-2015), for comprehensive utilisation of the potential of tourism in the respective region. Through developing and promoting of integrated products, Slovakia maintains its uniqueness and originality contributing to increasing number of visitors and to mitigation of regional differences of the country. It is required to direct assistance also into the projects for improvement of the spatial information of visitors and participants in tourism (various forms of public infrastructure of tourism), and into enhancing quality of information and presentation services, the all year-round utilisation of tourism centres, conference tourism, etc.

Table 41/2012: Overview of existing implementation of the PO3 (EU funds + SR public funds)

Prioritná os 3	Pôvodná celková alokácia v eur	Počet prijatých žiadostí o NFP	Počet žiadostí o NFP odporučených na schválenie	Suma žiadostí o NFP odporučených na schválenie v eur (bez zohľadnenia úspor)	Nová alokácia PO po revízii ROP v eur (po zohľadnení realokácií a úspor)
celkom	171 189 180,00	214	108	88 632 550,95	171 189 180,00

Based on ROP evaluation in the middle of the programming period, reduction of allocation of Priority Axis 3 of the ROP was made in favour of strengthening the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP and partial amendment of ROP strategy for Priority Axis 3 of the ROP. Changes in the Priority Axis 3 ROP respond to the reasons listed in the Article 33, paragraph 1, letter a), b) and d) of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006. It is concerned significant changes of socio-economic environment (economic crisis, adoption of the common currency EUR with a lower conversion ratio) and changes of priorities at the national, regional and local level, in relation to updating the regionalization of tourism in Slovakia. In the year 2010 there was also identified at the national level the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013, as a national priority in the funding of cultural infrastructure. Moreover, for infrastructure of the tourism were identified support implementation difficulties (because of the absence of complementarity in promoting activities of private and public sectors in the tourism sector, as well as adoption of national legal regulations in the area of tourism in the year 2010, with effect from the year 2011).

5.4 PRIORITY AXIS 4 OF THE ROP - REGENERATION OF SETTLEMENTS

5.4.1 Objective and focusing of the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP

Objective of the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP is ***“Increasing competitiveness of settlements and enhancing the quality and safety of public spaces”***

Fulfilling of the objective of the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP performs through the following group of activities:

Regeneration of settlements – separate demand-oriented projects of settlements regeneration through renewal and partial building-up of the tangible infrastructure of settlements within the centres of municipalities, eventually in centres of part of municipalities identified as the cohesion and innovation growth poles, including their core settlement centres. **Regeneration of settlements - supporting housing infrastructure**

Regeneration of settlements - development projects for municipalities with the Roma settlements in rural areas through renovation and partial construction of physical infrastructure of the settlements with segregated and separated Roma settlements

Regeneration of settlements - developing documents at the NUTS 2 and 3 levels

Regeneration of settlements – infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services

Detailed description of the groups of activities describes the content of the ROP Programme Manual.

Table 42/2012: Indicators at the level of the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP

Indicator type	Indicator name	Measure unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value in 2015	Definition
Core No. 39	Number of projects ensuring sustainability and enhancing the attractiveness of towns and cities	Number	2006	0	480	Number of realized projects focused on improving of state and restoration of elements of the settlements physical infrastructure and support for housing infrastructure

Core No. 16	km of reconstructed roads	km	2006	0	430	Length of renovated and modernized local roads on which the intervention into settlements regeneration had systemic nature
Output	Number of projects aimed at the support of housing infrastructure	Number	2006	0	48	Number of aimed at the support of housing infrastructure
Output	Number of projects for settlements regeneration directly aimed at improving the situation of marginalized Roma communities	Number	2006	0	48	Number of settlements regeneration projects aimed at improving of the living conditions of marginalized Roma communities by supporting the physical infrastructure of settlements with separated and segregated Roma settlements
Output	Number of supported development documents	Number	2006	0	13	Number of projects aimed at developing and updating development documents (planning documentation, land-use planning documents, programs of economic and social development and other development documents) at NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 level
Core No. 31	Number of projects in the field of risk prevention	Number	2006	0	140	Number of projects aimed at preventing the risk of disasters and incidents adversely affecting the population, i.e., number of reconstructed, expanded and modernized facilities of non-commercial rescue services (including acquisition of their equipment) Note: Indicator includes also several projects reported within the "Number of information society projects" indicator within Priority Axis 4
Core No. 11	Number of information society projects	Number	2006	0	72	Number of completed projects aimed at the acquisition and utilization of ICT equipment in the facilities of non-commercial rescue services Note: All projects of information society within Priority Axis 4 are concurrently reported within the "Number of projects in the risk prevention area" indicator
Result	Percentage of settlements with increased competitiveness of the total number of settlements identified as cohesion and growth poles in assisted territory	%	2006	0	50	Percentage of settlements identified as cohesion and growth poles, which were supported by interventions into regeneration of settlements of the total number of all settlements, identified as cohesion and growth poles in the Convergence objective territory in SR
Result	Number of new and improved services provided in supported facilities of non-commercial rescue services	Number	2006	0	192	Number of new and improved quality services provided to users of non-commercial rescue services facilities, arising from the projects implemented
Result	Percentage of population living in more competitive environment through interventions into regeneration of settlements	%	2006	0	40	Percentage of population living in settlements supported by the projects of settlement regeneration of the total number of population of all settlements identified as growth poles in the Convergence objective territory in the SR. Note: Result applies only to demand-oriented settlements regeneration projects.
Core No. 23	Number of renewable energy projects	Number	2006	0	5	Number of projects aimed to increase the using of renewable energy. Note: Renewable energy = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy
Core No. 24	Increased installed performance of devices using renewable sources of energy	MW	2006	0	0,2	Increase of performance of production of thermal and electric energy by installing technologies using renewable energy sources in civil infrastructure facilities. Note: Renewable energy sources = all sources of energy, save for fossil and nuclear energy
Output	Thermally insulated area of non-commercial rescue services	Square metre	2006	0	192 000	Thermally insulated area in square metres of peripheral walls and roof of reconstructed objects of civil infrastructure facilities (non-commercial rescue services), including technical facilities (area of replaced windows or adjusted windows, etc.).
Output	Thermally insulated area of residential houses	Square metre	2006	0	144 000	Thermally insulated area in square metres of peripheral walls and roof of reconstructed objects of supported residential houses, including technical facilities (area of replaced windows or adjusted windows, etc.).
Impact	Energy saving in facilities of non-commercial rescue services	GJ/year	2006	0	96 000	Annual saving of thermal energy and electricity incurred based on realisation of project in civic infrastructure facilities (non-commercial rescue services) converted to GJ/year, measured by heat gauge at the entry to building by electric energy or gas gauge.
Impact	Energy saving in residential houses	GJ/year	2006	0	96 000	Annual saving of thermal energy and electricity incurred based on realisation of project in supported residential houses converted to GJ/year, measured by heat gauge

						at the entry to building by electric energy or gas gauge.
Impact	Average reduction in energy intensity of buildings used by supported non-commercial rescue services facilities	%	2006	0	25	The average percentage reduction in energy demand for heating of buildings utilized by the non-commercial rescue service facilities
Impact	Average reduction in energy intensity of supported apartment dwelling houses	%	2006	0	35	The average percentage reduction in energy demand for heating of supported buildings in projects of support to the housing infrastructure

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2012

Interventions within the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP aim mainly at strengthening of competitiveness of the settlements identified as the innovative and cohesion poles, and at the all-territorial provision of the infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services in the supported territory.

With respect to the high fragmentation of SR settlement structure and in the interest of effective utilization of development resources, support of the tangible infrastructure of settlements aims at the cohesion and innovative growth poles. Exception is supposable in relation to support of the tangible infrastructure of the municipalities with significant representation of the Roma population in segregated and separated settlements. Methodology of the growth poles identification gives the Annex 4. A precise list of municipalities according to respective categories presents the web page <http://www.ropka.sk/dokumenty-na-stiahnutie/>. Exemption from the direction of assistance into the innovation and cohesion growth is admissible also in connection with elimination of flood effects of the year 2010 and with flood-protection activities. That may be realized only in selected areas, which were the most affected, respectively the most threatened by floods, in accordance with the Resolution of the Slovak Republic Government No. 566/2010, and in accordance with the ROP strategy described in the Chapter 4.

Additional ERDF resources and the SR State Budget co-finance the activities of settlements regeneration, and they are aiming at support of municipalities identified as growth poles. The municipalities not identified as growth poles can use additional resources from the EAFRD within frame of the axis 3 of the Programme Development of Rural Areas for implementation of similar activities in the programming period 2007-2013.

Support of the non-commercial rescue services infrastructure performed within the ROP is in line with the Concept of spatial deployment of the FRC personnel and equipments. This Concept elaborated the Ministry of Interior of the SR. Successful fulfilment of this Concept, with contributions of the ERDF resources, will ensure uniform all-territorial coverage of the entire SR area with professional rescue components by the year 2015. That will enable arrival time within 15 minutes (i.e., the ROP supports activities in the Objective Convergence territory).

Character of eligible interventions given by the strategy of the ROP for individual areas of support within the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP as follows:

Regeneration of settlements - separate demand-oriented projects of settlements regeneration

through renovation and partial building of the public tangible infrastructure of settlements in centres of municipalities, respective in centres of parts of municipalities identified as cohesion and innovative growth poles, inclusive their cores of settlement, aimed at:

- Arrangement of public spaces and public greenery elements,
- Building and reconstruction of public lightings,
- Building and reconstructions of walkways and bike routes,
- Reconstruction of local roads,
- Reconstruction of bridges and footbridges in connection to implementation of the investment activities aimed at the local roads, walkways and bike routes,
- Reconstruction and building of public transport stops,
- Reconstruction and building of public conveniences,
- Arrangement and regulation of catchment areas in the built up sections of municipalities and towns, but exclusively in connection to implementation of other investment activities. This is in

line with the Draft of principles, guides and framework conditions to ensure the prevention of floods, reducing flood risk, drought and other risks of sudden natural disasters, and integrated management of river basins, approved by the SR Government Resolution No. 556/2010,

- Partial recovery and building of the physical infrastructure of settlements of above-mentioned focusing in relation to elimination of the effects of floods of the year 2010 and flood-protection activities.

Eligible beneficiaries are the municipalities identified as the innovative and cohesion growth poles. Interventions implement exclusively in accordance with the spatial planning documentation of such settlements, with aiming at the central public spaces. Interventions within this group of activities are not determined for the regional towns. The minimum scope of eligible operations within one separate demand-oriented project of settlements regeneration comprises at least four of the given operations.

It is possible to implement a project also on the territory of some municipalities, in the case of projects aimed at mitigation of the floods effects of the year 2010 and flood-protection activities (a complex solving of affected territory exceeding the cadastral territory of one municipality). It is possible also outside the growth poles, but only in selected areas, which were the most affected, respectively the most threatened by floods, in terms of the ROP strategy described in Section 4. Allocation to these interventions in amount of € 34,448,841 million provides the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 of August 27th, 2010.

The rural municipalities with separated or segregated Roma settlements are the territorial exceptions for the principle application of the innovative and cohesion poles support. With the given exception, it is necessary to avoid duplicity of financing, or partially duplicity of financing of the same activities from the Programme Development of Rural Areas. The framework mechanism preventing from overlaps of both programmes is utilization of the ITMS for monitoring projects supported within the frame of ROP up to the level of individual operations, and work with the given information in the selection process within the axis 3 of the PDRA. In case of although additional finding of any overlapping of operations, the beneficiary is not eligible to obtain, or to hold financial contribution from both programmes.

Settlements regeneration – assistance to the housing infrastructure

In SR conditions, the need for support of housing infrastructure (residential houses - multifamily housing) still persists. In connection with the identified difficulties with implementation of integrated strategies of development of urban areas, it is necessary to create a mechanism of support of housing infrastructure from EU funds by way of a pilot approach (e.g. using the innovative financial tool JESSICA).

In the context of ROP strategy, interventions to the existing housing infrastructure in order to reduce energetic demands of buildings, support of utilisation of renewable energy sources and social cohesion seem to be the most appropriate in order to implement the pilot approach, since these objectives are monitored within the ROP also in the support of all civic infrastructure facilities. Another relevant objective could be the support of social inclusion of marginalised groups, or other objectives defined in Article 44 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 and Article 7 of European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No. 1080/2006.

With respect to the advanced stage of implementation of the programming period 2007-2013, an allocation has to be specified, corresponding to the successful realisation of a smaller number of projects, with emphasis on the creation of implementation mechanism in the context of existing supporting tolls of housing in the SR so that the acquired experience could be utilised to a larger extent in the next programming period.

Details concerning the implementation of support for housing infrastructure will be established by the Programme Manual.

Settlements regeneration - development projects for municipalities with Roma settlements in rural areas through renovation and partial building of physical infrastructure of settlements with separated and segregated Roma settlements

The project focuses on the following operations:

- Arrangement of public spaces and elements of public greeneries,
- Building and reconstruction of public lighting,
- Building and reconstruction of footpaths and bicycle paths,
- Reconstruction of local roads,
- Reconstruction of bridges and footbridges, following the implementation of investment activities focused on local roads, walkways and bicycle lanes,
- Reconstruction and building of bus stops,
- Reconstruction and building of public conveniences,
- Reconstruction and regulation of river basins in built-up areas of municipalities and towns, exclusively following the implementation of other investment activities,
- Restoration and partial construction of public physical infrastructure of rural settlements with separated and segregated Roma settlements in connection with elimination of flood effects from the year 2010 flood and with flood prevention activities.

Relevant municipalities are bearers and implementers of projects aimed at rehabilitation of municipal infrastructure with the separated and segregated Roma settlements, in which cadastral territory the given Roma settlements are located. Starting points for supporting projects with the complex approach are designated micro-regions with high concentration of Roma settlements. In the early years of programming period 2007-2013, the intention of the Managing Authority for the ROP is to support projects from a projects stock supported by the PHARE grant scheme. This projects stock includes prepared project plans for the regeneration of selected Roma settlements, what meet the conditions for implementation of investment projects under the relevant legislation of the SR. Another starting point for the implementation of projects promoting improvement of living conditions of the marginalized Roma communities are prepared projects in micro-regions, selected by the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for the marginalized Roma communities, mainly in connection to the implementation of complex approach.

Implementation of projects within frame of support of marginalized Roma communities may be realize as a part of a complex approach, provided by the coordinator of the horizontal priority "marginalized Roma communities". An assumption for the additional investment projects realization is the material and legal settlement of estates, which are location of the project implementation, what is the role of local self-governments. In addition to support of standard activities of settlements regeneration, it is possible, in the case of municipalities with such type of Roma settlements, to realize also investment into building and reconstruction of water and sewerage systems, what contributes significantly to the enhancement of the quality of life in separated, respectively segregated Roma settlements.

In the case of projects of regeneration of municipalities with Roma settlements issues, supported within the grant scheme PHARE 2002/000.610-03, the support of utilities based on preliminary preparation was carried out in 2007-2010 in these special cases.

Projects aimed at mitigation the effects of floods of 2010 may also be implemented in territory of several municipalities with separated or segregated Roma settlements, exclusively only in selected areas the most affected, respectively threatened by floods, in terms of the ROP strategy described in the Chapter 4. Allocation to these interventions in amount of € 5 million preset the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 of August 27th, 2010.

Settlements regeneration - developing documents at regions NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 level

The projects are aimed at developing and updating of the land-use planning documents, regional planning papers, programs of economic and social development, and other development documents at the level of NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 level regions.

Settlements regeneration - infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services

In **2007-2010**, interventions in construction objects of FRC, MFB and MRS facilities were supported, with focus on the elimination of unsatisfying construction-technical condition and provision of equipment (including ICT equipment, save for means of transport), in order to reduce the high

energetic demands of operation; in two special cases also for construction of new objects. Support was directed to territories identified based on the Concept of Spatial deployment of Forces and Resources of FRC, in the case of Mountain Rescue Services into cohesion and innovation growth poles, in justified cases based on the morphological features of the territory also outside growth poles (e.g. alpine environment).

- Based on the structure of facilities supported in 2008-2010, the additional support has to be focused on Fire and Rescue Brigade facilities in order to achieve the originally set ratio of state and municipal facilities. Due to this fact, since 2011 the projects focus on the reconstruction, expansion and modernization of non-commercial rescue service (FRC) facilities, and in two predetermined specific cases also on building facilities of the FRC, in accordance with the Concept of spatial deployment of FRC personnel and equipment, and related procurement of equipment of non-commercial rescue services, including ICT equipment (excluding vehicles).

Interventions into structural buildings of FRC aimed at elimination of unsatisfactory structural-technical conditions in order to reduce the high energetic demands of operation of facilities and procurements of their equipment (including ICT equipment, excluding transportation vehicles), and in two specific cases also into building of new FRC buildings is enabled.

5.4.2 Eligible areas under the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP

During the years 2007 – 2011 interventions within the frame of Priority Axis 4 of the ROP were in the Objective Convergence territory aimed at the following:

1. within support of the tangible infrastructure of settlements in the innovative and cohesion growth poles, except the regional towns, with aiming at central public concourses
2. in relation to the integrated strategies of development of urban areas exclusively into the municipalities with the statute of town with more than 15 000 inhabitants (i.e., the issuing year 2005 according to the SO SR) with aiming at urban areas with more than 1 000 inhabitants
3. within support of the tangible infrastructure of municipalities with separated or segregated Roma settlements in the rural areas also outside the growth poles
4. within support of the facilities of the FRC and the MFB into territories identified based on the Perspective of spatial distribution of the personnel and tools of the FRC; in case of mountain rescue service interventions are primarily aimed towards the cohesion and innovative growth poles, in justified cases based on morphologic specifications of the territory also outside the growth poles (e.g., the high-mountain environment)

Since the year 2011 interventions within the frame of Priority Axis 4 of the ROP were in the Objective Convergence territory aimed at the following:

1. Within frame of support of the tangible infrastructure of municipalities into the innovative and cohesion growth poles, except the regional towns, with aiming at central public spaces,
2. Within frame of support of the tangible infrastructure of settlements with separated and segregated Roma settlements in rural areas also outside the growth poles,
3. In connection with elimination of the flood effects from the year 2010, and flood prevention activities is the eligible area the same as in above-mentioned points 1 and 2 with the difference that it do not have to be the growth poles and at the same time it have to be territories most affected, respectively the most threatened by floods, in terms of the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010,
4. In order to support the infrastructure of housing into the innovation growth poles, in the case of support of social inclusion of members of Marginalised Roma Communities also outside growth poles,
5. In support of the FRC facilities into areas identified based on the Concept of spatial deployment of the FRC personnel and equipment,

6. In case of non-investment projects focused on the development and updating of development documents at the regional level the principle of territorial concentration will not be applied.

The condition for directing interventions of investment character outside the growth poles is to demonstrate sustainability and meeting of all legislation conditions for implementation of the concerned project.

5.4.3 Eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP

The eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axis 4 ROP are the local self-governments. In the area of non-commercial rescue services, the eligible beneficiaries are the entities of the public sector and of the non-profit sector. In case of non-investment projects aimed at preparation and updating of development documents, the self-governing regions are the beneficiaries. Since the year 2011, in the case of support for housing through the innovative financial instrument JESSICA, the eligible beneficiaries are subjects of public bodies, non-profit sector and subjects providing housing management.

Detailed list of the eligible entities in connection to the relevant legislation is in the content of the ROP Programme Manual.

5.4.4 Substantiation of the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP

The Priority Axis 4 of the ROP aims at interventions into the tangible infrastructure of towns and municipalities as the basic core settlement centres of the regions. The purpose of interventions is, in particular, support of their competitiveness and innovative capacity through improving conditions of the tangible infrastructure of settlements. The high structural-technical level of public spaces and their supplementary components, satisfactory transport-technical conditions of local communications and the environment with high aesthetic value are the inevitable assumptions for attractiveness of the territory for diverse economic activities, and concurrently preventing from arising of areas with physical deterioration and social exclusion.

The urban settlements are the largest development centres of the territory, which progress have effect on the entire surrounding area, and concurrently they are the strongest engines of development and application of innovations, science and research. The broad spectrum of activities establishes assumptions for implementation of the project plans for complex development of settlements, and links to the excessive demand for the given types of activities within frame of the Measures 3.4 Renovation and development of municipalities of the OPBI in the shortened programming period 2004-2006. In contrast to the programming period 2004-2006, the municipalities with the town statute are among the eligible entities as well.

An objective shortcoming of urban areas is the technical and social deterioration of housing stock; in particular, in the town districts influenced by negative socio-economic effects, what contributes to the gradual degradation of the given areas. Therefore, it is necessary to focus activities of settlements regeneration also in support of housing infrastructure.

The inevitable assumption for elimination of social exclusion of the marginalised Roma communities is their support through the complex approach, aimed at several aspects of their life. The ROP enables to increase mainly the level of physical environment, where the marginalised Roma communities are living, through renovation or building-up of the tangible infrastructure elements in the municipalities with separated or segregated Roma settlements. For the given purpose, in relation to support of marginalised Roma communities, it is possible to ensure also interventions into water supplies and sewage systems, implementation thereof is otherwise eligible within the OP Environment (needs an agreement with the Managing Authority for the OP Environment). Interventions of the given type have the high potential to become a significant part of the complex approach ensured by the coordinator of horizontal priority Marginalised Roma Communities.

Updating of the elaborated development documents at the level of regions in the supported territory is the inevitable assumption of covering trends in the whole spectrum of the self-governing regions competences. Spatial planning documents and economic development programmes are the inevitable pre-conditions for correct directing of the regions development activities.

The Priority Axis 4 of the ROP is focuses also on ensuring of the required quantitative and qualitative levels of amenities of the territory with the non-commercial rescue service infrastructure as well. The key aspect is provision of required time accessibility of the professional rescue services in the entire supported territory in terms of the MI SR strategy. Safety on the public spaces and areas attractive for tourist ensure the mountain rescue services. The non-commercial rescue services, likewise as the all areas in competence of the public sector, were affected by insufficient financing into maintenance of structural buildings and modernisation of their internal equipment. Facilities of non-commercial rescue services as Fire-fighting and Rescue Corps, Municipal Fire Brigades, Mountain Rescue Services were not subject of relevant support programmes funded, either from the national, or other development programmes, over a long time.

Table 43/2012: Overview of existing implementation of the PO4 (EU funds + SR public funds)

Prioritná os 4	Pôvodná celková alokácia v eur	Počet prijatých žiadostí o NFP	Počet žiadostí o NFP odporučených na schválenie	Suma žiadostí o NFP odporučených na schválenie v eur (bez zohľadnenia úspor)	Nová alokácia PO po revízii ROP v eur (po zohľadnení realokácií, dodatočných zdrojov a úspor)
celkom	571 466 355,00	1157	781	537 910 734,66	548 184 002,00

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2013

In the programming period 2007-2013, the separate demand-oriented projects for settlements regeneration constitute the most significant development priority of self-governments, along the educational infrastructure. Interventions into the material infrastructure of settlements enhance competitiveness of the growth poles, their attractiveness to their own citizens as well as for their gravity area, what also supports their function of the territory serviceability. Managing Authority for the ROP in two announced calls for grant applications (in the years 2009 and 2010) met with the demand, which represented approximately 170% of allocation set for settlements regeneration. It is possible to assume, that through the ROP probably will be achieved recovery of the majority of eligible settlements in the territory of the Objective Convergence (i.e., growth poles).

In the year 2009, when the impacts of economic crisis fully reflected, demand for interventions into the settlements regeneration reached dimensions of a nationwide order. Managing authorities in relation to measures of the SR Government and in connection with the impacts of the economic crisis intensified focusing of implementation to the most effective areas of support from the operational programmes. The self-governments as eligible beneficiaries on focused on those areas of support, which had in terms of their development priorities maximal contribution (reduction of energy consumption of buildings, creating jobs, promoting education, ICT introduction into schools, restoration of the physical environment and safety of settlements, etc.).

Intensification of the EU funds drawing in times of economic crisis also had important side benefits as a substitution of private investments dropout in the SR economy, promoting for keeping employment in the construction sector, the importance of financial resources from the EU funds as a component of the state budget revenues, etc.

On the other hand, the Managing Authority for ROP identified difficulties in the implementation of integrated development strategies for urban areas, mainly related to legislation for funding of apartment dwelling houses from the ERDF. Under interpretation of the relevant EU regulations, the promotion of investments into the apartment dwelling houses would disrupt the market environment, and therefore, such support can realize only the form of state aid scheme. This fact, in connection with the problem of legal regulations of flat ownership, under conditions of the Slovak Republic, seriously affects the viability of integrated development strategies for urban areas. It is reasonable to assume, that even in case of resolving of this complex legal situation, the complicate set up supporting mechanism would not be able to compete on the market with a much simpler products of building societies and banks (obligations of beneficiaries resulting from contracts for provision of grant, certifications, audits, controls).

Implementation in the area of non-commercial rescue service runs as expected. Already based on results of the existing implementation, there is expected fulfilling of the objectives of the Concept of spatial deployment of the FRC personnel and equipment. The Concept elaborated the Ministry of Interior SR. It is the starting point of the ROP strategy in this area of support, and therefore the financial ROP plan for this area was appropriately adjusted, in favour of separate demand-oriented projects for settlements regeneration.

The Priority Axis 4 will contribute also to mitigation of the floods effects from the year 2010, through settlements regeneration in the areas most affected, or the most threatened by floods.

The Managing Authority for ROP in the year 2010 initiated an internal reallocation of funds within the Priority Axis 4, following this development, confirmed by the assessments/analyses. The reallocation is strengthening the financial allocation for the Priority Axis 4 ROP compared to the initial allocation, which was set in the process of the ROP preparation in the years 2006-2007, and partial modification of the ROP strategy for the Priority Axis 4 ROP. Changes of the ROP Priority Axis 4 respond to the reasons listed in Article 33, paragraph 1, letter a), b) and d) of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006. It is concerned significant changes in socio-economic environment (economic crisis, adoption of the common currency EUR with a lower conversion ratio) and changes of priorities at the national, regional and local levels (regeneration of settlements is profiled as a development priority of the self-governments, a need of systematic solution of the floods impacts from the year 2010) . Moreover, in the case of integrated development strategies for urban areas, there were identified objectively serious implementation difficulties (because of legislative restrictions on financing of housing support).

5.5 PRIORITY AXIS 5 OF THE ROP - REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS ENSURING TRANSPORT SERVICEABILITY OF THE REGIONS

5.5.1 Objective and focusing of the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP

The objective of the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP is ***“Increasing of the level of transport serviceability of the regions”***

Fulfilling the objective of the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP performs through the following group of activities:

- Reconstruction, modernisation and in special cases also construction of new sections of the 2nd and 3rd class roads in the Objective Convergence territory, including reconstruction and development of transport sub-systems ensuring increase of the level of transport, safety and environmental aspects.

Detailed description of individual activities is in the contents of the ROP Programme Manual.

Table 44/2011: Indicators on the level of Priority Axis 5 ROP

Indicator type	Indicator name	Measure unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value in 2015	Definition
Core No. 13	Number of road projects	Number	2006	0	60	Number of completed projects specifically aimed at intervention into the regional communications under the ROP Priority Axis 5
Core No. 14	km of new roads	km	2006	0	60	Length of built-up road sections under the ROP Priority Axis 5, which did not exist before the project implementation
Core No. 16	km of reconstructed roads	km	2006	0	600	Length of renovated and modernized road sections under the ROP Priority Axis 5, in which the intervention was systemic in nature and contribute to reduction of accidents, increasing traffic carrying capacity, etc.

Result	Proportion of the length of reconstructed roads of 2 nd and 3 rd class in the total length of road network of 2 nd and 3 rd class in the supported area	%	2006	0	4.5	Percentage of renovated and modernized roads of 2 nd and 3 rd class under the ROP Priority Axis 5 of the total length of road network of 2 nd and 3 rd class in the Objective Convergence territory
Impact	Percentage of reduction in accidents on supported road sections of 2 nd and 3 rd class	%	2006	0	15	Percentage of accidents decrease on the road sections 2 nd and 3 rd classes after implementing interventions aimed at improving transport and the technical characteristics of supported sections of 2 nd and 3 rd class roads.

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2011

Defining the objective of the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP issues from the results of analysis in the area of the regional infrastructure, and of it identified main disparities and development factors. The Priority Axis 5 of the ROP aims at support of investment activities focused on reconstruction and modernisation of transport-technical conditions of the regional communications (i.e., the 2nd and 3rd class roads) in ownership of the self-governing regions. Aimed is to ensure such interconnection of the core settlement centres that enables effective movement of people and goods, modernisation of transport sub-systems providing safe and hygienically satisfactory transport routes. The goal of investments into this type of transport infrastructure is elimination of the identified shortcomings in the road network with respect to the environmental and safety aspects. With respect to the character of intervention aimed at increasing accessibility between the municipalities, which are growth poles, and the municipalities in their gradient territory not belonging among growth poles, it is not the main goal of support within the Priority Axis 5 to shorten travel time. Therefore, the indicator 'shortening of travel time' is not monitored at the given section of the reconstructed or modernised road of the 2nd or 3rd class in comparison to travel time at the given section prior to the intervention implementing.

Within frame of the Priority Axis 5 ROP are also included interventions aimed at mitigation of the after-effects of floods in the year 2010, through reconstruction and restoration of the regional roads 2nd and 3rd classes infrastructure in the areas most affected, or the most threatened by flooding. Allocation to these interventions the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 of August 27th, 2010 set in amount of € 10 million. Managing Authority for the ROP may, if necessary, within available resources of Priority axis 5 ROP raise the financial resources allocated to those interventions well beyond the Government Resolution no. 566/2010.

Character of eligible interventions given by the ROP strategy for the regional communication is as follows:

Interventions are focused on increasing the level of transport-technical conditions of the 2nd and 3rd class roads, which are in bad or unsatisfactory conditions, ensuring transport serviceability of municipalities in the area to the cohesion growth poles, enhancing accessibility of the higher civil amenity for the citizens outside the cohesion growth poles, establishing conditions for improving mobility for job, and support of complementary elements of the transport infrastructure to the 2nd and 3rd class roads, which will enhance safety and permeability of transport and reduce its impacts on the environment.

Construction of new sections of the 2nd and 3rd class roads may be done only in provably justified cases due to procurement of transport serviceability of an area and in order to eliminate identified system deficiencies in the road network with respect to the environmental and safety aspect.

Interventions in regional communications concurrently partially eliminate the consequences of destructive floods, which affected the SR in 2010, in selected areas that were mostly affected by floods in 2010 pursuant to SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010.

5.5.2 Eligible areas within the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP

The place of implementation of the project is the Objective Convergence territory, supported sections of roads ensures serviceability of the territory into the growth poles.

5.5.3 Eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP

The territorially relevant self-governing regions are the eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axes 5 of the ROP. In case of elimination of flood effects it have to be 2nd and 3rd class roads in territories the most affected or the most threatened by floods at the same time.

5.5.4 Substantiation of the Priority Axis 5 of the ROP

The high-class fitting with the road networks ensuring transport serviceability of the territory is one of the key development factors of the regions. The transport infrastructure under the conditions existing in the SR is characterised with the relatively compact road network, however with the lower proportion of functioning higher-class roads ensuring transport serviceability of the region.

With respect to the fact that the civil infrastructure is concentrated mainly in the cohesion growth poles (i.e., every innovative growth pole is also the cohesion growth pole), it is necessary to ensure its availability also to the population of the municipalities, which are not identified as growth poles. The given serviceability ensure the 2nd and 3rd class roads, density thereof is sufficient under the conditions of the SR, however more than one quarter of their entire length is in unsatisfactory transport-technical conditions. In addition, their identified shortcoming is an insufficient outfitting of the 2nd and 3rd class roads with elements increasing levels of their safety, permeability, and other aspects.

At the same time, Priority Axis 5 will contribute to mitigation of the floods after-effects from the year 2010 through reconstruction and restoration of the regional roads 2nd and 3rd class infrastructure in the areas most affected, or the most threatened by risk of flooding.

Table 45/2012: Overview of implementation of the PO5 (EU funds + SR public funds)

Initial total allocation in EUR	Number of received applications for grant	Number of applications for grant recommended for approval	Amount of applications for grant recommended for approval in EUR (without consideration of savings)	New PO allocation after ROP revision in EUR (after reallocations and savings consideration)
173 473 180,00	*88	58	151, 368,256.34	173,473,180.00

received 27 new application, which are only at the stage of evaluation - the number and amount of the grant application recommended for approval will be not changed

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2013

5.6 PRIORITY AXIS 6 OF THE ROP - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

5.6.1 Objective and focusing of the Priority Axis 6 of the ROP

The objective of the Priority Axis 6 of the ROP is “**Effective managing and implementation of the ROP**”

The Priority Axis 6 of the ROP establishes a supportive mechanism for bodies involved in the ROP management, i.e. mainly the Managing Authority for the ROP (hereinafter “the MA”) and Intermediate Bodies under MA for the ROP (hereinafter “the IBMA”) for performance of tasks defined in the General Regulation on the EU Structural Funds. In order to ensure a high quality of implementation of the ROP and its Priority Axes, funds of technical assistance have to be used for support of activities and functions regarding the preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, informing, publicity, control of implementation of programme, including support of administrative capacities required for the implementation of programme and probably the preparation of thematically-related OP for programming period 2014-2020 (e.g. ex-ante assessment).

The following belong among the main activities ensured through this Priority Axis:

- Activities of publicity and information,

- Technical, spatial and operational provisions,
- Staff expenditures,
- Educational/training activities,
- Provision of the Monitoring Committee for ROP functionality,
- Assessments of the ROP defined in the General Regulation,
- Provision of the information technologies,
- Software products and their maintenance,
- Studies and analyses, outsourcing, monitoring,
- Other activities, in accordance with the SR and EU legislation.

Detailed description of the procedures related to the management and implementation of the ROP, as well as in connection to their competences re-distribution between the MA and the IBMA is in the content of Chapter 9.

Table 46/2011: Indicators on level of the Priority Axis 6 of the ROP

Indicator type	Indicator name	Measure unit	Initial year	Initial amount	Target amount in the y. 2015	Definition
Output	Number of technical assistance projects	Number	2006	0	40	Number of technical assistance projects carried out by the MA and IBMA
Result	Number of the ROP implemented axes	Number.	2006	0	7	Number of ROP Priority Axes implemented during the programming period 2007-2013
Result	Number of grant applications processed by the Managing Authority for ROP	Number	2006	0	2,200	Number of applications submitted, inspected and registered in the ITMS at level of the MA
Result	Number of applications for grant, including project proposals processed by the Intermediate Bodies under the Managing Authority for ROP	Number	2006	0	1,000	Number of applications submitted, inspected and registered in the ITMS at level of individual IBMA (under decentralized arrangements of the ROP)
Result	Number of concluded contracts for provision of grant	Number	2006	0	1,800	Number of contracts for provision of grant concluded among beneficiaries and providers

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2011

5.6.2 Eligible areas within the Priority Axis 6 of the ROP

Eligible is entire territory of the Slovak Republic.

5.6.3 Eligible beneficiaries within the Priority Axis 6 of the ROP

The eligible beneficiaries within frame of the Priority Axis 6 of the ROP are the Managing Authority for the ROP and the Intermediate Bodies under the Managing Authority for the ROP.

5.6.4 Substantiation of the Priority Axis 6 of the ROP

For meeting tasks related to management of implementation of the ROP it is inevitable to ensure the material, technical, administrative and spatial conditions for directly involved bodies, but concurrently also the methodological and analytical services related to the managing, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and control of the programme. In relation to transfer of conduct of tasks of the MA in the area of the ROP implementation to the IBMA, it is necessary to ensure supportive financial resources related to establishing and operation of further entities, involved into implementation of the programme. Concurrently, it is inevitable to ensure adequate publicity about the options provided from the EU Structural Funds, and about their positive effects on development of Slovakia. Despite of significant increasing effectiveness of the implementation and control mechanisms, realization of the ROP will require an increase of administrative capacities. That finding is also the conclusion of the

analysis performed by the Managing Authority for ROP in cooperation with the respective self-governments in the first quarter of 2007.

The Managing Authority of the ROP is responsible for coordination of the projects elaboration and proportionality of resources distribution to the individual areas of activities, taking into consideration the objectives and particularities of the operational programme, and the number of eligible entities involved into its implementation, demands of the processes for administrative capacities, etc. In the interest of effective utilization of the technical assistance resources of the ROP, and in accordance with the relevant guidance of the CCA, the Managing Authority for the ROP elaborates and approves separate projects of technical assistance for the priority theme 85 "Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control", and for the priority theme 86 "Evaluation and studies; Information and communication".

Although an elaboration of only two complex joint projects of technical assistance was initially foreseen (predominantly in connection with the setting of system of the means of technical assistance use at the national level), the Priority Axis 6 implementation in forms of several projects developed individually by the MA IBMA proved to be a more efficient and flexible way for resources utilization of the technical assistance of the ROP.

5.7 PRIORITY AXIS 7 OF THE ROP – EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE – KOŠICE 2013

5.7.1 Objective and focusing of the Priority Axis 7 of the ROP

Objective of the Priority Axis 7 of the ROP is ***"Strengthening of the cultural potential and competitiveness of the region NUTS 2 – East, in connection with the implementation of the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013"***

The Priority Axis 7 ROP creates conditions for the implementation of investment projects in relation to the project European Capital of Culture (hereinafter referred to as "ECOC") - Košice 2013, which is on the basis of the SR Government resolutions adopted in the years 2009 and 2010, defined as a priority at the national level.

The objective of the Priority Axis 7 of the ROP is strengthening of the cultural potential and competitiveness of the region NUTS 2 East, especially of the city of Košice and its surroundings in connection with implementation of the project ECOC - Košice 2013.

The Priority Axis 7 will be implemented by way of one or more national projects consisting of partial investment projects directly related to the project ECOC - Košice 2013, which indicative list comprises the Annex No. 9 ROP. This indicative list can be adjusted in comply with the purpose of the project implementation, eligibility of beneficiaries and their territories of realization, in the context of the approved project ECOC - Košice 2013.

Realization of individual investment projects is not interconencted from the building and technical aspect. Having in regard sucesfull carrying out of related events the physical implementation of most investment projects must be completed no later than December 31st, 2012. Completion of some technically more demanding projects may also occur during the year 2013. Infrastructure supported through projects under the Priority Axis 7 ROP will remain functional and in use, with respect to the maintance of objectives, purposes and results of the projects, even after the year 2013, in accordance with the principle of investments sustainability.

Realization of particular investment projects related to the project ECOC - Košice 2013 supposes the strengthening of cultural potential development of the town of Košice and of the wider region, through reconstruction, modernization and completion of the cultural and social-cultural infrastructure, and physical infrastructure of the town, with regard to environmental sustainability, job creation and support of the urban and cultural-cognitive tourism.

The Priority Axis 7 of the ROP will be implemented through following groups of activities:

- Restoration, reconstruction, expansion and modernization of buildings in connection with the project ECOC, in order to their utilization for cultural and social purposes, development of culture, arts and cultural-cognitive tourism, and related acquisition of equipment, including ICT equipment
- Arrangement and revitalization of public spaces, elements of small architecture, public greenery, and reconstruction and completion of local transport infrastructure (local roads, footpaths, bicycle lanes, transport subsystems, etc.) in functional connection with the project ECOC - Košice 2013

Table 47a/2012: Indicators at level of the Priority Axis 7 ROP

Indicator type	Indicator name	Measure unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value in year 2013	Target value in year 2015	Definition
Output	Number of implemented investment ECOC - Košice 2013 projects	Number	2011	0	21	20	Number of investment projects implemented in connection with the project ECOC - Košice 2013
Output	Number of supported facilities of cultural infrastructure	Number	2011	0	17	17	Number of cultural infrastructure facilities supported through reconstruction, expansion, modernization and acquisition of equipment within frame of individual projects of ECOC - Košice 2013
Output	Number of revitalized immovable cultural monuments	Number	2011	0	6	6	Number of objects registered in the register of immovable cultural monuments of the Ministry of Culture SR, supported through interventions into buildings and equipment, in order to preserve the cultural heritage, or with utilization in the cultural-cognitive tourism
Output	Number of projects of regeneration of settlements	Number	2011	0	4	4	Number of projects of regeneration of settlements focused on improving of state of elements of physical infrastructure in connection with the project ECOC – Košice 2013
Result	Number of new and improved services provided in supported facilities of cultural infrastructure	Number	2011	0	45	45	Number of new and improved services provided to users of cultural infrastructure, resulting from implemented projects.
Result	Number of new and improved services provided in supported immovable facilities of cultural infrastructure	Number	2011	0	6	6	Number of new and improved services in relation to the conservation of cultural heritage and cultural-cognitive tourism, resulting from projects implemented
Core No. 11	Number of informative society projects	Number	2011	0	12	12	Number of investment projects focused on the acquisition and use of ICT equipment within frame of projects implemented in relation to the ECOC - Košice 2013
Impact	Increasing of visit rate in supported facilities in consequence of realization of project ECOC – Košice 2013		2011	0	N/A	15	Percentage expression of increase of absolute number of visitors in supported facilities in consequence of realization of the projects ECOC – Košice 2013
Core No. 1	Created new jobs	number	2011	0	45	45	The total number of permanent jobs that would not be created without implementation of projects under the ROP Priority Axis 7 Note: The indicator represents a summation of created jobs for men and women
Core No. 2	Created new jobs for men	number	2011	0	20	20	The total number of permanent jobs for men that would not be created without implementation of projects under the ROP Priority Axis 7 Note: All created jobs for men are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator
Core No. 3	Created new jobs for women	number	2011	0	25	25	The total number of permanent jobs for women that would not be created without implementation of projects under the ROP Priority Axis 7 Note: All created jobs for women are concurrently reported within the "Created jobs" indicator

CORE č. 39	Number of projects ensuring sustainability and improving the attractiveness of towns and cities	number	2006	0	4	4	Number of projects to improve and restore elements of the physical infrastructure of settlements under Priority 7 ROP
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Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2012

Structure of financing of individual investment projects consists of a contribution from the EU, from the state budget and from own resources of the beneficiary. The amount of grant is individually determined on level of each project, in accordance with Article 55 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, as amended by later changes and completions.

Character of eligible interventions given by the ROP strategy for Priority Axis 7 is defined in connection to implementation of investment projects in relation to the ECOC project contained in Annex 9 of the ROP. These projects are related to the renovation, reconstruction, extension and modernisation of buildings that have potential of utilization for cultural and social purpose, development of culture, arts and cultural-cognitive tourism and related civil infrastructure at local and regional level, and related acquisition of equipment (including ICT equipment), while the majority of buildings is not used or used inappropriately. Projects implemented in connection with the ECOC - Košice 2013 project are focused also on modification and revitalization of the public space, public greeneries, reconstruction of existing and building-up of new tangible and transport infrastructure, including transport subsystems (local roads, pavements, cycle routes, transport subsystems, etc.). Supported objects are primarily owned by the public sector, support of significant immovable cultural monuments, however, may apply also to objects that are not owned by the public sector, but the recipient must have long-term right of use to the object in question. All projects have to prove functional connection with the ECOC - Košice 2013 project and concurrently the sustainability of the supported infrastructure.

Projects are oriented mainly at completion of missing features of the cultural infrastructure, with emphasis on its modernizing, and they substantially develop, innovate and change the cultural infrastructure of a town and region. They are based mainly on the transformation of existing buildings and sites to the modern, multi-functional cultural spaces of the 21st century, with regard to the integration of disadvantaged groups, including marginalized Roma communities.

Managing Authority for the ROP ensures mechanisms to avoid duplication of support of the operations supported through the ROP Priority Axis 7 and operations supported by the other Priority Axes of the ROP, other operational programmes, transnational and international programs, respectively from other public sources.

5.7.2 Location of the project implementation under the Priority Axis 7 of the ROP

Urban area of the city of Košice and its surrounding.

5.7.3 Eligible beneficiaries under the Priority Axis 7 of the ROP

1. the city of Košice,
2. Košice self-governing region,
3. Ministry of Culture SR,
4. a non-profit organization providing general welfare services, established in accordance with the Act No. 213/1997 Coll., on non-profit organizations, as amended by later regulations, which co-founder is the city of Košice, respectively its districts,
5. a foundation providing general welfare services, established in accordance with the Act No. 34/2002 Coll., on foundations and on change of the Civil Code, as amended by later regulations, which co-founder is the city of Košice, respectively its districts.

5.7.4 Substantiation of the Priority Axis 7 of the ROP

Ministry of Culture SR in accordance with the Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of

Culture event for the years 2007 to 2019 held two rounds of competition among the Slovak towns for this prestigious European title. Based on recommendations of the International Selection Committee the SR Government approved by its Resolution No. 309/2009 the nomination of the town of Košice as European Capital of Culture in the year 2013. The EU Council Decision No. 8770/09 in Brussels on April 21st, 2009 designated Košice as the European Capital of Culture for the year 2013, and this decision is for the SR Government bounding.

Priority Axis 7 ROP creates conditions for implementation of the investment projects related to the project ECOC - Košice 2013 defined as a priority at the national level, and as a strategically important project with the multiplicative effects for tourism development. Purpose of the investment projects is to prepare infrastructure that will facilitate successful implementation of the project ECOC - Košice 2013, will create a positive synergy for improvement of the quality of life, environmental sustainability, job creation, and will contribute to the development of urban and cultural-cognitive tourism.

Creation of conditions for implementation of investment projects related to the project ECOC - Košice 2013 and their funding, respectively partial funding from the ERDF was already considered at an early stage of the ROP strategy formulation. Nature of investment projects related to the project ECOC - Košice 2013 requires modification of the operational programme in that kind, that specifications set by the original strategy ROP will be eliminated (e.g., initially, activities of settlements regeneration were not directed to the regional capitals, ROP strategy for repository and fund institutions and immovable cultural monuments is not focused on building of new facilities, etc.). However, from construction-technical and environmental point of view there are not new types of eligible operations (projects and activities), as it is concerned reconstruction of buildings and arrangement of public spaces, which are eligible in the ROP since the beginning of the programming period 2007-2013. In the process of building permission is a part of each proposed project also potential assessment of environmental impacts. From the thematic point of view there does not expand the list of priority themes realized in the ROP, these projects would be implemented within the frame of existing list of priority themes of ROP.

Whereas the Priority Axis 7 will be implementing through the form of national projects, it will implement the Ministry of Culture SR as the Intermediate Body under the MA for ROP.

Table 47b/2012: Overview of implementation of the PO7 (EU funds + SR public funds)

Initial total allocation in EUR	Number of received applications for grant	Number of applications for grant recommended for approval	Amount of applications for grant recommended for approval in EUR (without consideration of savings)	New PO allocation after ROP revision in EUR (after reallocations and savings consideration)
67 447 620,00	22*	20	67,447,626.20	65 254 679,00

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2013

*Note: 2beneficiaries withdrew two applications.

6 HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES

Based on the expected effects of contributions on development of the territory, as well as individual sectors of economic activities, the strategy of the NSRF defines the horizontal priorities, what in complementary manner influences the NSRF objectives, in the following four areas:

- Marginalised Roma Community,
- Equality of Opportunities,
- Sustainable Development,
- Information Society.

6.1 CHARACTER AND SCOPE OF HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES

Every of the all four horizontal priorities differ in its character, requiring the specific approach in the process of implementation. Purpose of every of horizontal priorities is to ensure achievement of its defined goal concerning to several priorities of the NSRF, and thus it cannot be ensured through only one operational programme, but requires coordinated approach crossing several specific priorities, or projects.

Horizontal priorities are by their nature applied in relevant operational programs under the following table:

Table 48/2011: Application of the horizontal priorities within the ROP

Horizontal priority	Goal of horizontal priority	Application of horizontal priority
Marginalised Roma Communities (MRC)	Increasing employment and educational level of members of MRC and improve their living conditions	a) Individual demand-oriented projects of settlements regeneration, aimed at support of selected Roma settlements b) Complex approach (integration of projects from several operation programmes)
Equality of Opportunities	Ensuring equality of opportunities for the all and prevention from the all forms of discrimination	Predominantly support to eradication of barriers in the civil infrastructure facilities and creation new jobs for men and women
Sustainable Development	Ensuring environmental, economic and social sustainability and social sustainability of the economic growth	Reduction of energy consumption in buildings of civil infrastructure facilities through relieve the environmental shortages, improving state of the elements of material infrastructure of settlements, including reconstruction and modernization of road sections, creating new jobs
Information Society	Developing of inclusive information society	interventions into civil infrastructure facilities, through which it is possible to procure equipment, including ICT equipment, and implement also the structural and technical works for the ICT infrastructure

Sources: MCRD SR, 2011

The Annex No. 13 of NSRF gives indicative indicators for the horizontal priorities of the NSRF level. In collaboration with the MA and with coordinators of the horizontal priorities, the mentioned list was updated and approved by the NMC Resolution for the NSRF No. NMC NSRR/2009/2. A set of measurable indicators for the horizontal priorities at the levels of operational programme/Priority Axes, respectively measures, through which are the horizontal priorities monitored, is a component part of the Coordination system of horizontal priorities implementation. Updated indicators for ROP, for the horizontal priorities at the program level (including their quantification), are presented and discussed at sessions of the Monitoring Committee for the ROP²³.

Table 49/2011: Indicative indicators of the ROP for the horizontal priorities at the level of programme

Horizontal priority	Indicator name	Indicator type	Unit	Initial year	Initial value	Target value in year 2015
Marginalised Roma Communities (MRC)	Value of the project identified by the OPSRGRC as specific targeted on the MRC	Result	EUR	2006	0	85,000,000
	Number of the projects specific targeted on the MRC	Result	Number	2006	0	130
	Number of created jobs specific targeted on the MRC	Impact	Number	2006	0	50
Equality of Opportunities	Amount of the projects with contribution to the equality of opportunities	Output	EUR	2006	0	120,000,000
	Number of the projects with contribution to the equality of opportunities	Output	Number	2006	0	170
	Number of projects aimed at eradication of barriers/number of objects with eliminated barriers	Result	Number	2006	0	170
	Amount of projects aimed at eradication of barriers	Result	EUR	2006	0	120,000,000
	Number of created jobs taken by men	Output / Core	Number	2006	0	520
	Number of created jobs taken by women	Output / Core	Number	2006	0	780
Sustainable Development	Average reduction of energy demands of buildings supported through the ROP	Impact	%	2006	0	25
	Number of projects with contribution to the horizontal priority Sustainable development	Result	Number	2006	0	1 884
	Amount of financial resources of the projects with contribution to the priority Sustainable development	Result	EUR	2006	0	1 195 000 000
	Number of technically valorised facilities of the education infrastructure	Output	Number	2006		815
	Number of technically valorised facilities of the social infrastructure	Output	Number	2006	0	173
Information Society	Amount of the projects with contribution to the horizontal priority information society	Result	EUR	2006	0	500 000 000
	Number of the project with contribution to the horizontal priority information society	Result	Number	2006	0	689

Source: Central Coordination Authority, Managing Authority for the ROP, Coordinators of HPs 2013

Note: Indicators for horizontal priorities within frame of the ROP are listed the Annex No. 13 NSRF. It is possible to reappraise the indicators in the implementation process of the NSRF Operational Programmes.

6.1.1 Marginalized Roma communities

Within the issue of marginalized groups of the population is separately solved the specific problems of the marginalised Roma communities (hereinafter “the MRC”). There is an aim to reinforce cooperation and to achieve more effectively coordination of activities and financial resources, which are destined towards live conditions improving of the MRC members. Support of the RMC aims at the four priority fields: education, employment, health, housing, and to the three mutually related problematic circles: poverty, discrimination and gender equality.

²³ MA for ROP in accordance with the updated indicators for each ROP horizontal priorities assures providing of relevant data on the part of recipients, with regard to the retroactive aspects of the influence of aforementioned update.

Based on the conclusions of the Working Group of the CSF (Community Support Framework) for development of Roma communities, the role thereof is monitoring of the SF interventions effects in solution of the MRC problems. In addition, the Working Group has to suggest proposals for increasing their effectiveness, it is necessary to increase effectiveness of the SF interventions in solving the issues of the MRC through the complex approach. The complex approach connects several activities or projects into the overall strategy of a specific locality development so, that their implementations link in each other, contributing to long-term development of the MRC at the given locality. With the complex approach, there is emphasis on mutual interconnection of activities, and to active participation of the local community in the project implementing. Using complexity in solving the MRC problems is a necessity, because it ensures systematic solution of the problems of such communities, enabling long-term strategic planning and management of development of that community and positive changes.

Considering the scope and demandingness of the complex approach application, there is available assistance for the pre-selected areas/micro-regions²⁴. There is interest in the complex approach at preparing a local strategy for development of Roma communities, as well as at preparing project activities within the strategy so, that there will be assured content's and time complementarity and overall synergic effect. The complex approach is applied mainly in the areas with significant concentration of the MRC.

The horizontal priority Marginalised Roma Community is projected into the individual strategic or specific priorities and to their objectives through implementation of a broad series of measures aimed at integration of the MRC, in particular, through improvement of the infrastructure of Roma settlements, employment, education, healthcare and social services.

The targets of the complex approach are the settlements listed in the Socio-graphic Mapping 2004 and who declare their interest in solving of the issue through the complex approach, and concurrently demonstrate their eligibility in terms of the conditions specified in individual calls for submitting applications for providing grant from the EU Funds.

An indicative allocation for implementation of the complex projects at NSRF level was determined based on needs of the pre-selected areas or micro-regions, and assumption of the complex projects implementation. The indicative allocations at the level of the operational programmes relevant for implementation of the complex projects (see the NSRF) ensure allocation in amount of € 200 million for financing thereof. This indicative allocation may be adjusted in the course of the programming period in links to ongoing evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of the selected complex approach, while its re-consideration as well as results of ongoing evaluation is subjects of the National Monitoring Committee sessions.

Implementation of the projects within the complex approach does not preclude implementation of individual demand-oriented projects that supplement to the complex approach.

Contribution of the ROP to the horizontal priority MRC

Within frame of the ROP, support of MRC is implementing through such projects that can be implementing individually as demand-oriented projects, or as a part of complex projects coordinated from the position of the coordinator of complex approach to the solution of the issue of MRC at the national level.

The projects, that are a part of complex approach, are already on submission of an application marked in the prescribed manner. It is possible as a part of complex projects to implement through the ROP the partial projects, aimed at for instance at the educational and social infrastructure, as well as at regeneration of settlements (i.e., municipalities, or Roma settlements). Completion of the missing tangible infrastructure of settlements and overall amenity of the municipalities, including respective separated or segregated Roma settlements has a potential to be the key part of complex projects.

In addition, it is possible within the ROP to implement also individual projects aimed at improvement of the living conditions of Roma communities' members. Projects are not a part of complex projects coordinated at the national level, but they represent separate demand-oriented projects with the significant benefit for MRC. In terms of types of the eligible activities that contribute to the elimination

²⁴ Implementation of the projects issues from the already prepared micro-regions and settlements with the processed project documentation within the grant scheme PHARE; 14 micro-regions (134 municipalities) were pre-selected and pre-prepared within the project TA 11400130021 titled "Developing Administrative Capacities of Plenipotentiary of the SR Government"

of damages caused by devastating floods in Slovakia in the year 2010, for self- government in areas affected by floods are relevant activities promoting settlements regeneration.

Thus, support of MRC from the ROP is implementing in the form of both approaches, and it substantially aims exclusively at the activities eligible under the Priority Axes of the ROP.

In case of the settlements with the high concentration of the Roma population, interventions of the ROP can aims also outside the innovative and cohesion growth poles.

6.1.2 Equality of opportunities

Support of the fundamental rights, non-discrimination and equality of opportunities is one of the basic principles applied in the EU. Equality of opportunities is one of the pillars of the European Employment Strategy and European Framework Strategy of non-discrimination and equal opportunities for the all, in terms thereof the horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities supports abatement of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, faith, health handicap, age or sexual orientation.

Special emphasis is laying to the principle of gender equality (i.e., equality of opportunities for women and men), fulfilment thereof belongs to the basic objective of the European Community and as such, it belongs among the main objectives of the Structural Funds. According to Article 2 of the Amsterdam Treaty, the role of the Community is to achieve equal position of women and men in society, and according to Article 3, there is set an obligation to remove inequalities and to enforce gender equality in the all activities using the method of gender mainstreaming. This is a process with that all the concept, strategic, decision making and evaluation procedures in all stages of preparation and implementation are subject of the gender equality point of view. In the context of the SF it means, that the contribution and to enforcing equality of opportunities for the all and support of balanced representation of women and men is taken into account in the programming, monitoring and evaluation.

Contribution to the horizontal priority Equal opportunities is in the ROP observed in majority of measures in accordance with the selection and evaluation criteria approved by the Monitoring Committee for ROP.

The horizontal priority is exercising also through availability and accessibility of the physical environment, transport and public services for the population with limited mobility and orientation.

Very often there is a combination of several disadvantaging factors, resulting into more bothersome assess and remaining in the labour market, access to vocational education and to other life opportunities. Therefore, besides respecting the principle of equality of opportunities at the all Funds' contributions, specific priorities of the NSRR are actively aimed at this principle as well (i.e., "Support of employment and social inclusion growth", and "Modern education for knowledge-based society"). The specific priority "Support of employment and social inclusion growth" aims at equality of opportunities in the labour market; besides others, it is oriented on establishing equality of opportunities in access to the labour market and integration of disadvantaged groups in the labour market, including support of the mechanisms for elimination of gender inequality in the labour market. The specific priority "Modern education for knowledge-based society" supports equality of opportunities through concrete activities establishing the conditions for equal access to the formal and informal education for the all over the whole life. Particular attention is giving to the issue of disadvantaged groups of population.

Contribution of the ROP to fulfilment of the horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities

- Implementation of investment projects with emphasis on removal of barriers and other arrangements makes easier access of the physically handicapped into the reconstructed, extended, modernised or newly built facilities of the civil infrastructure, or access to public spaces, walkways, etc.,
- Improving access to all forms of civic amenities and public transport and residential services,
- Home-life strengthening through support of the preschool facilities infrastructure and support of the social infrastructure facilities.

6.1.3 Sustainable development

Sustainable development means that the needs of the current generation should be satisfied without threatening of the future generations' ability to satisfy their needs. This is one of the basic goals of the EU, conducting all its policies and activities. It aims at ongoing enhancement of the quality of life and well-being of the current as well as future generations on the Earth. For this purposes it supports dynamic economy with full employment, high level of upbringing, education, health protection, social and territorial integrity, as well as high level of the environment protection. Change of behaviour and attitudes of citizens and politicians in favour of respecting the principles and goals of sustainable development is the key and long-term all-society role.

Sustainable development is comprised as one of the key NSRF principles in the strategic goal of the NSRF, defining complying of sustainable development as one of the key conditions for enhancing competitiveness and performance of the regions and the SR economy in years 2007-2013. Fulfilment of the long-term vision of the NSRF, i.e., the process of the SR economy convergence to the EU-15 average, must proceed under the conditions of sustainable development.

The goal of the horizontal priority Sustainable Development is to ensure, that the resulting effects of all interventions financed within the NSRF support in the synergic manner the sustainable development in all of its components, i.e., in the environmental, economic and social components, in accordance with the goals and indicators of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. With respect to the fact that the interventions into the given three components performs through several operational programmes, monitoring and evaluation of achievements the goal of this horizontal priority is done at the NSRF level, through evaluation of the strategic goal of the NSRF, comprising the principle of sustainable development.

Specific objectives of the horizontal priority defined in the System of coordination of the implementation of horizontal priority "Sustainable development" are as follows:

- Increasing economic prosperity,
- Improved environmental quality,
- Social solidarity and inclusion,
- Balanced regional development.

Contribution of the ROP to fulfilment of horizontal priority Sustainable Development

- Individual assessment of the all investment and non-investment projects supported within the ROP in terms of the environmental impacts,
- Increase of energy efficiency of the buildings utilized by the civil infrastructure facilities (i.e., schools, social sphere, culture and rescue services), but also apartment dwelling houses, what has as consequence decreasing of their economic demands,
- Principles of territorial and thematic concentrations applying, with focusing on interventions perspective and sustainability.

6.1.4 Information society

Currently in building a knowledge-based society in the world comes to a gradual transformation of its traditional perception in terms of the knowledge triangle (i.e., education, research and innovation) to the rectangle (added is the fourth party - computerization). Introduction of information and communication technology (hereinafter "ICT") and streamlining processes effectiveness through their use contributes significantly to a much greater efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation elements of the knowledge-based society.

The goal of the horizontal priority is support of higher effectiveness, transparency and quality of the NSRF priorities implementation in consequence of introduction and utilization ICT tools. Specific objectives of the horizontal priority defined in the System of coordination of the implementation of the horizontal priority "Information Society" are the following:

- Information literacy,
- Effective elektronisation of the public administration,
- Wide availability of the Internet.

Implementation of the horizontal priority will strengthen synergistic linkage of the relevant operational programmes and ensure, that activities supported by specific projects will take into account the information society in all of its aspects.

The NSRF supports the area of developing information society in the following two ways: within the frame of OP Informatization of Society (hereinafter “the OPIS”), and through the projects of informatization implemented within other operational programmes. In this context, implementation of the horizontal priority Information Society requires an integrated approach to the implementation of projects in the area of informatization in the operational programmes outside the OPIS, based on close cooperation of the managing authorities and intermediate bodies of these programmes with the Managing Authority and the Intermediate Body for the OPIS.

The OPIS strategy aims at establishing of the technological, application and procedural environment for introducing effective electronic services, provided by the public administration, and increasing their availability through the broadband connections. The OPIS concentrates on the e-Government project, including e-Health, e-Culture and the broadband connections, what establish a good environment for development of infrastructure and e-services in the theme-specific areas falling under competences of other managing and intermediate authorities.

At the horizontal level, development of information society is supported through the projects of informatization, implemented within other operational programmes except the OPIS. In this sense, the horizontal priority Information Society focuses on the optimizing specific processes of services provided by the central authorities of the state administration, and on integration of the technology-application infrastructure. Within implementation of this horizontal priority are supported activities in the areas of purchasing and operation of the technological and application infrastructure, local and specialised networks, and development of electronic services in specific areas. Interventions within this horizontal priority needs support for introducing of such services of e-Government, as for example e-Content, e-Learning, e-Transport, e-Inclusion, e-Business, e-Tourism, e-Skills, etc., which are parts of the sector strategies of the individual operation programmes²⁵. Projects in these themes are financed from the own resources, allocated in the theme-relevant operational programmes.

Thus the projects of informatization of the society implemented in these operational programmes link to the activities of OPIS, what establish the integrated methodological, procedural, technological and application environment for coordinated development of these projects.

Contribution of the ROP to fulfilment of the horizontal priority Society Informatization

Interventions into the all facilities of the civil infrastructure, through which is possible to procure ICT equipment, but also implement structural-technical arrangements for the ICT infrastructure.

6.2 COORDINATION OF HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES

Through the SR Government Resolution No. 1005/2006 of December 6th, 2006, coordinators of the horizontal priorities are determined as follows: the SR Government Office for the MRC, Sustainable development, and Information society, and the MLSAF SR for the horizontal priority Equality of opportunities.

Already at the level of NSRF is describing coordination of the horizontal priorities implementation. Detailed description of the system of implementation for every horizontal priority is described in the System of coordination of the horizontal priority implementation, elaborated individually for every of the horizontal priorities and approved by the Central Coordination Authority and the managing authorities for operational programmes.

Monitoring of each horizontal priority on the NSRF level is ensured through a set of indicators, which is located in the Annex No. 13 NSRF (updated and approved by the Resolution NMC for the NSRF No.

²⁵ Complementarity of the interventions implemented within the OPIS with the interventions within other operational programmes is described in the OP IS

NMC NSRF/2009/2). The set of measurable indicators for the horizontal priorities at the level of operational programme/Priority Axes, respectively measures is part of the System of coordination of implementation of horizontal priority, and of managing documentation of individual operational programmes. Implementation of horizontal priorities is monitored separately in the annual reports and in the final report of the operational programmes, in accordance with the nature of the horizontal priorities, as well as in annual reports and in the final report of the NSRF, whose base consists of annual reports and final report of relevant horizontal priority, indicating the regional projection of implemented activities.

In the course of the programming period are conducted **ongoing evaluations aimed at success and effectiveness of the selected way of implementation of each horizontal priority**, and at evaluation of outputs and results of the projects implemented within the horizontal priorities and evaluation of fulfilment objectives of horizontal priorities. After termination of the programming period is carried evaluation of impacts of the projects implemented within the horizontal priorities. All the conducted evaluations are subject of discussions during the sessions of the National Monitoring Committee and relevant Working Groups, involved into implementation of the given horizontal priority. The evaluations are published through the communication channels of the Central Coordination Authority, including coordinators of horizontal priorities, and through it, they are available to the general public.

Marginalized Roma Communities

The NSRF envisages through the horizontal priority MRC to establish a space for effective impact of the assistance from the SF on the problems of MRC solving. Coordinator of the horizontal priority MRC is the Office of Plenipotentiary of the SR Government for Roma Communities (hereinafter "the OPSRGRC"), who for conducting activities related to the administrative and methodological provision of the horizontal priority MRC establishes the MRC Horizontal Priority Coordination Department²⁶.

Ambition is to use the SF for extension, supplementation and better combination of the already existing programmes at the national level. Issuing from the SR governmental strategy for integration of economically and socially excluded Roma communities, implemented already for several years, and through in practice verified instruments of inclusion, it is possible to use for the period 2007-2013 to achieve synergic and sustainable effect. Starting point is the governmental policy, founded on the equalizing measures. As well as the resort concepts of education (e.g., pre-school preparation, teacher's assistants, support of Roma language, integrated education), regional development and housing (e.g., building-up rental flats and infrastructure), support of health (e.g., health assistants), community development and employment (e.g., community social workers, community centres, social enterprises) and others. A positive fact is also the developed institutional network, either through the public institutions (e.g., regional offices of the OPSRGRC, departments at the regional self-governing regions, regional offices of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, etc.), or through the non-governmental sector and civil sector. This network represents the qualified human potential. In the year 2006, for complexity of solution and better coordination especially at the level of regions, the OPSRGRC commissioned elaboration of Regional Concepts for Development of Roma Communities in areas with High Concentration of Marginalised Roma Groups (i.e., the Košice, Prešov and Banská Bystrica Regions). In this task, a broad partnership participated and the level of self-governing regions consulted and accepted the documents.

The following instruments are proposed to ensure impact and coordination:

- Complex approach in solving the MRC problems, that is applied in the ROP, the OP Employment and Social Inclusion, the OP Education, the OP Environment, the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth and the OP Health care,
- Individual projects (i.e., demand-oriented projects), that can be applied in all operational programmes.

The tasks of the OPSRGRC and cooperation with the managing authorities, scope and precise conditions of implementation of the described instruments for the provision of the horizontal priority MRC within the concrete operational programmes are objects of the binding agreements on

²⁶ In accordance with the document titled "Analysis of Administrative Capacities for the Programming Period 2007 -2013", adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 396 of May 2nd, 2007

cooperation concluded between the OPSRGRC and each of managing authority or intermediate body under the managing authority.

The complex approach is solving as follows:

- Submitting of the local strategies of complex approach (hereinafter "CA") from the part of a municipality or micro-region (i.e., in links to the content of the regional concepts of socio-economic inclusion of the MRC, which arising was initiated by the OPSRGRC in the year 2006 in cases of the Prešov, Košice and Banská Bystrica Regions, and requires involvement of a broad partnership in the given locality),
- Assessment and approval of the local strategies of CA,
- Preparation of projects within the approved local strategies of CA,
- Approval and implementation of projects within the operational programmes,
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of fulfilment goals of local strategy through individual projects,
- Evaluation of benefits from complex projects to fulfilment the goal of the horizontal priority.

The competences of the OPSRGRC in relation to implementation of complex approach arise from commission of the SR Government Office. The OPSRGRC:

- Enters into agreements with individual managing authorities and intermediate bodies under managing authorities on mutual cooperation and coordination in fulfilling the horizontal priority MRC, that are signed by the Chief of the SR Government Office as the statutory representative of the SR Government Office,
- Collaborates with the managing authorities in preparing calls for submitting projects within CA,
- Publishes calls for submitting local strategies of CA,
- Establishes the selection commission of CA and coordinates its activity for purpose to approve local strategies of CA,
- Cooperates with municipalities/micro-regions, which based on successful local strategy of CA obtain or utilize counselling,
- Cooperates with the managing authorities and intermediate bodies under managing authorities in selecting, evaluation and monitoring projects submitted within the CA, which clear identification will be ensured through marking directly in the grant application,
- Coordinates activities of the CA Monitoring Group, the task thereof is to monitor implementation of a complex project directly in site, and to solve possible identified problems in implementation, and this in direct communication and collaboration with the managing authorities of respective operational programmes,
- Cooperates in monitoring and evaluation of impact of the SF to the MRC in the period 2007-2013 together with the Working Group for the MRC,
- Ensuring special monitoring and evaluation, aimed at overall performance of approved local CA strategies.

Competences of the managing authorities and intermediate bodies under managing authorities in relation to implementation of complex approach are as follows:

- Are members of the Inter-departmental Commission for appraisal and selection of the CA projects,
- Earmarks indicative allocation of resources determined for the complex projects implementation within the OP,
- Announces calls for submitting projects within CA, while the system of ongoing call is applied, i.e., it is possible to submit projects at any time over the OP implementation, through that are ensured conditions for smooth implementation of all components of a complex project, in accordance with time schedule for implementation of the approved local strategy of CA,
- Appraises and select individual projects submitted within CA,

- Ensures monitoring and control of successful projects submitted within CA,
- Cooperates with the OPSRGRC in content and technical assuring calls for submitting projects within CA,
- Provides in regular intervals to the OPSRGRC required information and data necessary for execution of monitoring and evaluations of impacts on the SF to the MRC.

Implementation of individual projects having impacts on the MRC is running as follows:

- Applicant clearly defines in the specific section of a grant application, that the project is aimed at the MRC,
- Anticipated impact of the projects on the horizontal priority MRC, which are highlighted by applicants in such way, are appraised by the MA or IBMA in the process of assessment of the projects aimed at the MRC,
- The project with significant impact on the MRC, are scored advantageously (i.e., except operational programmes, where the HP MRC is solved through an individual measure or through a group of activities).

The OPSRGRC ensures information and publicity, as a significant component of establishing atmosphere of cooperation and successful solution the MRC position through the following activities:

- Informs the Central Coordination Authority and SR Government Office in regular intervals about fulfilment of the horizontal priority MRC, in cooperation with the managing authorities and with intermediate bodies under the managing authorities,
- Ensures the Communication Plan implementation of the horizontal priority MRC, aiming to increase information of the MRC, as well as the public, about the opportunities of providing support and on results of the horizontal priority MRC implementation.

The Working Group CSF for development of Roma communities (under denomination “Working Group for Roma communities’ development”) operates in close cooperation with the MRC Department for Horizontal Priority Coordination at the OPSRGRC, **in the interest of engaging beneficiaries and other actors.** They ensure a broad platform for communication of the horizontal priority MRC implementation in the NSRF, and in interest of further monitoring and evaluation effects of the implemented projects on the MRC. The Working group activity in the programming period 2004-2006 demonstrated as good example of the SF implementation.

Equality of opportunities

Coordination role in implementing the NSRF horizontal priority “Equality of Opportunities” meet the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR. The all operational programmes within the NSRF follow the horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities.

Assessment of effect of any project on the fulfilment horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities is obligatory for all applicants of grants from the SF and the CF, and is monitored in the grant applications, where applicant assess whether his project has an effect on equality of opportunities. While a project has the effect on equality of opportunities, this effect is appraising as positive or negative, and relation to equality of opportunities is included among the appraisal criteria. Where a project has no effect on equality of opportunities, the relation to equality of opportunities is not included among appraisal criteria.

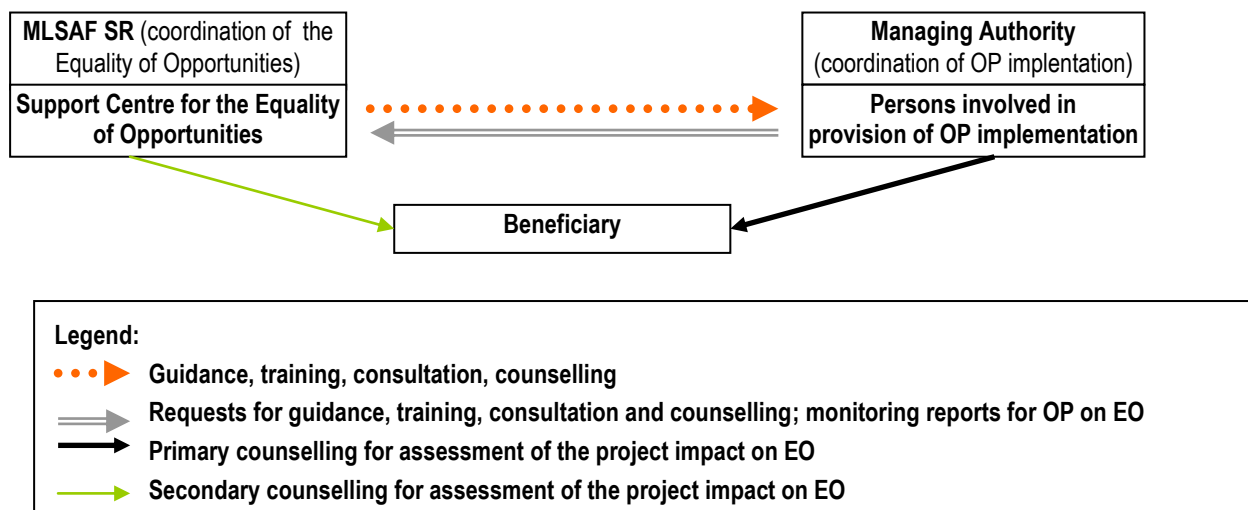
Evaluative criteria for assessment of effect of the projects on equality of opportunities elaborates the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR (hereinafter “the MLSAF SR”), providing guidance in this area for all managing authorities, and ensures training of their personnel. Component part of the project indicators of every such project are also indicators monitoring effect on equality of opportunities.

The MPSVR SR establishes a Support Centre providing help to beneficiaries in assessment of the project impact on equality of opportunities. Individual managing authorities for OP establish focal points (i.e., contact persons). Their role is to cooperate with the Support Centre of the MPSVR SR, to provide counselling to the beneficiaries in assessing of the given project relation to the horizontal

priority Equality of Opportunities, as well as in appraisal of the project in the process of the projects selection, and in their implementation and monitoring.

Such activities coordinate the MPSVR SR. The MPSVR SR ensures adequate awareness with the goal to increase positive effect of supported activities on equality of opportunities from the resources of the OP Technical Assistance and the OP Employment and Social Inclusion, in cooperation with the Central Coordination Authority.

Scheme of coordination of the horizontal priority “Equality of Opportunities” (EO) implementation



Source: MLSAF SR, 2007

Sustainable development

The Vice-Premier for knowledge-based economy, European affairs, human rights and minorities at the political level met the coordination role in implementing the horizontal priority Sustainable Development (hereinafter “HP SD”) by July 7th, 2010. Institutional coordinator of the horizontal priority SD is the SR Government Office (hereinafter “the SR GO”). The SR GO ensures, that the HP SD is effectively managed and implemented in relation to the all operational programmes, their Priority Axes, and monitors and evaluates fulfilment of the horizontal priority SD at the NSRF level.

For this purposes the SR Government Office has established the Working Group for the HP SD, where every relevant managing authorities have their representation, together with the Central Coordination Authority, Central State Authority for Energy and Certification Authority in observer position. In case of need at the meeting of the Working Group are invited representatives of socio-economic partners (e.g., representatives of regional and local self-governments, academic community, research institutions, entrepreneurial and trade unions, interest association and civil society).

The key instruments for fulfilling the objectives of the horizontal priority sustainable development are the integration tools, which results from the conceptual, legal and institutional framework of the sustainable development:

- Strategic and programme document, concepts in the field of sustainable development on the EU and SR levels, inclusive of energy efficiency,
- Principles, priorities, goals and indicators of the sustainable development.

One of the fields significantly contributing to the sustainable development is the area of energy and energy efficiency, supported not only within the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth, but also within the activities of the ROP and by the OP Environment (e.g., in the area of renewable energy resources utilization), OP Healthcare, OP Research and Development and OP Bratislava Region. Coordination of interventions in the area of energy is ensured horizontally by the Ministry of Economy of the SR by June 30th, 2010, which is responsible, in terms of Competence Act²⁷, as

²⁷ Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on the organisation activities of government and central state administration

amended by later changes and completions, for the energy policy, ensuring and meeting tasks implied for the SR from regulations, directives and strategic documents of the EU. The Ministry of Economy and Construction of the SR concurrently has to notify the EC on meeting these commitments.

Ministry of Economy of the SR provides to the SR Government Office details for the assessed area of energy efficiency, so that the SR Government Office could ensure a comprehensive assessment of the HP SD within framework of the Working Group for HP SD. The SR Government Office within the Working Group for SD will ensure monitoring of energy efficiency indicators for each OP co-financed by ERDF/CF in frame of the NSRF.

Implementation of the horizontal priority sustainable development is performed in the following phases of the programming cycle:

a) Implementation

- In the phase of operational programmes implementation is fulfilling of the HP SD performed by means of defining text in the manual for beneficiaries, of which implies that an applicant for non-repayable contribution in his project has to define clearly whether his project contributes to the HP SD and in what way.
- In the implementation phase is the fulfillment of HP SD assured by adjusting of the evaluation criteria as part of the evaluation criteria of the operational programme in accordance with the objectives of HP SD.

b) Monitoring

- In the monitoring phase the fulfillment of HP SD is performed through the monitoring of indicators fulfillment of the HP SD on level of the Operational Programme, Priority Axes, respectively measures. Coordinator in collaboration with representatives of individual MA defines a set of indicators, as a component part of System of coordination of the HP SD implementation. Based on aggregated data at the operational programme level, contained in the information on contribution of the Operational Programme fulfilling to the HP SD, the coordinator HP monitors those data and summarizes them in relation to the NSRF, consequently compiles them into annual reports and to the final report on HP SD.

c) Assessment

- Assessment of the HP SD is oriented on appraisal of the level of objectives achievement of the horizontal priority SD, qualitatively and quantitatively assessment of the implemented projects contribution to the HP SD, efficiency and effectiveness of implementation of the HP SD, evaluation of outcomes and results of the projects implemented in the frame of the HP SD, etc. After the program period termination there will be realized subsequent assessment of impact from projects implemented under the HP SD in relation to the objectives of the HP SD.
- Evaluation results are inputs for proposals how to improve the operational programme implementation, and thus also the overall NSRF from view of the implementation of HP SD, and together with the results of monitoring they are inputs for achieving desired progress towards reaching the main economic, social and environmental objectives of the HP SD.
- The coordinator prepares annual reports and final report on the HP SD giving regional projection of carried out activities, that are component part of annual reports and of the final report of the NSRF.

All outputs from the coordinator, in agreement with individual MA, serve as inputs for sessions of the respective Monitoring Committees. The coordinator of the HP SD attends sessions of Monitoring committees of each operational programmes as a regular member.

Information society

The Vice-Premier for knowledge-based economy, European affairs, human rights and minorities was responsible for the horizontal priority Information Society (thereinafter "HP IS") at the political level by July 7th, 2010. Institutional coordinator of this horizontal priority is the SR Government Office. The MF SR is responsible at the concept and substantial levels for the horizontal management and

implementation of the all projects of Informatization of Society, as the central authority of state administration in the area of informatization. The SR Government Office coordinates fulfilling tasks in area of society informatization, in terms of the Act No. 275/2006 Coll., on organization of activities of government and central state administration, as amended by later regulations.

The SR Government Office ensures that the horizontal priority information society is effectively managed and implemented in relation to the all operational programmes, their Priority Axes, monitors and evaluates fulfilment objectives of the horizontal priority information society also at the NSRF level.

For this purpose, the SR Government Office has established the Working Group for the HP IS, where are represented all relevant managing authorities, the Central Coordination Authority and the Coordinating Authority in observer position. In case of need are invited on the Work Group sessions also representatives of socio-economic partners (i.e., representatives of regional and local self-governments, academic community, research institutions, entrepreneurial and trade unions, interest associations and civil society).

The key instruments, through that are managed interventions so to fulfil the horizontal priority Information Society, are the integration instruments implied from the conceptual, legal and regulation framework of information society:

- Strategic documents, action plans in the area of information society on the EU and SR levels,
- Legal framework of the information society defined in legislation of the EU and SR,
- National concept of informatization of the public administration, and from it arising concepts for the development of the public administration information systems of compulsory subjects, which are institutions of public administration,
- National Projects implemented within the OPIS,
- Data standards, technological standards and safety standards,
- Methodological instructions, guidance, guidelines for applicants, eventually calls for proposals.

Implementation of the horizontal priority Information Society is performing in these phases of the program cycle:

a) Implementation

- In the phase of the operational programmes implementation is fulfilment of the HP IS performed by means of defining text in the guidelines for beneficiaries, of which implies that an applicant for non-repayable contribution in his project has to define clearly whether his project contributes to the HP IS and in what way,
- In the implementation phase is the fulfillment of HP IS assured by adjusting of the evaluation criteria as part of the evaluation criteria of the operational programme in accordance with the objectives of HP IS.

b) Monitoring

- In the monitoring phase the fulfillment of HP IS is performed through the monitoring indicators of the HP IS on level of the Operational Programme, Priority Axes, respectively measures. Coordinator in collaboration with representatives of individual MA defines a set of indicators, as a component part of System of coordination of the HP IS implementation. Based on aggregated data at the operational programme level, contained in the information on contribution of the Operational Programme fulfilling to the HP IS, the coordinator HP monitors those data and summarizes them in relation to the NSRF, consequently compiles them into annual reports and to the final report on HP IS.

c) Assessment

- Assessment of the HP IS is oriented on appraisal of the level of objectives achievement of the horizontal priority IS, qualitatively and quantitatively assessment of the implemented projects contribution to the HP IS, efficiency and effectiveness of implementation of the HP IS, evaluation of outcomes and results of the projects implemented in the frame of the HP IS, etc. After the program period termination there will be realized subsequent assessment of impact from projects implemented under the HP IS in relation to the objectives of the HP IS.

- Evaluation results are inputs for proposals how to improve the operational program implementation, and thus also the overall NSRF from view of the implementation of HP IS, and together with the results of monitoring they are inputs for achieving desired progress towards reaching the main economic, social and environmental objectives of the HP IS specified in the strategic documents.
- The coordinator prepares annual reports and final report on the HP IS giving regional projection of carried out activities that are component part of annual reports and of the final report of the NSRF.

All outputs from the coordinator, in agreement with individual MA, serve as inputs for sessions of the respective Monitoring Committees. The coordinator of the HP IS attends sessions of Monitoring committees of each operational programs as a regular member.

7 COMPLIANCE OF THE ROP STRATEGY WITH THE POLICIES, DOCUMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

7.1 COMPLIANCE WITH THE EU STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

7.1.1 Community Strategic Guidelines

Strategic Guidance on Community Cohesion defines the basic framework for the National Strategic Reference Frameworks of the individual Member States with an aim of enforcing harmonic, balanced and sustainable development of the Community (Article 25 of General Regulation). In accordance with the revised Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment, there are set three strategic priorities at the NSRF level, while the ROP indirectly contributes to the implementing of specific priority 1.1 <i>Regional Infrastructure</i> of the NSRF within the strategic priority 1 <i>Infrastructure and Regional Availability</i> of the NSRF. The ROP contributes indirectly to application, in particular, of the First Guideline, i.e., "improvement of attractiveness of Member States, regions and towns through improving availability, ensuring adequate quality and levels of services and maintaining their environmental potential" . In addition, the ROP strengthens assumptions for development of the Second Guideline, i.e., "support of innovations, business and growth of economy based on knowledge through the research and innovation capacities, including new information and communication technologies" . This all mainly within support of ICT equipment of the educational facilities and the repository and heritage fund institutions, and partially as well as in the area of tourism support. Support of the tourism infrastructure and support of developing new facilities of the social infrastructure comply as well with the Third Guideline, i.e., "establishing the largest possible number and higher quality jobs through acquiring a higher number of people for employment or entrepreneurial activity, improving adaptability of workers and enterprises and increasing investments into human capital" .			Strategic Community Guidelines		
			Make Europe and its regions a more attractive place for investments and work	Improvement of knowledge and innovation for growth	Bigger number and better jobs of higher quality
Strategic priority 1 NSRF Infrastructure and regional availability	Regional Operational Programme	1 Infrastructure of education		X	X
		2 Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship			X
		3 Strengthening of cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism	X	X	X
		4 Regeneration of settlements	X		
		5 Regional communications ensuring transport serviceability of the regions	X		
		6 Technical assistance of the ROP		X	X
		7 European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013	X	X	X

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2011

7.1.2 Lisbon and Göteborg Strategies

In February 2005, the SR Government adopted the Slovakia Competitiveness Strategy until 2010 regarded as the National Lisbon Strategy. The given document issues from the basic philosophy of EU Lisbon Strategy, what is development of economic competitiveness through the two basic types of activities: deep reforms (i.e., the so-called structural reforms) and adequate development policies. In accordance with the processes of coordination, the Member State strategies are drafted within the three-year cycles and are presented in the National Reform Programmes (hereinafter "the NRP"). The NRP under the conditions existing in the SR aims primarily at developing of the areas that support most the growth of creative potential of Slovak economy:

- Education,
- Employment,
- Information society,
- Science, research and innovation,
- Business environment.

The National Lisbon Strategy formulate clear visions of the target conditions by the year 2010 for each of above mentioned areas, as well as the main policies and measures through that it is possible to achieve these objectives. The given visions, objectives and main policies revolve into the NRP.

The interventions into tangible amenities in the fields of education, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship perceive in the NRP as one of crucial aspects of the modern education policy. The repository and heritage fund institutions play the irreplaceable role in intermediating knowledge and development of knowledge-based society, as well.

The measures for increasing availability of public services and flexibility of the educational system and of the children care system, the measures to promote the position of parents and the measures to build infrastructure in those areas pay important role in promotion of balancing and coping with demographic changes.

Within strengthening the inclusive labour market and inclusive society, the NRP identifies the need of introducing new types of social services, as well as introducing new types of terrain kind of social services. The given need reflects also in the ROP, where based on performed analyses the areas of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship are identified as the only area where building of new types of facilities will be supported.

The NRP describes a high-class physical infrastructure in the area of transport and through it as well accessibility of the individual SR regions, as one of the most significant factors of the business environment developing and assumptions for the entry of foreign investors. For the period 2008 - 2010, the SR Government approved further National Reform Program SR 2008 - 2010. The program priorities are unchanged, in the part of Action plans is the program structured similarly:

- Education,
- Employment,
- Science, research and innovations,
- Business environment (there is included also the Information Society).

For the next decade 2011 - 2020, the Lisbon Strategy transforms into the new Europe 2020 strategy. The European Council approved it in March, respectively, in the second phase in June 2010 endorsed the value of previously vague objectives (education, social inclusion).

The Strategy Europe 2020 focuses on three priorities:

1. **Intelligent growth:** Creating of innovations and knowledge-based economy.
2. **Sustainable growth:** Promoting of greener ecological and more competitive economy, which uses resources more efficiently.
3. **Inclusive growth:** Promoting the economy with high employment and ensuring social and territorial cohesion.

The Strategy Europe 2020 has five objectives:

1. Focusing on increasing the **employment rate** of women and men aged 20-64 years at 75%, inter alia by increased participation of young people, older workers and low-skilled workers, as well as by improving of the legal integration of migrants.
2. Improving conditions for **research and development**, in particular for purpose of the overall level of public and private investments into this sector rising to 3% of the GDP.
3. Greenhouse gasses **emissions** reduction by 20% in comparison with the year 1990 levels. Increasing **renewable energies** share in final energy consumption to 20%. Go forward to **increasing energy efficiency** by 20%. EU resolved to adopt the decision on increased restriction of emission by 30% in comparison with the year 1990 level by the year 2020. That represents the EU provisory offer in order to achieve a global and comprehensive agreement for the period after the year 2012, if other developed countries will commit themselves to realize comparable emission reductions, and if the developing countries will contribute adequately according to their responsibilities and possibilities.
4. Increasing the level of **education**, predominantly through efforts aimed at reduction of premature dropout rates of graduation to less than 10% and increasing the proportion of people aged 30-34 years who completed tertiary degree or some equivalent education at least to 40%
5. Promoting **social inclusion**, particularly through poverty reduction, efforts at extrication at least 20 million people from the threat of poverty or exclusion.

European objectives are simultaneously the national objectives with that each Member State defines it the values of these objectives. The Government of SR, which started in July 2010, will comprehensive assess the national objectives of the SR under the National Reform Program SR for the further period in April 2011, before the compulsory program presentation to the European Commission.

The component parts of the strategy are further seven major initiatives:

1. **"Innovation in the Union"** to improve the framework conditions and access to research and innovations financing for purpose to ensure that the innovative ideas will lead to the creation of products and services which ensure growth and jobs.
2. **"Youth in motion"** to improve results of the education systems and to facilitate young people enter to the labour market.
3. **"Digital program for Europe"** to accelerate introduction of high-speed Internet and utilizing benefits, which brings the unified digital market for households and businesses.
4. **"Resource-efficient Europe"** to promote decoupling of the economic growth from resources utilization, promotion for the transition to a low carbon economy, increasing renewable energy utilization, modernizing the transport sector and promoting energy efficiency.
5. **"Industrial policy in the era of globalization"** to improve the business environment, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises, and promotion to the development of solid and sustainable industrial base, that will be competitive in the global scale.
6. **"Program for new skills and new jobs"** to modernize labour markets and strengthening position of people by supporting of development their skills during their lifetime in order to increase participation in the labour market, and better harmonization of supply and demand on the labour market, including labour mobility.
7. **"European platform for fight against poverty"** to ensure social and territorial cohesion, so that everyone can benefit from growth and employment, and that people living in poverty and social exclusion have the opportunity to live in dignity and to participate actively in society life.

Among the all operational programmes, just the ROP indirectly the most contributes most to the Lisbon objectives fulfilling (from the year 2011 so-called Europe 2020 strategy).

7.1.3 EU legislation in the area of Cohesion Policy

Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council (EC) No. 1080/2006 of July 5th, 2006 on the ERDF, repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1783/1999, as amended by later changes and completions, defines in Article 4 the priorities of the ERDF for the Objective Convergence for the programming period 2007-2013. Through the ROP are fulfilled the priorities No. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11.

7.1.4 EU legislation in the area of the rules of competition

Support from the ERDF through the ROP is performing in accordance with the rules of economic competition, in terms of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2003 on implementation of the rules of economic competition, laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of the Treaty establishing the European Communities, as amended by later changes and completions.

Supervision over the area of protection and promotion of the economic competition in the SR is performing through the Antimonopoly Office of the SR as the central authority of the state administration.

The Managing Authority for the ROP guarantees providing of any state aid including *de minimis* scheme within the ROP, in accordance with the procedural and substantial rules of the state aid, applicable in time of providing aid from the public resources.

7.1.5 EU legislation in the area of rules of the public procurement

The main principles of the public procurement rules issue from the Treaty on the functioning of the EU and from the EU Directives for the area of public procurement. This concerns the principle of transparency, equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition and proportionality in observing the principles of economy in spending financial resources.

The issue of public procurement and commissioning of the public orders is assuring by the approximated legislation, through the Act No. 25/2006 Coll., on the public procurement, and on changes and supplementing to some acts, as amended by later regulations, that introduces the system of public procurement, considering the SR commitments as a member of the EU. This Act regulate the public procurement of orders for delivery of goods, commissions for performing construction works, orders for providing services, concessions for construction works, tender of bids and administration of public procurement.

Through the implementation of this Act is achieved increasing of transparency of the public procurement process, increasing of competition and through it, development of economic competition and business environment in general. In addition, it contributes to advancing effectiveness of control over the spending of public funds and restriction of options of corruption.

The central authority of state administration for the area of public procurement is the Public Procurement Office.

The activities what are not subject to the application of the Act on public procurement, e.g., market survey, are performing based on the Commercial Code through the public tenders.

7.1.6 EU legislation in the area of rules for protection and improvement of the environment

Within the preparation of the ROP, the strategic environmental assessment performs in terms of the Act No. 24/2006 Coll., on the environmental impact assessment, and on the modification and amendment of certain Acts and Council Directive No. 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, and which is applied in assessing of strategic documents in the SR.

The process of strategic environmental assessment describes the Chapter 2, and the conclusions of assessment are included into the ROP and its proposed interventions.

Preparing and selecting the projects in the process of the operational programme implementation sweeps respecting observation of the principles of protections and improvement of the environment, in terms of the Act No. 543/2002 Coll., on the protection of the nature and countryside, as amended by later regulations.

The ROP Implementation respects the EU legislation in the area of rules for protection and improvement of the environment, manifested through the following:

- Application of the principles of reducing energy demands of buildings in projects implementation within the all ROP Priority Axes, except for the Priority Axes 5 and 6 (regional communications and technical support)
- Preferential evaluation of the potential of cultural and natural heritage (e.g., NATURA 2000) in projects implementation within the relevant areas of the ROP assistance
- Individual assessment of individual project plans supported through the ROP, in accordance with the current SR legislation (e.g., within the process of building proceedings).

Interventions into the structural buildings (e.g., facilities of the civil infrastructure, apartment dwelling houses, etc.) will be assure within the ROP with respect to the environmental aspects consisting in reduction of energy demands and increasing economic efficiency of buildings. Energy savings in building-up new building or renovation of the existing buildings applies based on the Directive No. 2002/91/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of December 16th, 2002, on the energy performance of buildings (Official Journal of the EC L 001, January 4th, 2003). This Directive revolves into the Act No. 555/2005 Coll., on the energy performance of buildings, and on modification and supplementing to some acts as amended by later regulations, which is effective since January 1st, 2006. The Act applies compulsory energy certification of the new and renovated buildings, laying down the minimum requirements for their energy performance. In accordance with the concentration principle contained in the ROP, the interventions are primarily oriented to the perspective and financially sustainable facilities of the civil infrastructure. Therefore, a pre-condition of sustainability is introduction and use of renewable energy sources, reconstruction and modernisation of existing energy and heat sources, and increasing of energy effectiveness at the level of municipalities as well.

7.1.7 EU legislation in the area of the rules for equality of opportunities, gender equality and non-discrimination

Activities in the projects implementation will be ensuring in accordance with the EU legislation in the area of observation of the rules of equal opportunities, gender equality and non-discrimination.

The SR Constitution guarantees the basic human rights and freedoms in the SR. Concurrently, the SR is bound though the international conventions and treaties and by intrastate legislation, the efforts thereof is to ensure implementation of equality of opportunities into the legislation and practice. In the year 2004 was adopted the Act No. 365/2004 Coll., on the equal treatment in some areas and on the protection from discrimination, and on amendment and supplementing to some acts (the Anti-discrimination Act) in connection with the implementation of anti-discrimination European legislation into the legal order of the Slovak Republic.

The purpose of Anti-discrimination Act is to ensure for individual subjects of the right such protection from all forms of discrimination, which to the aggrieved persons guarantees the options to claim adequate and effective judicial protection, including compensation for damages and immaterial injury. This Act specifies contents of the provisions on equality and non-discrimination embedded in the SR Constitution and in some international treaties.

Whereas already prior to adoption of the Anti-discrimination Act a number of valid acts contained the so-called anti-discrimination provisions, in the interest to avoid duplicity, the amendments of the content-related regulations were adopted in parallel to establishing the Anti-discrimination Act, that besides others reinforce the principle of equal treatment between women and men.

As an active instrument to prevent all forms of intolerance, the SR Government from the year 2000 regularly adopted the systematic instrument of discrimination control: The "Action Plan of Preventing from the All Forms of Discrimination, Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Demonstrations of Intolerance". (The Action Plan is preparing for two- respective three-year period from the year 2000). The objective of the Action Plan is to assist in establishing systematic and permanent attention paid to the issue of the human rights observance and preventing from discrimination within the individual resorts and developing cooperation of the resorts with individual NGOs and other entities.

7.2 COMPLIANCE WITH THE SR STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

7.2.1 National Strategic Reference Framework of the SR for the period 2007-2013

Through the ROP is fulfilled the first of the three strategic priorities at the NSRF level for the programming period 2007-2013; this is the strategic priority 1 *Infrastructure and Regional Availability*. The strategic priority performs through the specific priority 1.1 *Regional Infrastructure*, given in the lower hierarchic level, predominantly implemented through the ROP in the period 2007-2013.

The ROP strategy works out the NSRF strategy in the area of the topic and territorial concentration through directing interventions into the sphere of the civil infrastructure and amenity of the territory, primarily into the cohesion and innovative growth poles in the Objective Convergence territory, under the conditions existing in the SR.

“To increase availability and quality of the civil infrastructure and amenities in the regions” is the global objective of the ROP. Fulfilling of the given goal will contribute to achievement of the objective of strategic priority 1 of the NSRF formulated as **“Increase of amenities of the regions with infrastructure and enhancing effectiveness of public services related to it”**.

Contributions from the ERDF directs primarily to the innovative and cohesion growth poles respecting existing distribution of the population. In the specific and justified cases, they can aim also at the municipalities not identified as the growth poles (e.g., facility significant from the view of the functions and type within a concrete region, support of marginalised Roma communities, etc.). Support is directing outside the growth poles providing indication of the sufficient number of users, enabling effective utilization of facilities and sustainability of the investment.

About 83% of the SR population lives in the innovative and cohesion centres and in the municipalities that are in their gradient areas. The subsidiary measures are concentrated in the decisive extent into these centres, while the supported types of infrastructure carry out the functions also for other SR population.

7.2.2 Complementarity and synergy with other operational programmes for the programming period 2007-2013

The following Table introduces the Priority Axes of the operational programmes implemented during the programming period 2007-2013, that are in terms of sectors related to the areas of ROP support. Arising of positive complementarities and synergies within the individual activities assisted by the ROP is ensuring through various mechanisms, e.g., cooperation with individual managing authorities in preparing programme documents, defining eligible activities and beneficiaries, elaborating calls for submitting projects and participation of representatives of the relevant resorts in selection of individual operations, etc.

Table 50/2011: Links of the ROP to other operational programmes at the level of Priority Axes

Priority Axis of the ROP	Operational programme	Priority Axes
Infrastructure of education	OP Education	Reform of the education system and professional training
		Further education as an instrument of the human resources development
		Support of education of individuals with specific educational needs
		Modern education for Information Society of the Bratislava region
	OP Research and Development	Infrastructure of universities
Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship	OP Employment and Social inclusion	Support of employment growth
		Support of social inclusion
		Support of employment growth and social inclusion in the Bratislava Region

Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and development of tourism	OP Informatization of Society	Development of repository and heritage fund institutions and renewal of their national infrastructure
	OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth	Tourism
Regeneration of settlements	OP Environment	Integrated protection and rational use of waters
		Protection from floods
		Protection and regeneration of the natural environment and country
	OP Transport	Road infrastructure (TEN-T)
		Road infrastructure (express roads and the 1 st class roads)
	OP Bratislava Region	Infrastructure
Regional communications ensuring transport serviceability of the regions	OP Transport	Road infrastructure (TEN-T)
		Road infrastructure (express roads and the 1 st class roads)
	OP Environment	Protection from floods
	OP Bratislava Region	Infrastructure
Technical assistance	OP Technical Assistance	Preparing, managing, monitoring, evaluating, informing and strengthening of administrative capacities in these areas
		Financial managing, control, audit and strengthening of administrative capacities in these areas
European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013	OP Informatization of Society	Development of repository and heritage fund institutions and renewal of their national infrastructure
	OP Competitiveness and Economy Growth	Tourism
	OP Bratislava Region	Infrastructure

Source: Managing Authority for the ROP, 2011

Operational Programme Education

Complementarity and synergy of the ROP operations and the Operational Programme Education consists principally in it, that the ROP supports interventions into the technical conditions of buildings utilized by the relevant civil infrastructure facilities in the area of education, while OP Education aims at the content and qualitative aspects of the services provided. Both operational programmes concurrently contribute to enhancing level of the educational process within the Objective Convergence territory, and through it as well within the all SR. The high-class educational process is the key factor for development of the modern society based on knowledge and for growth of the Slovak economy competitiveness.

Operational Programme Research and Development

Spectrum of the civil infrastructure facilities supported within the ROP (e.g., kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, and the relevant school facilities) complements support of universities performed through the Operational Programme Research and Development. Implementation of both programmes significantly contributes to enhancing qualitative level of the conditions for providing educational services, under the conditions existing in the SR.

Operational Programme Healthcare

In the area of support to civil infrastructure, both programmes contribute to enhancing the level of services ensuring protection of health of the population and prevention from risks. The ROP aims at support of the entities, that do not perform directly healthcare rescue services (i.e., Fire-fighting and Rescue Corps, Municipal Fire Brigades, Mountain Rescue Services, etc.).

Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion

The deinstitutionalisation process includes the transformation of place as well as the manner of provision of social care, i.e. a transformation of care providers (in particular the facilities) and concurrently of their approach to care provision (requalification of employees, etc.). The support of facilities through the ROP automatically establishes a space for the related activities of non-investment character, co-financed from the ESF, aimed at strengthening of the content and qualitative aspects of services provided. The synergy of investment and non-investment activities is a precondition of success of the deinstitutionalisation process. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR is responsible for the preparation of conceptual and programme documents which should initiate the deinstitutionalisation process of social infrastructure facilities in conditions of the SR, not only in relation to the support of these facilities from the EU Structural Funds. The role of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR rests also in the provision of non-investment activities (ESF) for deinstitutionalisation projects carried out within the ROP. The synergy of investment and non-investment activities is a precondition of success of deinstitutionalisation processes.

The area of support of the marginalised Roma communities, within frame of local strategies with complex approach, is another significant area, where synergic effect of support from the ERDF and the ESF should be achieved (for example, support of community centres).

Linkage of the ROP projects implementation, significant from the view of size and character, with the employment services

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR ensures through the Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family training of the potential employees with required skills in professions where is lack in the labour market, for needs of such projects implementing. That is In relation to the implementation of infrastructural projects significant from the view of size and character, and with the aim at strengthening mutual interconnection among the operational programmes financed from the ESF and from the ERDF, in favour of reducing unemployment in the regions, The given trainings are financed from the ESF.

With an aim to enable to the Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family to ensure training of the required workers with sufficient time advance, the concerned Managing Authorities forward to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR on request the required information about projects which implementation is expected in the following year. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR takes into consideration such information in the course of preparing the strategy of employment for the following year.

Operational Programme Informatization of Society

Support of infrastructure of the repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels through the ROP, and support of digitalisation of the repository and heritage fund institutions at the national level through the Operational Programme Informatization of Society, strengthen mutually the level of preservation and accessing of collection and book stock at the all-national level.

Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth

Tourism is perceiving as the factor of economic and social development of the regions, that delivering options for establishing jobs and resources of income for local development, however, in case of significant tourism centres also for the regions development. Support of tourism in the programming period 2007-2013 from the SF is under the conditions existing in the SR based on the SR Government Resolution No. 832/2006 of October 8th, 2006 implemented within the two operational programmes. The ROP aims at support of public sector, and the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth at support of private sector.

In relation to tourism, through the ROP are realized mainly the projects aiming at enhancing quality of complementary services in the area of tourism. This concerns non-investments promotion activities and investments into the public infrastructure surrounding to the complex centres of tourism with the all year-round utilization, that are situated in the territories with international or supranational

importance, and in the territories in a region of higher category than the respective region. Interventions of the ROP aim at property in ownership of public sector (e.g., parking places, bicycle paths, orientation boards, walkways, public sanitary facilities, lie-bys, etc.). The business sector, represented by the relevant significant tourism centres, can profits from the interventions non-directly, what has effects on growing of the economic levels and visitor rates of the individual regions. In the interest of integrated support of tourism, the aim of the managing authorities for the relevant operational programs is to coordinate development of tourism in the most perspective areas, identified in the New Tourism Development Strategy in SR until 2013 as amended by later changes and completions. Slovakia through developing integrated products will preserve its uniqueness and originality, what contributes to the increasing of number of visitors and to mitigating regional disparities of the country.

Unused or unsuitably utilised monuments in ownership of public sectors, of the types of castle, mansion, manor house, burger house, etc., may be conveniently utilize for accessing of collection stock and presentation of the cultural heritage of the respective region. Priority have the significant immovable cultural monuments in unsatisfactory technical conditions and with the advantageous location, in relation to the existing or arising cultural-learning routes, mainly in the territories with international or national significance, and in the territories of a higher category than the respective regions. These can support the development of the cultural-cognitive and urban tourism in particular.

Coordination and complementarity of the ROP and OP CEG through their partnership in the preparation of calls, continuous exchange of information and mutual participation of representatives of both Managing Authorities in the selection process failed to be achieved in the first half of the program period. By the Managing Authority for ROP, cooperation is based on the exchange of information, ensuring of participation by representative of the OP CEG in the selection process of projects for the field of tourism and Monitoring Committee for ROP. Managing Authority for the OP CEG to the implementation of projects in tourism began in 2008 with no real involvement of the Managing Authority for ROP to support implementation of the mentioned area of support or selection process. Due to these facts, the remaining allocation of the ROP for the field of tourism should be used in 2011-2015 to maximise the (so far unsuccessful) synergy of investments with OP CEG. Managing Authority for the ROP will procure this objective by supporting the public infrastructure of tourism adjacent to the most important centres of tourism that were supported within OP CEG.

In relation to support of settlements within the ROP, it is possible to implement interventions aimed at development or renovation of public lightings, with goal to achieve energy savings through both programmes. Within the ROP, it concerns exclusively activities within the settlements regeneration, whereby the reconstruction or building up of public lightings may be realize only as one of the activities of the project for settlement regeneration in the central zone of a municipality/town. Within the OP Competition and Economic Growth, it is possible to realize reconstruction or building up of public lightings as a separate project within the whole municipality/town. The prevention of support duplicity is ensured by using of the ITMS by the both Managing Authorities.

Operational Programme Environment

Interventions of the ROP into enhancing quality of the services provided through improving structural-technical conditions of the civil infrastructure facilities contribute to increasing energy efficiency of buildings and through this decrease environmental burdens.

The complementarity link between the ROP and the Operational Programme Environment represents mainly the support of flood protection measures within frame of the Priority Axes 4 and 5. The ROP supports activities aimed at regulation of river catchment areas in the built up areas of towns and municipalities, exclusively as a part of the projects interconnecting several activities for support of the tangible infrastructure of settlements (i.e., not as an individual activity). It supports also activities related to elimination floods effects from the year 2010 and realization of flood protection activities, in terms of the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 in areas the most affected by floods, respectively threatened by risk of floods. With consent of the administrator of water management significant streams performs the investment projects of the given character within the ROP. The Operational Programme Environment implements separate activities aimed at investments into regulation of rivers catchment areas in the non-built up areas of municipalities and towns, in accordance with the SR Anti-Flood Protection Programme until 2010. The Operational Programme Environment supports separate activities aimed at reconstruction and building up water supply networks and communal wastewater discharge and treatment by public sewages for the

municipalities. Based on the agreement of both Managing Authorities, through the ROP can be implemented reconstruction of sewages and water supply networks, but only in the direct link to the realized reconstruction of public spaces, walkways and local roads, etc. (i.e., not as an individual activity).

Within OP Environment, separate projects are carried out with focus on reconstruction and building up of public water supply networks and communal wastewater discharge and treatment by public sewages for the municipalities. Within ROP in 2007-2010, upon agreement with the Managing Authority for OP Environment, the support of activities focused on reconstruction and building up of water supply networks and communal wastewater discharge and treatment was enabled in connection with other activities of settlements regeneration (such as reconstructions of local roads and public places) carried out exclusively in municipalities with separated or segregated Roma communities, the support of which in the ROP is a follow-up to the granting scheme PHARE 2002/000.610.03.

In the selection process, the projects are appraising with the goal to confirm that there is no duplicity of financing, and therefore the Managing Authority for the ROP and the Managing Authority for the OP Environment utilize information from the ITMS II, which records all the projects co-financed from the SF at the level of operations.

Operational Programme Transport

The ROP and the Operational Programme Transport through support of the transport infrastructure significantly boost one of the most significant factors for development of the SR economy, which is the good class road network. Road infrastructure has crucial influence on interconnection of Slovakia and its regions to the main transport corridors, but as well on transport serviceability of the territory.

The Operational Programme Transport, within frame of the road network support, implements interventions into the roads of higher categories (motorways, express roads, the 1st class roads), which meet function of the principal transport corridors. Moreover, the ROP implements interventions into the 2nd and 3rd class roads, which ensure transport serviceability of the regions, and into the local roads supporting competitiveness of settlements.

Operational Programme Bratislava Region

The Operational Programme Bratislava Region aims to the large extent at the similar activities as the ROP; however, its interventions are focusing to the territory of Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment (i.e., the territory of the Bratislava self-governing Region). Both programmes implemented in the programming period 2007-2013 boost socio-economic development of Slovakia as a whole, and contribute to increasing levels in the area of regional infrastructure.

Operational Programme Technical Assistance

The Operational Programme Technical Assistance aims at financing of horizontal activities, which are common for the all operational programmes, or where it is necessary to implemented them in the all territory from the Central Coordination Authority level for all authorities involved in managing, implementation and control of the individual operational programmes in the programming period 2007-2013. Within the Priority Axes of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance can be realized assistance for the individual Managing Authorities respectively the IBMAs.

The Operational Programme Technical Assistance aims, besides others, at establishing the joint IT Monitoring System for the Structural Funds and for the CF, and at ensuring information and publicity at the general level. Within the ROP Priority Axis 6 Technical Assistance ensures the terminal equipments for interconnection to the IT Monitoring System, as well as the activities linked to informing and publicity in relation to the ROP, in accordance with the approved Communication Plan for the ROP.

Dividing lines among the ROP and other programs financed by EU funds are in a clear tabular form described in detail in the Annex No. 4. The dividing lines are defined in order to avoid duplicity support of similar types of operations from multiple sources, and in order to provide clear information to the subjects applying for grant from those sources.

7.2.3 Complementarity and synergy with the operational programmes within the Objective European Territorial Cooperation

The cross-border cooperation operational programmes for period 2007-2013 consider the provisions of the EU basic strategic and programme documents, in particular, in the area of defining goals and scope of the priorities. In accordance with the General Regulation, the programme ensures cohesion of the received support from the ERDF with the Community measures, policies and priorities. Activities proposed in the programmes of cross-border cooperation are in accordance with the Community policies and its strategic documents.

The area of support aims primarily at support of socio-economic development of the along-border region, development of cross-border transport information infrastructure and the environment.

Within frame of the cross-border cooperation programmes, the individual projects are implemented in the along-border areas of the SR. At the Objective Convergence territory, it relates to cooperation of the Slovak regions with the regions of the Czech Republic, Austria, Poland and Hungary. The projects develop cross-border cooperation, and they have transnational character of cooperation.

Cross-border Cooperation Programme Slovakia & Czech Republic

The Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Slovakia & Czech Republic 2007-2013 are elaborated in collaboration with the Czech party, for the period of years 2007-2013, within frame of the cross-border cooperation programme in links to Objective European Territorial Cooperation. This Objective links to the initiative INTERREG IIIA implemented in the shortened programming period 2004-2006, and concerns territories of the Self-governing Regions Trnava, Trenčín and Žilina.

Priority I *Support of social, cultural and economic development of the along-border region* and Priority II *Development of cross-border transport and information infrastructure, environment and tourism* are complementary with the ROP Priority Axes in the area of tourism and reinforcing amenities of the territory. Complementary effects imply from the implementation of both programmes for the territories of involved SR regions in the Objective Convergence territory, contributing to reinforcement of their sustainable development.

Cross-border Cooperation Programme Austria & Slovakia

The Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Slovakia & Austria 2007-2013 was elaborated in cooperation with the Austrian party, for the period of years 2007-2013, within frame of the cross-border cooperation programme in links to Objective European Territorial Cooperation. This Objective links to the initiative INTERREG IIIA implemented in the shortened programming period 2004-2006 and within the Objective Convergence concerns the territory of the Trnava Self-governing Region.

Priority II *Sustainable development and regional availability* with its character is directly complementary with several ROP Priority Axes aimed at reinforcement of amenities of the territory. Complementary effects imply from the implementation of both programmes for the territory of the Trnava Self-governing Region in the Objective Convergence territory, contributing to reinforcement of the sustainable development of the region.

Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland & Slovakia

The Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Poland & Slovakia 2007-2013 was elaborated in cooperation with the Polish party, for the period of years 2007-2013, within frame of the cross-border cooperation programme. This Objective links to the initiative INTERREG IIIA implemented in the shortened programming period 2004-2006 and concerns the territories of the Žilina and Prešov Self-governing Regions.

Implementation of Priority I *Development of cross-border infrastructure* and Priority II *Social and economic development* represent support of operations complementary with the operations comprised in the ROP, aimed at development primarily of the transport infrastructure and at enhancing quality of life in the supported territory.

Cross-border Cooperation Programme Slovakia & Hungary

The Hungary & Slovakia Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 was elaborated in cooperation with the Hungarian party, for the period of years 2007-2013, within frame of the cross-border cooperation programme in links to Objective European Territorial Cooperation.

The aforementioned programme defines the following common Priorities: Priority I *Economy and society*, and Priority II *Environment, protection of nature and availability*. Similarly as other programmes aimed at cross-border cooperation, also the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Hungary & Slovakia ensure through projects development of neighbouring regions, and through it also synergic effect with achieving the ROP goals in the territories of the Košice, Banská Bystrica, Nitra and Trnava Regions.

7.2.4 National Reform Programme / Slovakia Competitiveness Development Action Plans until 2010

<p>The ROP and its Priority Axes link to the priorities of the National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic for 2006-2008 and 2008-2010 (hereinafter “the NRP”) connecting to the Lisbon Strategy²⁵, specifying visions, goals and policies until the year 2010, while primarily aims at the following areas: education and employment, information society, science, research and innovation, and business environment. Support of the given areas contributes to the strengthening of the innovative potential of Slovak economy, development of knowledge-based economy and employment.</p> <p>In relation to the NRP, the ROP aims at completing the basic conditions for knowledge-based economy and activities of the traditional Cohesion Policy that are necessary for starting up knowledge-based economy and balanced regional development, predominantly, within the first strategic priority <i>Infrastructure and Regional Availability</i> of the NSRF.</p> <p>Detailed linkages of these two strategic documents, the ROP and the NRP, and their priorities are obvious within the system of goals and indicators in the ROP.</p>			N R P / L S S			
			Information society	Business environment	Education and employment	Science, research and innovations
Strategic priority 1 NSRF Infrastructure and Regional Availability	Regional Operational Programme	1 Infrastructure of education	X		X	X
		2 Infrastructure of social services, social-legal protection of children and social guardianship			X	
		3 Strengthening of cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism	X	X	X	X
		4 Regeneration of settlements		X		
		5 Regional roads ensuring transport serviceability of the regions		X		
		6 Technical assistance	X		X	
		7 European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013	X	X	X	X

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2010

²⁵ ROP indirectly contributes to the fulfillment of goals of the Lisbon Strategy

7.2.5 National Sustainable Development Strategy / Action Plan Sustainable Development

<p>The National Sustainable Development Strategy defines eight long-term priorities (integrated goals) of the sustainable development of the SR for purpose of achieving the orientation of the SR and its long-term, meaningful comprehensive aiming at the establishing of society based on the principles of sustainable development and their practical application. This system of long-term priorities has in comparison to the ROP Priority Axes a close relationship, as indicates this Table.</p>			National Sustainable Development Strategy							
			Developed democratic country	Modern state and system of public administration	Developed civil society	Social solidarity and social protection	Balanced spatial development	High quality of human and social resources	New model of economy	High quality of environment, protection and rational use of natural sources
Strategic priority 1 of the NSRF Infrastructure and Regional Availability	Regional Operational Programme	1 Infrastructure of education	X		X			X		
		2 Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship			X	X				
		3 Strengthening of cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism			X			X		
		4 Regeneration of settlements	X	X	X	X	X			X
		5 Regional roads ensuring transport serviceability of the regions					X			X
		6 Technical assistance		X	X			X		
		7 European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013			X	X		X	X	

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2011

7.2.6 Slovakia Spatial Development Perspective

The ROP directly links to the SSDP 2001, taking from it the principles of polycentric development system of the SR settlement (i.e., the system of settlement centres and cores). The NSRF transforms the mentioned principles into the principles of territorial concentration of the NSRF, applied through the philosophy of cohesion and innovative growth poles (Chapter 4). The Priority Axes describe individually the scope of the territorial concentration principles application.

7.2.7 Other national sector strategic documents

Table 51/2011: List of the national and sector strategic documents

PRIORITY AXIS ROP	OTHER NATIONAL, SECTORAL STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS
Infrastructure of education	Perspective of integrated education of Roma children and youth
Infrastructure of social services, social-legal protection of children and social guardianship	Action Plan Employment 2004-2006 Action Plan Social Inclusion 2004-2006 Joint Memorandum on Inclusion of December 18 th , 2003 Community Social Work Programme
Strengthening of cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism	SR Museums and Galleries Development Strategy until 2011 Strategy of Slovak Librarianship Development for 2008-2013 Strategy of State Cultural Policy and Action Plan of Introduction Stage of Cultural Policy Implementation Slovak Libraries Development Strategy until 2006 Libraries Electronization Programme New Development Tourism Strategy of the SR until 2013 and its updating
Regeneration of settlements	Slovak Spatial Development Perspective 2001 Community Social Work Programme Housing Development Programme Housing Development Perspective Long-term Housing Perspective for Marginalised Groups of the Population and Model of its Financing Principles of State Housing Policy up to 2005 with an Outlook up to 2010 Principles of State Housing Policy up to 2015 Principles of Building Restoration with Emphasis to Restoration of Housing Fund SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010
Regional roads ensuring transport serviceability of the regions	SR Transport Policy until 2015 SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010
Technical assistance	Guidelines of the Central Coordination Authority and Certifying Authority
European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013	SR Government Resolution No. 546/2010 Council Decision of the EU No. 8770/09 of April 21 st , 2009 (INTERFACE project)

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2011

7.2.8 Regional strategic documents

The ROP supports, in particular, the fields that based on the Act No. 416/2001 Coll., on the assignment of some competences from the state administration bodies to the municipalities and self-governing regions, as amended by later regulations, fall into the competences of the relevant regional and local self-governments. Development plans of the regional self-governments are contents of the economic and social development programmes of the individual self-governing regions, but also of some sector strategies of self-governing regions. Space for regional strategies inclusion into the ROP

strategy was established through the participation of representatives of self-governing regions in the Working Group for the ROP preparing.

Supported types of operations for the groups of eligible beneficiaries, and other relevant content proprieties of the ROP, were set in the ROP preparation process based on the principle of partnership in collaboration with the representatives of the regional and local self-governments (i.e., the self-governing regions and the STMA). It can state based on the given, that the ROP follows to the large extent fulfilment of the regional and local strategies, comprising the strategic documents of regional self-governments.

In the interest of ongoing application of the partnership principle during the entire programming period 2007-2013, participation of representatives of the regional and local self-governments is ensured in the preparing calls for projects submitting, in activities of information and publicity, in selection of operations in the collective decision making bodies, in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP, and in the Managing Group for the ROP assessment (more details in the Chapter 9 ROP).

7.3 INTERCONNECTION TO OTHER EU FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS²⁹

7.3.1 Synergy, complementarity with the programmes financed from the EAFRD and the EFF

In the programming period 2007-2013, direct support of the rural areas performs through the Programme of Development the Rural Areas of the SR (hereinafter "the PDRA"), co-financed from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (hereinafter "the EAFRD"). **"Multifunctional agriculture, food industry, forestry and sustainable development of rural areas"** is the global goal of the PDRA. The guarantor of the PDRA is the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the SR. The PDRA is realized through the following four axes:

1. Increasing of competitiveness of agriculture and forestry,
2. Improvement of the environment of the countryside/country,
3. Quality of life in the rural areas and diversification of rural economy,
4. Leader.

Besides support of a broad spectrum of the ROP activities, primarily directed to the cohesion and innovative growth poles, direct support of the rural areas within the ROP performs through the Priority Axis 3 of the ROP (i.e., through the part aimed at support of tourism) and through the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP (Regeneration of Settlements). The given areas of the ROP support are content-related to the support within the axes 3 and 4 of the PDRA.

Thus, both programmes support activities aimed at renovation and renewal of the rural settlements (i.e., local communications, public spaces, etc.), as well as activities aimed at development of tourism.

Synergy arising from the implementation of both programmes in the period 2007-2013 is in the interest of strengthening the socio-economic development and competitiveness of the rural areas in the SR.

Table 52: Complementarity between the ROP and the National Strategy PDRA for 2007-2013

Programme of development of Rural Areas (EAFRD)		Regional operational programme (ERDF)	
Axis 3	Quality of life in the rural areas and diversification of rural economy	Priority Axis 3	Strengthening of cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism
		Priority Axis 4	Regeneration of settlements
Axis 4	Leader	Priority Axis 3	Strengthening of cultural potential of the regions and development of tourism
		Priority Axis 4	Regeneration of settlements

²⁹ Expenses co-financed from the Funds cannot obtain assistance from another financial instrument of the Community (Article 53 (5) of the General Regulation)

Axis 3 of the PDRA aims through its contents at the following:

- Diversification of non-agricultural activities,
- Support of activities in the field of tourism,
- Renovation and development of municipalities,
- Professional education,
- Skills acquiring and revival.

The PDRA activities focuses to establishing jobs in the rural areas also at support of business in the area of rural tourism, what aimed at beneficiaries from private sector. Support of tourism within the ROP is intended for the entities of public sector for non-investment activities, and in details, it describes the Chapter 5. The PDRA aims at support of rural tourism and agro-tourism. Both programmes contribute to increasing attractiveness of the SR territory for visitors, and contribute to enhancing of the level of services provided in the area of tourism.

Another topic-related priority of the axis 3 of the PDRA is renewal and development of municipalities; the contents thereof are similar activities as in the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP. This concerns the interventions into the tangible infrastructure of municipalities (i.e., public spaces, local roads, walkways, public lighting, etc.). Interventions into the tangible infrastructure of rural municipalities in the PDRA are intended for the municipalities that are not eligible for the ROP. Regeneration of municipalities of the ROP is focusing to similar types of activities, specifically for the municipalities identified as the innovative and cohesion growth poles. Annex No. 4 to the ROP gives a list of the municipalities included into the respective categories, inclusive of the used methodology description.

The PDRA is not oriented at support of the tangible infrastructure of municipalities in relation to the marginalised Roma groups. The agreement of the Managing Authority for the ROP and the Ministry of Agriculture SR enabled to implement support through the ROP to the tangible infrastructure of municipalities with separated and segregated Roma settlements also in the municipalities, which are not the growth poles. Mechanism for avoiding duplicity of support of the equal operations, respective parts of operations, consist in utilization of the ITMS, which records all the projects implemented within the ROP up to the level of individual operations, and in mutual information exchange.

The axis 4 of the PDRA represents a specific approach to the implementation of project plans eligible for the axis 3 of the PDRA. This concerns the Leader approach, within that the so-called local action groups (hereinafter "LAG") elaborate specialised development strategies for the selected areas. The representatives of local self-governments, citizens, NGOs, but as well representatives of the private sector established the LAGs. A territory of the selected LAG can cover several municipalities, and therefore based on the agreement is required to define explicitly the demarcation lines between the PDRA and the ROP in relation to support of the rural areas so, to avoid duplicity of co-financing of the same development activities.

Table 53: Setting the demarcation lines between the PDRA and the ROP for years 2007-2013

Area	Programme	Axis (PDRA) / Priority Axis (ROP)	Priority (PDRA) / Area of support	Characteristic
Demarcation line for the field of tourism	PDRA	Axis 3 Quality of life in the rural areas and diversification of rural economy	Priority: Establishing Jobs in Rural Areas Measure: Support of Activities in the Field of Rural Tourism	Support of private sector entities within the rural areas in the sphere of tourism.
	ROP	Priority Axis 3 Strengthening of cultural potential and development of tourism	Development of Tourism	Support of the public sector.
Demarcation line for the field of renovation	PDRA	Axis 3 Quality of life in the rural areas and diversification of rural economy	Priority: Renewal and Development of Municipalities Measure: Renewal and Development of Municipalities	Interventions into the tangible infrastructure of municipalities in the SR territory, including elaboration of economic and social development programmes of the

				municipalities, what are not the cohesion or innovative growth poles. Within the PDRA are not realized complex projects of support for the marginalised Roma communities
	ROP	Priority Axis 4 Regeneration of Settlements	Regeneration of Settlements	Interventions into the tangible infrastructure of the municipalities in the Objective Convergence territory within the SR, what are the cohesion or innovative growth poles. Exception represents implementation of the projects of infrastructure renewal of the municipalities with the segregated or separated Roma settlements, which municipalities can implement also outside the growth poles. Exception is applicable to the concrete activities within the concrete projects and not the municipalities as beneficiaries for the period 2007-2013.
Demarcation line for approach LEADER	PDRA	Axis Leader	Priority: Improvement of Management and Directing and Mobilisation of Development Potential in the Rural Areas Measure: Implementation of Integrated Strategies of Development of the Territory	Activities of the axis 3 of the PDRA as a part of the projects implemented by the local action groups (LAG). The existing options: a) LAG comprises of municipalities, that are not the growth poles - project is realized within the PDRA b) LAG comprises of municipalities that are, or are not the growth poles - concrete project is realized within the PDRA, while the municipalities that are the growth poles and a part of the LAG can separately implement also other projects (other activities) within the ROP.
	ROP	Priority Axis 4 Regeneration of Settlements	Regeneration of Settlements	Municipalities in the Objective Convergence territory within the SR, that are the growth poles, can implement partner projects based on the principle of one applicant + partner/partners.

Source: MCRD SR, 2007

Allocation for the Leader approach application represents 2.5% of available allocation from the EARDP within the PDRA. A relative small number of expected projects implemented with the Leader approach in the course of the programming period 2007-2013 enables in the simple way to avoid duplicity in support of concrete projects submitted by LAGs, which comprises also the municipalities identified as the growth poles. It is possible to avoid possible overlap on the part of the MA for the ROP or the IBMA, through the recoding all projects into the ITMS and their continuous monitoring. Description of demarcation lines between the PDRA and the ROP comprises the Annex No. 6.

In the programming period 2007-2013 is implemented in the SR also the Operational Programme Fisheries, which is co-financed by the European Fisheries Fund (thereinafter "EFF"). Objective of the mentioned operational programme is "Sustainable and competitive sector of fishery". The given operational programme aims primarily at support of entrepreneurial entities acting in this sector. In support provided through the operational programme fishery occurs no overlap with support provided

through the ROP. Both programmes contribute to boosting competitiveness of Slovak economy to the higher or lower extent.

7.3.2 Synergy, complementarity with other EU financial instruments

Individual project plans implemented within the ROP have relatively small scope, and they aiming at beneficiaries who are the public sector entities, in terms of the SR legislation. There are some exceptions represented by entities of the private sector, however, these are with their character aimed at providing services in the area of public beneficial services. It concerns primarily NGOs and churches.

The types of projects supported within the ROP are not focusing on income generating, what restricts utilization of returnable forms of financing of their implementation and involvement of the private sector.

Though the object of the ROP strategy is primarily the infrastructure in competence of the regional and local self-governments, implementation of projects establishes primarily the local impacts. Thus, the ROP strategy aims at the bigger number of projects evenly implemented in the supported territory. In contrast to the investments into national infrastructure (i.e., motorways, facilities of the civil infrastructure established on the national sector level), the private sector have limited opportunity of involvement also by the restricted extent of investments.

Among the innovative financial instruments JESSICA, JASPERS and JEREMIE with respect to character of the ROP, JESSICA appears as the most relevant. JESSICA is an initiative of the EC, the EIB and the Council of the European Development Bank, and its goal is to enforce sustainable investment, growth and jobs in the European urban areas. In connection with implementation of the integrated strategies of urban areas development, during implementation of the ROP, opportunities of innovative financial instruments utilization suitable for support of given types of projects are continuously examined in collaboration with the MF SR. In mid-term of the programming period the Managing Authority for ROP adjusted initially set mechanism of the integrated strategies for urban areas development so, that support of housing infrastructure could be realized also through the innovative financial instrument JESSICA (see strategy for the Priority Axis 4 of the ROP).

With respect to the character and focusing of the ROP activities, the Managing Authority for the ROP during implementing the ROP examines actively inclusion of innovative activities, arising from the initiative "Regions for Economic Change", to the ROP also in form of enabling participation and establishing space for a representative of the network in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP.

In the year 2010, within months May, June and August, extremely large floods with devastating effects affected the SR, due to adverse weather conditions, and caused material damages to property of citizens, municipalities and towns, state, legal persons, agricultural land and production, country, but also losses of human life. Estimation of damages was expressed in amount € 695.1 million. It is pursuant to the Report on measures taken within frame of elimination flood damages of May and June 2010 in Slovakia, and on the state of the application for grant preparing from the EU Solidarity Fund. The report approved the Government Resolution No. 482/2010, dated on July 14th, 2010, based on data available at the time of the report elaboration.

In light of the abovementioned resolution the SR Government through the Minister of Foreign Affairs SR requested on July 16th, 2010 on aid from the EU Solidarity Fund. The EU Solidarity Fund was established in accordance with the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1012/2002 of November 11th, 2002. This regulation established European Union Solidarity Fund, **for purpose to assist to the EU Member States impacted by major natural disaster, and its aim is to** provide as soon as can effective assistance in mobilizing works and services for immediate needs of people, and for short-term repairs of damaged critical infrastructure, so that the affected areas could start economic activity. These funds have additional nature.

Awarded financial resources from grant have to be used within 1 year from provision financial resources to the receiving State. In the event of this condition violation, the Member State is obliged to repay remaining amount to the European Commission.

At the end of September 2010, the Slovak Republic provided the European Commission with additional detailed information regarding the floods, including an amended estimate of total damage. The estimated direct damage amounted to € 561,133,594. Pursuant to the draft decision submitted by the European Commission for approval of the Parliament and the Council regarding the mobilisation of the Solidarity Fund of 14 January 2011, an aid of € 20,430,841 should be granted to the Slovak Republic. The European Parliament adopted a decision on mobilisation of the Solidarity Fund on 6 April 2011.

8 FINANCIAL PLAN

8.1 FINANCIAL PLAN OF THE ROP - ANNUAL LIABILITIES OF THE ERDF

Table 54/2011: Annual liabilities of the ERDF for the ROP in EUR, in current prices

	Structural Funds of the ERDF (1)	Cohesion Fund (2)	Total (3)=(1)+(2)
2007	205,515,550	0	205,515,550
2008	199,983,511	0	199,983,511
2009	192,452,432	0	192,452,432
2010	177,546,535	0	177,546,535
2011	227,680,862	0	227,680,862
2012	247,436,834	0	247,436,834
2013	303,888,203	0	303,888,203
Total 2007-2013	1,554,503,927	0	1,554,503,927

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2011

At the end of May 2012, 45,89% is actually exhausted from the total obligation of the ROP for the programming period 2007-2013. The n+3 rule is continuously filled at the level of majority of the ROP Priority Axes, the level of approved and contracted financial resources gives a highly probable assumption of complete exhaustion of the allocated funds at an earlier date than at the end of 2015.

8.2 FINANCIAL PLAN FOR THE ROP - PRIORITY AXES

Distribution of the disposable allocation from the ERDF into the separate ROP Priority Axes results from analyses of quantitative and qualitative characteristics of individual thematic areas of the regional infrastructure, and from analysis of the priorities set within the defined strategy of the ROP.

Analyses assessed the following criteria:

- Quantity (i.e., number of the civil infrastructure facilities, capacity standards of facilities, existing housing stock, length of the 2nd and 3rd class roads and local communications, etc.),
- Quality (i.e., structural-technical and transport-technical conditions of the regional infrastructure, amenities of the civil infrastructure, conditions of the housing stock, etc.),
- Aspects related to territorial location of the regional infrastructure.

In the middle of the programming period, the financial plan ROP was modified in connection with partial arrangement of the strategy ROP. Modification on the level of individual Priority Axes and modification of more detailed areas of the ROP assistance, including relevant justifications describe in details sections 3, 4 and 5 ROP.

The main reason for the allocations adjustment at the level of ROP Priority Axes are socio-economic changes (economic crisis), and with that related modifications of development priorities on level of eligible beneficiaries, mainly territorial self-governments. Except that financial resources from the EU structural funds fill the objectives of individual operational programs, in the conditions of Slovak economy they also constitute a significant source for investments and maintaining jobs, particularly in

the construction industry. Intensive utilization of these funds in times of economic crisis in years 2008-2010 substantially replaced a dropout of private investment in construction industry, and conduced to maintain thousands of jobs. Particularly for this reason, the Managing Authority for ROP, in relation to the relevant resolutions of the SR Government, allowed during the year 2009 'above quota approval' of financial resources in the most effective areas of the ROP assistances. It concerns areas of support, what in the view of self-governments represent the most accentuated development priorities. These development priorities can prospective bring economic benefits to the next years, in the form of saving operational costs in the public sector (reduction energy consumption of buildings), further enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of settlements, introduction of ICT equipments, keep jobs, etc. Concerning the unprecedented economic crisis occurred 'above quota approval' of the funds amount without previous reallocation of funds. The SR Government was informed on the above mentioned steps, and in year 2009 the MA for ROP informed all interested socio-economic partners who are represented in the ROP Monitoring Committee, as well as the European Commission (at annual meeting to the ROP, Annual Conference, Annual Report for year 2009). The above-quota approval of disposable volume of funds of 112% has been used also in the thematically related Priority 3 of the Operational Programme Basic Infrastructure in the shortened programming period 2004-2006.

Besides the modification of the ROP financial plan, the Managing Authority simultaneously proposed other mechanisms for resolving the above-quota approval within Priority Axis 1 of the ROP so that the negative financial impacts of state budget of the SR are minimised. A component part of the ROP revision in the mid-term of programming period is also resolving of a less significant overrun of allocations in some areas of support under the Priority Axis 4 ROP.

In the course of 2011-2015, the funds needed to cover the 'above quota approval' of allocation in the ROP Priority Axis 1 of 2007-2010 in volume of approximately 10% of the ROP budget will be progressively reduced to the end of the programming period primarily based on financial resources savings achieved in all seven Priority Axes of the ROP, namely on the reduced project budgets after public procurements, unpaid irregular expenditures, unexpended financial resources, unrealized projects, financial resources refund due to discrepancies, generating net income, etc. The Managing Authority for the ROP will use the incurred savings to cover or partially cover the above-quota approved volume of funds in Priority Axis 1 of the ROP without disrupting the achievement of defined objectives and target values of indicators of other Priority Axes of the ROP. Reallocations of incurred savings to Priority Axis 1 do not affect the amount of the remaining disposable funds in other Priority Axes. The ROP adopted this principle on 26 October 2010 in the form of approval of draft revision of the ROP by the Monitoring Committee for the ROP, without raising any comments by the members and present observers. Reallocations of incurred savings to Priority Axis 1 of the ROP will be considered in the ROP financial plan via one or more ROP revisions.

As of February 2011, savings of € 30.3 million (EU funds + SR public funds) were achieved in Priority Axis 1, thereof the major part (€ 20.5 million) is represented by savings based on the reduction of budgets of projects after public procurements. Within Priority Axes 2 to 5, savings of € 22.8 million (EU funds + SR public funds) were achieved based on cancelled projects, savings in public procurement, discrepancies in financial impact, voluntarily uncompleted exhaustion of funds and the like).

The above-mentioned approach of transferring savings to Priority Axis 1 has also been used in the second revision of ROP that allows using the savings achieved in projects carried out **from February to December 2011** for financing projects contracted beyond the available allocation of this Priority Axis. During this period, in the Priority Axis 1 savings of € 21.5 million (EU funds + SR public funds) have been achieved. The biggest part of these savings has been achieved based on reduction of budgets after public procurements and back out of contracts due to breach of contracts by the beneficiaries. Within Priority Axes 2, 3, 4 and 5 savings of € 31.7 million (EU funds + SR public funds) have been achieved, which were transferred into the Priority Axis 1. Reducing allocations of Priority Axes 2, 3, 4 and 5 has no impact on fulfilment of set targets as these savings are being achieved in particular within projects in implementation.

In the case of 4th revision ROP there was an internal transfer within the priority axis 2, 4, 7 and 1 of ROP (including transfers of not contracted funds), these transfers have a positive impact on the objectives at the global objective of the ROP.

The approach of transferring savings to Priority Axis 1 has also been used in the third revision of ROP that allows using the savings achieved in projects carried out from January to May 2012. Within Priority Axis 1 savings of € 11.3 million (EU funds + SR public funds) and within Priority Axes 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 of savings of € 30.5 million (EU funds + SR public funds) have been achieved as a result of reduction of budgets after public procurement, failed contracts due to breach of rules by the beneficiaries, irregularities with financial impact and other ineligible expenditures. The above-mentioned approach of transferring savings was for the first time applied also within the Priority Axis 7 ROP - European Capital of Culture Košice 2013. Calls for national projects within Priority Axis 7 were launched for all available allocation of priority axis. The difference between the allocation of the priority axis and the budgets of all approved national projects as well as ineligible expenditures identified in the appraisal process could be transferred to Priority Axis 1 ROP. The date of the European Capital of Culture Košice 2013 will not allow launching any new calls for national projects. Savings achieved within priority axis 2 to 7 ROP has no impact on fulfilment of set targets of ROP.

Amount of allocation for the **Priority Axis 1** takes into consideration the ROP strategy, defined for the given area of support. With respects to the principles of territorial concentration (i.e., directing support into the innovative and cohesion growth poles), there are identified priority types of facilities from the view of their aiming and future perspective of ensuring high class and sustainable educational process. Allocation considers the expected number of supported facilities over the programming period, and concurrently average financial demand of operations identified as the most required. Priority Axis 1 of the ROP through its interventions directly increases quality of conditions for realization of the educational process, what might be consider as an important contribution of the ROP to the fulfilment Objective of Lisbon Strategy: Education, Reduction Energy demands, Introduction of ICT and Employment. Implementation in 2008-2010 proved that Priority Axis 1 ROP represents the most effective and most demanding field of support in the frame of ROP. The amount of allocation for the Priority Axis 1 shall continuously be modified during the years 2012 – 2015 based on the approved principle of transferring financial savings achieved in projects carried out with the aim to cover the 'above quota approval' in the Priority Axis 1 allocation.

Setting allocation for the **Priority Axis 2** uses the same methodological approach, as in case of the Priority Axis 1. However, the social infrastructure facilities are more differentiate from the view of types and sizes than the education infrastructure facilities. However, the projection of the Priority Axis 2 strategy, aimed at the priorities in the area of the social infrastructure provided sufficient framework for setting respective allocation. Allocation considers also the spatial requirements of clients from supported facilities, and the need of building the number of facilities in terms of the defined strategy. Evaluation of the ROP implementation for the years 2007-2010 required modification of the strategy for the Priority Axis 2, and related transfers of financial resources, particularly in response to modifications in legislation and change of priorities of the eligible beneficiaries, i.e., self-governments.

Priority Axis 3 comprises two thematic related areas of support: preservation of cultural heritage, and support in the area of tourism. The infrastructure of repository and heritage fund institutions in the supported territory has, in terms of the defined strategy, relatively restricted and precisely defined number of supportable projects for the public sector, within which it is possible to anticipate certain extent of operations. Amount of the indicative allocation respects the fact, that though support of culture contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage of the regions and their uniqueness, it does not represent any significant development factor from the view of reinforcing their social and economic development.

Setting allocation for the thematic field of tourism responds to changes occurred in the field of tourism in 2007-2010 and from the decision of the Managing Authority for the ROP to concentrate funds to fields of the ROP support which proved to be as extremely required and effective. The remaining allocation to the field of tourism will be used to maximise the (unsuccessful so far) synergy of directing interventions with OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth..

Within the **Priority Axis 4**, activities are oriented mainly at regeneration of settlements and support of non-commercial rescue services.

Activities of settlements regeneration aimed at the municipalities and towns identified as the growth poles, what represents on third of the settlements in the Objective Convergence territory, in accordance with the ROP strategy. The given thematic area is characterised with the highest potential absorption capacity, and therefore the criteria of eligibility are oriented towards the central sections of settlements, and to determined scope of operations. Determination of the amount of allocation was

defined with respect to the number of rural and urban settlements in respect thereto if the expected range of activities for the central zone of settlements, with regard to the experience of "Measure 3.4 Renovation and development of municipalities OPBI" of the shortened programming period 2004-2006. Intensive implementation in 2009-2010 pointed out that activities of the material infrastructure regeneration of settlements represent the second most effective and most demanded area of support in frame of the ROP.

Taking into account the non-performance of integrated development strategies for urban areas in the first half of the programming period 2007-2013 and reallocation within Priority Axis 4, conditions for utilization of allocations for housing infrastructure through a pilot approach with minimum costs and with potential of wider utilisation in the future have been created since 2011. In order to procure the corresponding minimum expenses for realisation of the pilot approach, a transfer of € 5 million from Priority Axis 3 was performed concurrently.

The issue for support of the infrastructure of rural municipalities with separated and segregated Roma settlements is the projects stock prepared within the programme PHARE. The respective allocation takes into consideration also the length of programming period, over which it is possible to assume a higher number of projects with similar focus.

Within the frame of ROP is implemented support of non-commercial rescue services, based on the Concept of spatial deployment of the FRC personnel and equipments. The ROP strategy precisely aims in this thematic area at the identified needs in the SR territory, enabling the uniform level of amenities of all regions with the professional rescue services. The preset allocation corresponds to the identified needs with respect to the number of workplaces of non-commercial rescue services.

The allocation for the Priority Axis 4 in the middle of the programming period 2007-2013 increased based on the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 of August 27th, 2010. This additional allocation to that Priority Axis is within the scope of eligible activities intended for activities related to elimination damages after the devastating floods of the year 2010. Those activities are designed to the pre-identified the most affected territories.

In addition, the **Priority Axis 5** is characterised with the very high potential absorption capacity. The decisive criteria for setting indicative financial allocation were the length of the 2nd and 3rd class roads in the supported territory, roads transport-technical conditions, and data on financial demands for reconstruction per one kilometre of roads of the given categories. In addition, the allocation of Priority Axis 5 in the middle of the programming period 2007-2013 increased on basis of the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010 of August 27th, 2010. The additional allocation to that Priority Axis is within the scope of eligible activities intended for activities related to elimination damages after the devastating floods of the year 2010. Those activities are designed to the pre-identified most affected territories.

The ERDF contribution for the **Priority Axis 6** ROP given on the level of the NSRF is in maximum amount 3.13% of total ERDF contribution to the ROP. Despite of that the total ERDF contribution to ROP increased in the middle of the 2007-2013 programming period, and increased demands for the implementation of ROP (additional financial resources, additional Priority Axis), the Managing Authority for ROP did not propose allocations increase for the technical assistance ROP.

The ERDF contribution for **Priority Axis 7**, through which will be implemented the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013, is given by the SR Government Resolution No. 546/2010 of August 13th, 2010.

Except the outputs from analyses, one criterion for redistribution of allocations of the ROP for the Priority Axis represented also the up to date experience of the MCRD SR from the implementation of the Priority 3 Local Infrastructure of the OP BI in the shortened programming period 2004-2006. The mentioned experience was used in determining of expected financial demands for the projects aimed at interventions into the concrete types of the civil infrastructure facilities, or to the tangible infrastructure of municipalities.

Table 55/2012: Distribution of the ERDF contribution to the ROP Priority Axes in EUR, in current prices

Priority Axis	EU resources	SR public resources	Total	Rate of co-financing	EIB	Other resources
					contribution	

	a	b	c = a + b	a / c * 100	informative	informative
Infrastructure of education	509 768 559	89 959 158	599 727 717	85	0	500 000
Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection and social guardianship	185 120 984	32 668 409	217 789 393	85	0	500 000
Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and infrastructure of tourism	145 510 803	25 678 377	171 189 180	85	0	0
Regeneration of settlements	465 956 401	82 227 601	548 184 002	85	0	3 000 000
Regional communications ensuring transport serviceability of regions	147 452 203	26 020 977	173 473 180	85	0	0
Technical assistance	45 228 500	7 981 500	53 210 000	85	0	0
European Capital of Culture – Košice 2013	55 466 477	9 788 202	65 254 679	85	0	0
Total	1,554,503,927	274,324,224	1,828,828,151	85.00	0	4,000,000

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2013

The co-financing rate for each ROP Priority Axes was determined by the SR Government Resolution No. 834/2006 that adopted the Strategy of financing the SF and the CF for the programming period 2007-2013, of October 8th, 2006. The given document is fully in accordance with the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of July 11th, 2006, laying down general provisions on the ERDF, the ESF and the CF, and repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999. According to the Article 53, paragraph 2 of the given Regulation, contribution from the Funds at the level of operational programmes within Objective Convergence and Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment is subject to the maximum amounts set in Annex III of this Regulation, i.e., in case of the SR the percentage value of eligible expenditures is set as 85 %.

The rules of Strategy of financing the SF and the CF for the programming period 2007-2013 were chosen so, to be valid and uniform for assisting from the SF, and the CF, and the national resources for the projects from the all objectives. To achieve the highest and the most effective utilization of allocated financial resources it was necessary to determine meaningful, transparent and simple rules. In terms of the given document, contribution from the EU Funds in sense of the Article 53, paragraph 1b) of the General Regulation is determined based on the eligible public expenditures.

The MA for the ROP guarantees, that any state aid, including possible schemes *de minimis* within the ROP is providing in accordance with the procedural and substantially relevant rules of the state aid, applicable at the time of providing the aid from the public resources.

8.3 FINANCIAL PLAN OF THE ROP - CATEGORIES OF ASSISTANCE

The contribution from the ERDF for the ROP for the programming period 2007-2013 is dividing into the three following categories of assistance: *Priority topic*, *Form of financial contribution* and *Supported territory*. This is in accordance with Annex II to Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006 of December 8th, 2006, setting out rules for the implementation of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of July 11th, 2006, laying down General provisions on the ERDF, ESF and CF, and repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999.

Indicative distribution of the ERDF contribution according to the categories of assistance *Priority theme*, according to Priority Axes, and more detailed thematic areas of support in EUR, in current prices, implies from tables 56/2012 and 57/2012.

Table 56/2012: Indicative distribution of the ERDF contribution to the categories of assistance *Priority theme* in EUR, in current prices

Code of category	Indicative sum of financial resources
23 - Regional/local roads	221 058 636
24 – Bicycle lanes	2 244 733
54 - Other measures for preservation of the environment and preventing from risks	67 612 371

57 - Other assistance for improving services of tourism	19 818 770
58 – Preservation and protection of the cultural heritage	96 136 000
59 - Development of cultural infrastructure	85 022 510
61 - Integrated projects of the urban and rural areas regeneration	304 371 364
75 - Educational infrastructure	463 632 960
77 - Infrastructure in the area of children care	60 274 583
78 - Infrastructure of housing	12 750 000
79 - Other social infrastructure	170 982 000
81 - Mechanisms for improvement of policy and programmes designing, monitoring and evaluation at the national, regional and local levels, building up capacities in submitting strategies and programmes	5 371 500
85 - Preparing, implementing, monitoring and control	32 000 000
86 - Evaluation and studies; information and communication	13 228 500
Total	221 058 636

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2013

Table 57/2012: Indicative distribution of the ERDF contribution to the categories of assistance *Priority theme*, according to Priority Axes in EUR, in current prices

Code of category	Indicative amount of financial resources	Indicative amount of financial resources in structuring into thematic areas of support within the Priority Axes ("PA")	
23 - Regional/local roads	221 058 636	74 058 636	PA 4 Regeneration of settlements (local communications)
		147 000 000	PA 5 Regional communications ensuring transport serviceability of the regions
24 – Bicycle lanes	2 244 733	0	PA 3 Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and development of tourism (public infrastructure of tourism)
		1 792 530	PA 4 Regeneration of settlements (component of the tangible infrastructure of settlements)
		452 203	PA 5 Regional communications ensuring transport serviceability of the regions (complement. activity increasing safety)
54 - Other measures for preservation the environment and prevention of risks	67 612 371	67 612 371	PA 4 Regeneration of settlements (infrastructure of non-commercial rescue services)
57 - Other assistance for improvement of tourism services	19 818 770	19 818 770	PA 3 Strengthening of the cultural potential of the regions and infrastructure of tourism (support of tourism)
58 - Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage	96 136 000	80 000 000	PA 3 Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and infrastructure of tourism (unused immovable cultural monuments)
		16 136 000	PA 7 ECOC Košice 2013 (immovable cultural monuments)
59 - Development of cultural infrastructure	85 022 510	45 692 033	PA 3 Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and infrastructure of tourism (infrastructure of memory and heritage funds institutions)
		39 330 477	PO 7 ECOC Košice 2013 (infrastructure of culture)
61 - Integrated projects of the urban and rural areas regeneration	304 371 364	304 371 364	PA 4 Regeneration of settlements - components of tangible infrastructure of settlements: a) separate demand-oriented projects b) support of municipalities. with separated and segregated Roma settlements
75 - Educational infrastructure	463 632 960	463 632 960	PA 1 Infrastructure of education (elementary and secondary schools)
77 - Infrastructure in the area of children care	60 274 583	46 135 599	PA 1 Infrastructure of education (crèches - kindergartens)
		14 138 984	PA 2 Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection and social guardianship (social infrastructure for children)
78 - Infrastructure of housing	12 750 000	12 750 000	PA 4 Regeneration of settlements b) JESSICA
79 - Other social infrastructure	170 982 000	170 982 000	PA 2 Infrastructure of social services, socio-legal protection and social guardianship

81 - Mechanisms of improvement of policy and programmes drafting, monitoring and evaluation at the state, regional and local levels, development of capacities in submitting strategies and programmes	5 371 500	5 371 500	PA 4 Regeneration of settlements c) non-investment activities – preparing and updating development documents on the level of regions NUTS 2 and NUTS level
85 - Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control	32,000,000	32,000,000	PA 6 Technical assistance
86 - Evaluation and studies, information and communication	13 228 500	13 228 500	PA 6 Technical assistance
Total	1 554 503 927	1 554 503 927	

Sources: Managing Authority for ROP, 2013

Priority Axis 1 from the view of the assistance categories supports the infrastructure of elementary and secondary schools, that represents the category of assistance “*Educational infrastructure*” and the infrastructure of preschool facilities (i.e., crèches and kindergartens), which represents the category of assistance “*Infrastructure in the area of care of children*”. The primary share represents support of elementary and secondary schools, whereas the ROP strategy provides a restricted space for support of kindergartens. The allocation of the priority theme “*Educational infrastructure*” has been increased through reallocation from the priority themes “*Infrastructure in the area of care of children*” and “*Protection and preservation of the natural heritage*” within the frame of Priority Axes 2 and 3 ROP, as well as through transfer of savings from projects carried out in all ROP Priority Axes.

Priority Axis 2 from the view of categories of assistance has also internally structure, while in terms of the defined strategy, the category of assistance “*Other social infrastructure*” is dominant comparing to the category of assistance “*Infrastructure in the area of care of children*”. It relates with the ROP strategy, aimed in this area of assistance at support of facilities for seniors or adults.

Support within the **Priority Axis 3** Strengthening of the cultural potential of regions and infrastructure of tourism is structured significantly, whereas the thematic areas falling under this Priority Axis are differentiated in spite of their related character. The priority themes “*Development of cultural infrastructure*” and “*Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage*” relate with support of the repository and heritage fund institutions at the local and regional levels, but also with support of the existing stock of immovable cultural monuments, that have a potential to be utilised within the cultural-cognitive tourism. Support of tourism relates with the priority theme: “*Other assistance for improvement of tourism services*” and priority theme: “*Bicycle lanes*” whose allocation was increased within third revision of ROP because the support of bicycle lanes adjacent to the most important tourist destinations with all year round utilization is planned.

Within the **Priority Axis 4** is identified the category of assistance “*Other measures for protection of environment and preventing from risks*”, what correspondents to support of non-commercial rescue services within the ROP. The allocation for this priority theme was slightly reduced, in order to achieve targets set in favour of the separate demand-oriented projects for regeneration of settlements. Interventions into the tangible infrastructure of settlements falling under the priority theme “*Integrated projects of urban and rural areas regeneration*” are in terms of the ROP strategy differentiated into support of separate demand-oriented projects of municipalities and towns, and support of the infrastructure of municipalities with segregated and separated Roma settlements. One of activities for support of the tangible infrastructure of settlements is reconstruction of local communications, what is a component part of the priority theme “*Regional/local roads*”. Allocation for the priority theme “*Infrastructure of housing*” is determined for interventions into housing infrastructure. The amount of allocation takes into account efforts of the Managing Authority to perform a pilot approach with minimal costs and with potential of its wider utilization in the future. Supplementary activity in relation to support of the tangible infrastructure of settlements is support of building or reconstruction of bicycle paths within the priority theme “*Bicycle paths*”. Preparation and updating of development documents at the level of regions falls in terms of theme into the priority theme “*Mechanisms for improvement of drafting policy and programmes, monitoring and evaluation at the state, regional and local levels, development of capacities in submitting strategies and programmes*”.

Priority Axis 5 is included almost exclusively into the priority theme “*Regional/local roads*”. Supplementary activity increasing safety of transport, in relation to support of regional roads, is support of building or reconstruction of bicycle lanes along these roads, within the priority theme “*Bicycle paths*”.

Through the **Priority Axis 6** Technical assistance, it is inevitable to ensure activities related to the preparation, implementation, monitoring, control, but also evaluation of the operational programme. Concurrently, it is necessary to implement activities of information and publicity, and to ensure further related activities. The mentioned activities overlap in terms of themes the priority themes "*Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control*" and "*Evaluation and studies; information and communication*". The allocation of the priority theme "*Evaluation and studies; information and communication*" has been reduced, due to the fact that in the period 2009-2010, the Managing Authority for ROP was forced to provide information and publicity activities using its own limited administrative capacities, what caused lower utilization of funds. Transfer to the priority theme "*Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control*" relates to a major strengthening of administrative capacities in the years 2009 and 2010.

Priority Axis 7 enables to implement partial investment projects of the project European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013, which themes fall under the priority themes "*Development of the cultural infrastructure*" and "*Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage*", but by their specific nature they can not be implemented as separate demand-oriented projects under the Priority Axis 3 ROP.

The Article 9, paragraph 3 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of July 11th, 2006, laying down the General provisions on the ERDF, the ESF and the CF, and repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 states, that the objective of assistance co-financed from the SF and the CF are the EU priorities aimed at support of competitiveness and establishing new jobs. That includes fulfilling the goals of Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Employment (2005-2008), as set in the Council Decision No. 2005/600/EC (1). The EC and the Member States should ensure for this purpose and in accordance to their relevant competence that 60% of expenditures for the Objective Convergence and 75% of expenditures for the Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment for the all EU Member States before 1 May 2004 are set for the given priorities. These targets, based on categories of expenditure in the Annex IV to the General Regulation apply as an average over the entire programming period 2007-2013. The EU Member States, acceding to the EU on May 1st, 2004 or later, can decide on their own, about application of these provisions.

The ROP implemented in the SR in the programming period 2007-2013 contributes indirectly to the fulfilling EU priorities aimed at support of competitiveness and establishing jobs, including fulfilling goals of the Integrated Guideline for Growth and Employment (2005-2008). Although the ROP does not meet directly the codes of assistance categories *Priority topic*, given in Annex IV to the General Regulation, but through its interventions mainly to the structural-technical and transport-technical conditions of regional infrastructure, it establishes conditions for enhancing competitiveness in the area of public services. The ROP, through extending of the existing facilities and building new facilities of the civil infrastructure, contributes to growth of employment.

ROP significantly contributes to the fulfilling priority theme 43 "*Energy Efficiency*". All interventions into the civil infrastructure facilities within the frame of ROP have nature of reduction the energy performance of buildings. In the Slovak conditions, ROP is the operational program, which mostly contributes to fulfilling objectives of this priority in financial terms.

Within framework of the identified strategy of the ROP, no so-called large projects are implemented, in terms of Article 39 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of July 1st, 2006 laying down the General provisions on the ERDF, the ESF and the CF, and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999.

Table 58/2011: Indicative distribution of the ERDF contribution to the category of assistance *Form of financing* in EUR, in current prices

Code of category	Indicative sum of financial resources
01 - Non-repayable assistance (grant)	1,547,703,927
02 - Assistance (loan, interest subvention, guarantees)	6.800,000
03 - Risk capital (participation, risk capital fund)	0
04 - Other forms of financing	0
Total	1,554,503,927

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2011

The Managing Authority for ROP intends to utilize allocations for the priority theme 78 "*Housing infrastructure*" partly also through the financial engineering tools, such as JESSICA. Opportunities of

the innovative financial instruments utilization or other forms of support are ongoing monitored and considered during the programming period 2007-2013 by the Managing Authority for the ROP. Their possible utilization is subject of consultations with the MF SR and with the EC.

Table 59/2012: Indicative distribution of the ERDF contribution to the category of assistance *Type of territory* in EUR, in current prices

Code of category	Indicative sum of financial resources
01 - Urban	623 736 448
02 - Mountain	29 368 252
05 - Rural areas (other than mountain, island and/or under-peopled and very rare settled areas)	856 170 727
00 - Not applicable	45 228 500
Total	1,554,503,927

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2013

Slovakia could be considered as the country of rural character, even when 55% of the SR population live in urban settlements. Indicative allocation to the urban areas is set to a level of almost 50% of disposable contribution from the ERDF to the ROP, what is in accordance with the concentration approach applied in directing support within the frame of ROP. Distribution of the allocation to the types of area is provided also on basis of experience from implementation of the ROP from years 2007-2011. Adjustment of that distribution takes into account the methodology for the categorization of territory, issued by the Central Coordinating Authority in the year 2008:

For the purposes of the project categorization according to territorial area with reference to the Table No. 3 of Annex II, of the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006, due to unification of the input code relevant for the given operational program applies this procedure:

1. To determine the geographical area are used exclusively area codes of the territorial area as defined in the relevant operational program, what the Managing Authority simultaneously specifies in the initialization data within the ITMS.
2. Geographical area for the relevant grant application will be determined by establishing the lowest possible localization of common place for the use of project results, in order (municipality, district, county, and region).
3. Criteria for classification individual territorial units show the Table below.
4. In case of application categories: urban area, rural area and the mountain region at the village level, within frame of one measure, at the territorial categorization of the community first are applied the criteria for mountain area.

Table 60: Assistance location

Assistance location	Urban	Rural	Mountain	Unexercised
Municipality (LAU2)	Innovative growth poles	Municipalities outside growth poles	Altitude of the village center, more than 700 m above sea level including.	It is used only if the territorial categorization for the measure does not apply.
District (LAU1)	Proportion of population living in rural villages in the district population is less than 15% ³⁰	Proportion of population living in rural villages in the district population is higher than 15%15%		It is used only if the territorial categorization for the measure does not apply.

³⁰ Košice I, Košice II, Košice III, Košice IV, Bratislava I, Bratislava II, Bratislava III, Bratislava IV, Bratislava V

County (NUTS III)	Proportion of population living in rural villages in the county population is less than 15%	Proportion of population living in rural villages in the county population is higher than 15%		It is used only if the territorial categorization for the measure does not apply.
Region (NUTS II)	Proportion of population living in rural villages in the region population is less than 15%	Proportion of population living in rural villages in the region population is higher than 15%		It is used only if the territorial categorization for the measure does not apply.

Source: MCRD, 2007

8.4 FINANCIAL PLAN OF THE ROP - REGIONAL ALLOCATIONS

Distribution of disposable contribution from the ERDF to the ROP for the separate NUTS 3 level and NUTS 2 level regions of the Objective Convergence under the conditions existing in the SR is in the following Table. Determination of methodology for distribution of regional allocations represented in the course of the ROP preparation one of the most discussed topics (see Annex 3 Application of the principle of partnership). The Managing Authority for the ROP elaborated in collaboration with external co-workers alternative models for determination of regional allocations, considering results of analyses of individual thematic areas of support within the involved regions, economic performance of regions, and their socio-economic situation.

With respect to the fact that the socio-economic partners did not succeed in taking a joint position concerning to the issue of regional allocations, the Member State adopted decision on disposable allocations distributing of the ROP for the involved NUTS 3 level regions at its own level.

The issue for determining regional allocations was the data on GDP and the number of inhabitants at the level of individual NUTS 3 level regions, according to the following model:

$$W = N \cdot (100/M) \cdot 0.5$$

Where:

N is weight coefficient representing proportion of the population of the given region in the number of the all SR population expressed in percentage

M is GDP of the region per capita for the last three years in percentage, representing share of average GDP per capita for the last three years, given in purchasing power parity, in the given region and the same parameter related to the SR as a whole

W is weight factor giving percentage of the given region proportion in the overall budget of the ROP.

The given model considers the principles of regional policy of the Member country, and existing regional disparities among the individual NUTS 2 level regions.

The specific principles are applying for utilization resources of technical assistance of the ROP (i.e., the Priority Axis 6). Amount of the ERDF contribution for technical assistance of the ROP is less than 3.13% of the total ERDF contribution for the ROP in the programming period 2007-2013.

Table 61/2011: Indicative distribution of the ERDF contribution to the NUTS 2 level and NUTS 3 level regions within the Objective Convergence, under the conditions existing in the SR in EUR, in current prices and in percentage

Regional allocations	NUTS 3							Total in EUR
	TT	TN	NR	ZA	BB	PO	KE	
NUTS 3	9,6%	11,6%	14,6%	14,6%	13,6%	20%	16%	100%
EUR	134,378,064	162,373,494	204,366,639	204,366,639	190,368,924	279,954,300	223,963,440	1,399,771,500
NUTS 2	West - 35,8%			Centre - 28,2%		East - 36%		100%
Total in EUR	501,118,197			394,735,563		503,917,740		1,399,771,500

Note: Basis for calculation of regional allocations does not include allocation of Priority Axes 6 Technical Assistance, 7 European Capital of Culture - Košice 2013, and the amount of additional resources allocated to the ROP pursuant to the SR Government Resolution No. 566/2010.

Source: Managing Authority for ROP, 2011

In the middle of the program period may be said, that continuous achieved variations in performance of regional allocations at the level of whole programme move in the range from -1.65% to + 0.72% in

case of individual NUTS 3 regions. Mechanisms to achieve the planned level of regional allocations are applied primarily in the stage of selection process, when relevant selection committees are working with the budget forecast of the projects. Project budgets vary then in the process of implementation, depending on several factors (adjustment of the budget after public procurement, exhausting of the whole approved amount of grant, cancellation of the project, identifying ineligible expenditures, repayment of a part of grant because of irregularities, generating net income, etc.). Aggregation of these differences from the level of individual projects to the level of measures gives differences on the level of individual areas of the ROP support and individual NUTS 3 regions in order of millions of EUR. Based on these facts, and with the experience of the termination phase of previous shortened programming period 2004-2006 shows, that real information about exact amount of financial resources utilized at the territory of a concrete NUTS 3 region will be available only at finishing the programming period.

The Managing Authority for ROP continuously monitors the fulfilment of the scheduled regional allocations on the level of aggregate of approved contributions, and achieved savings. Measures aimed at meeting the originally set targets (e.g., declaring calls for distribution of the remaining allocations for selected regions only) are adopted on a continuous basis. Being tasked by the ROP Monitoring Committee, the ROP Managing Authority prepared in July 2011 Report on the state of achieving of planned regional allocations in ROP as of June 30th 2011. This report is published on the web page: <http://www.ropka.sk/sk/hodnotenie-rop/>.

Based on additional allocation assigned to the SR, increasing of the allocation for ROP in the year 2010, either the principle of transfer of savings into the Priority Axis 1 ROP does not affect the level of originally planned regional allocations. The allocation to enhance activities of the settlements regeneration and interventions into regional roads, related with elimination of damage after devastating floods in the year 2010, can not be divided into the territory according to the fixed ratio. These interventions are intended to areas identified by mapping of the most affected areas in Slovakia. The Priority Axis 7, which allows to implement investment projects in the frame of ECOC - Košice 2013 is located on the territory of the Košice self-government region indeed, but by agreement among the Managing Authority for ROP, Ministry of Finance SR and the Košice self-governing Region, the allocation for the Priority Axis 7 will separately monitored and reported over the scope of initial distribution of the indicative regional allocations.

9 SYSTEM OF IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 9 describes the system of the ROP implementation, in accordance with the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 of July 11th, 2006. This regulation is laying down the General provisions on the ERDF, the ESF and the CF, and repealing the Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 (hereinafter "General Regulation"), as amended by later changes and completions, and in accordance with the System of the SF and the CF Management for the programming period 2007-2013.

9.1 MANAGEMENT

9.1.1 Central Coordinating Authority

On the basis of Government Resolution No. 832/2006 of October 8th, 2006, the MCRD SR as the Central Coordinating Authority (hereinafter "CCA") insured the strategic level of management NSRF, for programs referred in the NSRF for the period 2007-2013, by June 30th, 2010. With effect from July 1st, 2010 based on the Act No. 37/2010 Coll., which supplemented and amended the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on the organization of activities of government and the central state administration bodies, as amended by later regulations, the MCRD SR was abolished, and its scope of responsibilities as a Central Coordinating Authority moved to the SR Government Office. Based on Act No. 403/2010 Coll. amending and supplementing Act No. 575/2001 Coll. on the organization of activities of government and the central state administration as amended and amending and supplementing certain acts, the CCA tasks have been transferred from the SR Government Office to the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the SR with effect from 1 January 2011.

The CCA position and responsibilities further defines § 6 of the Act No. 528/2008 Coll., on assistance and support provided from the funds of the European Communities, as amended by later regulations. Competence of the individual central state administration bodies are set in the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organization of activities of the government activity and the central state administration bodies, as amended by later regulations (hereinafter called "Competence Act") and in the System of Management Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund for the Programming Period 2007 - 2013.

9.1.2 Managing Authority

In terms of the SR Government Resolution No. 832/2006 of October 8th, 2006, the Managing Authority for the ROP was the MCRD SR. In accordance with the Act No. 37/2010 Coll., which complemented and amended the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organization of activities of the government and the central state administration bodies, as amended by later regulations, the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR fulfils from July 1st, 2010 the role of Managing Authority for the ROP.

The name of the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR has changed to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR in respect of resuming the activity of the Ministry of Environment SR, under the Act No. 372/2010 Coll. The Act No. 372/2010 Coll., amending and supplementing the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organization of activities of the government and the central state administration bodies, as amended by later regulations, with effect from November 1st, 2010. It has been without prejudice to the tasks of the Managing Authority for ROP.

The Managing Authority (hereinafter "the MA") for the operational programme represent operational level of the system of the NSRF management. Based on the Article 59, paragraph 1 of the General Regulation, the MA is an authority appointed by a Member State that is responsible for managing and implementation of the programme in accordance with the EU and the SR regulations. The MA proceeds in the operational programme managing in accordance with the methodical instructions and guidelines of the CCA, and with methodical instructions of the Certifying Authority and the Audit Authority in the relevant areas.

In accordance with the Article 60 of General Regulation, the MA is responsible for managing and implementing of the relevant OP, in particular, for the following:

- a) Elaboration of the operational programme and the programme manual,
- b) Co-financing of the operational programme from the State Budget,
- c) Guiding the Intermediary Bodies under the Managing Authority (hereinafter "the IBMA") and beneficiaries,
- d) Monitoring and evaluation of the operational programme,
- e) Managing the Monitoring Committee for the ROP (hereinafter "the MC for the ROP") and elaboration of the annual and final reports on implementation, submitting these reports to the MC for the ROP and to the EC,
- f) Publicity about assistance from the EU and information of the public about the EU Funds, in accordance with the Article 69 of General Regulation,
- g) Delegating tasks on the IBMA and performing control of the delegated tasks,
- h) Collecting and recording data required for financial management, monitoring, reviewing, audits and evaluation in computerised form,
- i) Archiving and availability of documents, in accordance with the Article 90 of General Regulation,
- j) Receiving and registration of applications for grant,
- k) Evaluating, selecting and approving projects submitted by applicants, in accordance with the criteria for evaluation and selection of the projects, approved by the Monitoring Committee,
- l) Concluding contracts on providing financial grant with beneficiaries,
- m) Control of co-financing of the individual projects from the beneficiary's resources and from other national resources,

- n) Control of delivery co-financed products and services, and control of actually incurred expenses,
- o) Provision of keeping separate accounting system by beneficiaries and other bodies involved into implementation,
- p) Control, pursuant to the Article 60 b) of General Regulation,
- q) Establishing the suitable system of the programme implementation and monitoring,
- r) Establishing and ensuring procedures that ensure that the all documents related to expenses and required audits necessary for provision of correct revision record will keep in accordance with the requirements of the General Regulation.

The description of systems of management and control defines the internal structure and distribution (delegation) of responsibilities of the Managing Authority for the ROP, in accordance with the Article 71 of General Regulation. The Member State will submit this description to the EC prior to submission of the first application for continuous payment, or at latest within 12 months from the ROP approval.

9.1.3 Intermediary Bodies under the Managing Authority for the ROP

In terms of the Article 59, paragraph 2 of General Regulation, the Member State can designate one or more IBMA for fulfilling some or all tasks of the Managing Authority. Delegation of tasks concluded between the MA and the IBMA defines details of tasks designation, in accordance with the Article 12 of the Implementation Regulation and with the System of the SF and the CF management. The final responsibility for performing and implementing the programme, especially towards the EC and the MF SR, remains on the Managing Authority, also in cases of delegating tasks to the IBMA. However, in the case of a negative impact on the financial plan of an operational program because of the wrong proceedings of the IBMA, however, the Managing Authority based on delegation tasks to the IBMA can file towards the IBMA the claim of recourse.

In the programming period 2007-2013, the extent of the regional structures involvement into the implementation of the ROP strengthens significantly, comparing to the shortened programming period 2004-2006. In relation to the ROP implementation, in the programming period 2007-2013 individual self-governing regions, representing the NUTS 3 level regions performs the tasks of the IBMA. The thematic areas of support, which are in decentralised way implemented by individual IBMA, aimed at support of development tourism, regeneration of settlements, and interventions related to the regional communications.

The basic issue for establishing the IBMA for the ROP on the decentralised principle is the SR Government Resolution No. 832/2006 of October 8th, 2006 to the draft of the NSRF update, and SR Government Resolution No. 1014/2006 of December 6th, 2006, through that the draft ROP is approved. It concerns the decision adopted at the level of a Member State, stipulating the scope of delegating at the thematic as well as implementation levels. The process of the ROP preparation, in which the all relevant socio-economic partners participated (Annex 3), preceded the given decision. The scope of tasks delegating at the thematic level is output of the principle of partnership application, and issues from the system of the public administration functioning at the level of a Member State. The implementation system ensures for the potential beneficiaries (i.e., regional and local self-governments, and the non-profit sector) equal and transparent approach from the part of the Managing Authority for the ROP and from the part of the IBMA. The system of implementation and the extent of delegation tasks of the Managing Authority for ROP to the IBMA will be subject of the mid-term review of the operational program, and the results will be reviewed with the possibility of eventual changes.

The delegation of the implementing procedures exercise for the IBMA is in response to the Internal procedures manuals of the MA and IBMA for ROP realized through mutual act between the MA for ROP and each IBMA individually. The implementation and control mechanisms for all measures of the ROP are subject to the same rules as described in the Internal Procedure Manuals of the involved entities.

As far as to implementation level, the scope of tasks delegated to the IBMA is specified in accordance with the SR and the EU legislation as follows:

- a) Cooperation in drafting and publishing calls for submitting projects,

- b) Receiving and registering applications for grant,
- c) Cooperation in appraisal and selecting applications for grant,
- d) Preparing and control of the contracts on providing financial grant concluded with the beneficiaries,
- e) Provision of conducting selection of the relevant operations for support, in accordance with the criteria set pursuant to the SR and the EU legislation,
- f) Provision of recording and archiving detailed accounting records on every operation in computerised form,
- g) Provision of data collecting about implementation, what are necessary for the financial managing, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation,
- h) Provision of compliance requirements for information and publicity, laid down in the Article 69 of General Regulation, in accordance with the approved Communication Plan,
- i) Control of the co-financed works, goods and services delivery, incurred expenses declared by beneficiaries, and their compliance with the SR and the EU legislation, controlling these facts on the spot at selected operations,
- j) Ensuring that the beneficiaries and all other entities participating in the programme implementation will keep a separate accounting system, or suitable code indication of accounts for the transactions linked to the operations,
- k) Provision of the procedures ensuring that all documents concerning expenditures and required audits, necessary for the provision of correct revision record are kept in accordance with the requirements of General Regulation,
- l) Ensuring that the Certifying Authority receives all required information on the procedures and performed verifications concerning to expenditures, for the purposes of performing certification,
- m) Elaboration of relevant sections for Annual reports and Interim Reports on implementation, and elaboration of the Final Report on implementation of the relevant Priority Axis, or thematic area of support.

Proposed system of implementation establishes increased demands for administrative capacities and establishing conditions for parts of the ROP implementation in decentralised manner, at the level of NUTS 3 level regions. The Managing Authority for ROP in the area of delegating execution of some its tasks to the IBMA shall do the following:

- Provides to the IBMA methodological guidelines on fulfilling the delegated tasks,
- Performs coordination of individual IBMAs,
- Supervises over compliance of conducting individual tasks with the relevant audit trail and internal procedures manuals,
- Ensures compliance of individual tasks performing with the SR and the EU legislation,
- Evaluates continuously level of meeting delegated tasks,
- Performs subsequent financial control of the projects implemented by the IBMA.

Detailed description of the processes of management and implementation of the operational programme gives the Internal Procedures Manuals of involved entities.

The preparation of compatible Internal Procedures Manuals of the Managing Authority for the ROP, IBMA for the ROP, Paying Unit for the ROP and relevant control units relates closely to the preparation of administrative capacities of the IBMA for the programming period 2007-2013. The Internal Procedures Manuals of the given entities were elaborated by the expert group at the working level in the first half of the year 2007, while over the entire programming period they were continuously updated in links to changes of external character (e.g., legislation), internal character (e.g., organisational changes), recommendations of internal and external audits, etc. In links to the outputs of the Work Group for the Internal Procedure Manuals preparation, the individual self-governing regions modified their organisational structures according to the qualitative and quantitative standards for conducting decentralised procedures. The Managing Authority elaborated the given standards for

the ROP, based on the implementation and control system applied within the Priority 3 of the OP BI in the shortened programming period 2004-2006, that was several times audited and ongoing arranged by several internal and external entities. Acquisition of administrative capacities of the IBMA, their training and certification is a process linked to the preliminary ongoing systematic audit performed by the MF SR, as the Certifying Authority, while the subject of audit is individually every entity, involved into implementation of the ROP. The Government Resolution No. 407/2007 gives in general terms individual stages of the IBMA preparation until their certification and a separate delegation. Annex 7 gives an indicative time schedule of the preparation of the IBMA.

In the year 2010 there is the ROP is extended by Priority Axis 7, through what will be implemented projects of the ECOC - Košice 2013. Based on this fact, there is a change in description of the management and control systems of the ROP. Based on the agreement of statutory representatives of the Managing Authority for ROP and the Ministry of Culture SR, as subject guaranteed in the long term for the preparation of the project ECOC - Košice 2013, for the ROP Priority Axis 7 implementation is responsible the Ministry of Culture SR as the IBMA. Delegation of tasks to the IBMA and creation of additional administrative arrangements for the implementation of the Priority Axis 7 is expecting no later than by April 1st, 2011.

At the level of implementation is the scope of tasks delegated to the Ministry of Culture SR in position of the IBMA, defined in accordance with the national and EU legislation as follows:

- a) Receiving and registering grant applications,
- b) Evaluation, selection and approval grant applications,
- c) Preparing and reviewing contracts for the financial grants with beneficiaries,
- d) Ensuring provision of selection of relevant operations for support, in accordance with the set criteria, defined in accordance with the national and EU legislation,
- e) Provision of evidence and archiving of detailed accounting records on each operation in computerized form,
- f) Ensuring data collection on implementation, necessary for financial management, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation,
- g) Ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Article No. 55 of General Regulation and its subsequent modifications,
- h) Providing reporting, resolving and administrating irregularities, and responsibility for the irregularities arising in connection with the Priority Axis 7 of ROP implementation,
- i) Ensuring compliance with the requirements for information and publicity, set out in the Article 69 of the General Regulation, in accordance with the approved Communication plan,
- j) Administrative control of the co-financed works, goods and services, incurred expenditures declared by beneficiaries and their compliance with the national and EU legislation, control of these facts on the spot,
- k) Ensuring that beneficiaries and all other entities involved in the program implementation will keep a separate accounting system, or an adequate accounting code indication, for transactions related to operations,
- l) Providing procedures to ensure that all documents regarding expenditures and required audits, needed to ensure proper revision report will be kept in accordance with the requirements of the General Regulation,
- m) Ensuring, that the Certifying Authority receives all necessary information on procedures and performed verifications related to expenditures for purposes of certification,
- n) Elaboration of the relevant parts for the Annual and On going reports on implementation and elaboration of the Final report on the relevant Priority Axis implementation, or thematic area of support implementation, as required by the Managing Authority.

9.1.4 Role of the regional and local self-government authorities

The Managing Authority for the ROP in accordance with the principle of partnership, given in Article 11 of General Regulation establishes conditions for the participation of socio-economic partners in the ROP preparation and implementation. The self-governing regions (i.e., the NUTS 3 level) and the local self-government (i.e., towns and municipalities) are in the SR conditions one of the actors of the regional development.

The regional and local structures (i.e., the self-governing regions and the local self-governments represented in the Slovakia Towns and Municipalities Association with the all-national competence) participated actively in the preparation of the ROP through the attendance at the Working Group for the ROP preparation. In the process of preparation of the ROP, there was established the professional space to the territorial self-governments for participation in defining the priority areas of support of the ROP, in accordance with the elaborated strategies at the local and regional levels and in links to analysis in the field of the regional infrastructure in the Objective Convergence territory.

The self-governing regions of the Objective Convergence territory in the SR participate in the process of implementation of the ROP as the IBMAs, established at the NUTS 3 level regions, they are directly involved into the processes of implementation in selected fields of support of the ROP (e.g., tourism, regeneration of settlements and regional communications). Involvement of the IBMA at the implementation level comprises complex activities of the project cycle: preparation and publishing calls, receipt, appraisal and selection of operations, projects financing, conduct of control processes, monitoring at the level of projects and cooperation in elaborating groundwork documents for monitoring at the level of programme.

Selection of individual operations is performed in the final stage (i.e., after the process of appraisal of individual applications for grant) by the collective bodies, i.e., the selection commissions, where in terms of compliance with the rule of equality of opportunities are represented representatives of territorial self-governments, sector ministries, NGOs, representatives of horizontal priorities and other socio-economic partners. The territorial self-governments are the prevailing majority of eligible beneficiaries within the ROP. With respect to the fact that the eligible self-governing regions are concurrently the founders of some types of the civil infrastructure facilities supported through the ROP, delegating of thematic fields of support to the self-governing regions took into consideration also this aspect, important from the view of ensuring equality of opportunities. The scope of delegating tasks at the thematic level is output of the partnership principle application, issuing from the system of public administration functioning at the level of a Member State. The concrete mechanisms preventing from the potential arising of conflict of interests are content of the ROP Programme Manual and of the Internal Procedure Manuals of the Managing Authority for the ROP and for the IBMA.

In the interest of application the partnership principle in conducting and implementing the ROP, participation of the above given spectrum of socio-economic partners is ensured in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP. Through the membership in the Monitoring Committee for the ROP, the regional self-governments and the representatives of local self-governments have opportunities to participate in fulfilling tasks of the Monitoring Committee, in terms of the Article 65 of General Regulation.

The Managing Authority for ROP provides condition for the socio-economic partners' involvement into the process of the operational program assessment. That realizes their participation in developing the content and structure of the ROP evaluation plan, participation in the process of summarizing data from the monitoring process and through the possibility to initiate evaluation of the program through participation in the Monitoring Committee for ROP, respectively in the Managing Group for evaluation of the ROP (see section 9.3).

In relation to the activities of information and publicity, a part of the communication strategy of the MA for the ROP is active cooperation with the regional self-governments, entities representing the interests of local self-governments and regional development agencies. Section 9.6 gives description of cooperation of the MA for the ROP with the territorial self-governments in the area of information and publicity, and more detailed in the Communication Plan for the ROP, on the preparation of which the self-governments participate. The regional self-governments are involved mainly into the information activities with regional and local nature, and their more active involvement in informing is expecting concurrently in relation to the measures of the ROP implemented in the decentralised manner.

9.1.5 Monitoring Committee for the ROP

In accordance with the Article 63 of General Regulation, the Monitoring Committee (hereinafter “the MC”) is established for every operational programme within three months of its approval by the EC. The role of the MC is to supervise over effectiveness and quality of the programme implementation.

The chairperson of the MC for the ROP is the statutory representative of the ministry, which performs the responsibilities of Managing Authority for ROP (hereinafter “Minister”). The Minister appoints the MC members. In accordance with the Article 11 of General Regulations, staffing of the Monitoring Committee is founded on the principle of partnership. Members of the MC for ROP besides the representatives of the MA for ROP are the relevant ministries, representatives of all regional self-governments in the Objective Convergence territory, entities associating local self-governments, representatives of third sector, SR Government Office, and other socio-economic partners concerned by the content of the given operational programme, while the balanced participation of partners is ensured. In addition, the members of the MC are representatives of the CCA, the Certifying Authority and the Audit Authority. The EC representative and eventually representatives of the European Investment Bank and of the European Investment Fund attend as observers and counsellors sessions of the MC. Modifications and amendments of the statute and rule of procedure of the MV for ROP approves the MV for ROP on its own session.

The MC meets twice per a year as a minimum for its session, or for extraordinary sessions following the initiative of the Managing Authority, or members of the MC more frequently, when it is required to discuss matters to what an approval by the MC is inevitable (e.g., proposal for revision of the operational programme). The statute and the rule of procedure approved by the MC on its first session regulate the MC competences and activities.

The main tasks of the Monitoring Committee in accordance with the Article 65 of General Regulation are the following:

- Approving the criteria for selecting projects (within six months of the operational programme approval) and reviewing them, if required,
- Considering and approving proposals for modification and supplementing the content of the operational programme,
- Regular reviewing of results of the programme implementation, mainly achieving targets/goals of the operational programme, and evaluation given in the Article 48, paragraph 3 of General Regulation,
- Considering and approving annual and final reports on the programme implementation prior to submitting them to the EC,
- Accepting information on the annual control report, or on its sections relevant to the operational programme, and on all significant comments that the EC can raise after its reviewing,
- Proposing any revisions, reviews or assessments of the operational programme that could enable achieving goals/targets of the relevant Fund, or improvement of management of the operational programme, including financial management.

For the purposes of discussion and approval of an annual report on the ROP, the Managing Authority for ROP shall ensure elaboration of a preliminary annual report for the preceding calendar year by April 30th of the following year. After inclusion of possible remarks of the MC members, the MC session discuss the annual report for the preceding calendar year, and the report is submitted to the EC at latest by June 30th of the following year. Possible reflections of the EC are included into the annual report for the preceding calendar year at latest by September 30th of the following year. The MA for ROP shall make available the annual report on its web page. In relation to the preparation and approval of the continuing reports and final report, with exception of respective terms, there are applied the similar procedures as for annual reports. Detailed description of the preparation and approval for reports on the programme gives the Internal Procedures Manual of the MA for the ROP and in the Internal Procedures Manuals of the IBMA for the ROP, elaborated in accordance with the methodical directions of the CCA.

Linkage between the process of monitoring at the level of the programme and the process of assessment of the programmes gives the section 9.3 ROP.

9.1.6 National Monitoring Committee for the NSRF

The representative of the CCA for the NSRF is the chairperson of the National Monitoring Committee for the NSRF (hereinafter "the NMC"). The CCA meets the function of secretariat. The NMC approves at its first session own Statute and Rule of Procedure. NMC members are representatives of central state administration bodies, municipalities and self-governing regions, and other socio-economic partners. Observer is the Permanent Representation of the SR. The EC has advisory function.

The National Monitoring Committee performs mainly the following activities:

- a) Monitoring progress of the NSRF implementation,
- b) Approving annual reports and final report on the NSRF implementation,
- c) Approving plan of strategic evaluations of the NSRF,
- d) Taking cognisance of the results of strategic evaluations, and evaluations carried out within frame of individual operational programs and horizontal priorities, in relation to achieving the objectives of the NSRF.

9.2 MONITORING

In accordance with the System of Management of the SF and the CF, monitoring represents the activity systematic dealing with collecting, sorting, aggregation, and storing of relevant information for the needs of evaluation and control of the managed processes. The main goal of monitoring is to monitor regularly realization of the NSRF goals, implementation of operational programmes and projects, using the system of measurable indicators.

Outputs from the monitoring ensures for the Managing Authority inputs for decision-making for the purpose of improving implementation of the operational programme, drafting annual reports and final report on the operational programme implementation, and groundwork documents for decision-making of the MC (e.g., in relation to a possible revision of the operational programme).

The process of monitoring comes from the structured model of management at the levels of the NSRF, operational programmes, and projects. In connection with the implementation of the ROP is monitoring at the level of individual projects provided as part of measures by the responsible project managers, whether MA or IBMA. The Monitoring and Evaluation Managers of the MA for the ROP, in cooperation with the respective managers of the IBMA ensure monitoring at the levels of Priority Axes and at level of the operational programme as a whole. Results of monitoring at the level of the operational programme, or its Priority Axes, are a component part of annual reports, approved by the MC for the ROP.

Data acquired in the process of monitoring represent a significant source of information for management of the programme, and for decision making of the MA for the ROP and the MC for the ROP. Concurrently, this data is used in the process of the programme assessment, eventually of its diverse aspects (e.g., Priority Axes, groups of beneficiaries, etc.). Time and procedural links between the process of monitoring and assessment at the level of the programme describes the section 9.3 ROP.

All entities involved in the management of the SF and the CF in scope of their defined tasks and responsibilities, and the entities that receive financial resources from the Funds ensure monitoring and assessment.

The tasks of the CCA in the area of monitoring:

- Preparation of the system of indicators for the NSRF, in cooperation with the individual MAs, and its possible updating,
- Coordination and methodological guiding of the MAs in the area of monitoring,
- Exercise of monitoring at the NSRF level.

The tasks of the MA for ROP in the area of monitoring:

- Proceeding in accordance with the CCA methodology in the area of monitoring,
- Submitting to the CCA suggestions for modifications or supplementing of the national system of indicators,

- Responsibility for collecting data and their analysis at the level of the programme in the area of monitoring, through the system of indicators, as well as in the area of monitoring at the level of categories of assistance,
- Responsibility for drafting the annual reports and final report on the operational programme implementation submitted for approval to the MC for ROP and subsequently to the EC.

The tasks of the IBMA in area of monitoring:

- Processing in the area of monitoring in accordance with the CCA methodology,
- Responsibility for collecting data and their analysis at the level of Priority Axes, or more detailed topic spheres of support in the area of monitoring, through the system of indicators, as well as in the area of monitoring at the level of relevant categories of assistance,
- Shared responsibility at the level of Priority Axes, or more detailed topic spheres of support for drafting the annual and continuing reports and final report on the operational programme implementation submitted for approval to the MA and the MC for the ROP.

Monitoring (and subsequent assessment) of the programme performs in two ways: based on the system of indicators, and based on the categories of assistance from the SF, given in General Regulation.

Monitoring through the system of indicators

The objectives of the NSRF and of the individual operational programmes are defined and subsequently quantified in the process of programming, through the set of physical and financial indicators (i.e., the national system of indicators for the NSRF). The indicators are binding for the all entities, and they are a component part of the IT Monitoring System. Meeting the defined indicators represents the most important instrument for monitoring and assessment of fulfilling the objectives of the operational programmes and the NSRF.

The indicators of the ROP at the level of the operational programme present the Chapter 4 and the indicators of the ROP at the level of Priority Axes presents the Chapter 5. The system of given indicators is detailed at the level of measures and at the level of projects.

For the needs of monitoring, the project is the basic unit, what is analysed through the relevant collected data. In the contract on providing financial grant from the ERDF, concluded between the MA for ROP and the beneficiary, the beneficiary undertakes to provide data for the purposes of monitoring and reporting the project. Physical and financial indicators of the projects received from the beneficiaries through the uniform monitoring sheets are projecting into the IT Monitoring System. Indicators and their values are aggregating upwards, from the project level to the level of integrated thematic scope of assistance, Priority Axis, operational programme up to the level of the NSRF. Information on continual fulfilling of indicators at the level of measures, Priority Axes and operational programme are a component part of annual report of the programme submitted to the Monitoring Committee for the ROP, and to the EC.

Monitoring through the categories of assistance from the SF

In accordance with the Article 9 of General Regulation and Annex II of the Implementation Regulation, expenditures from the Funds are monitoring pursuant to following categories:

- Priority topics,
- Form of finance,
- Territory type,
- Economic activity,
- Location of the operation.

Every operational programme comprises an indicative scheduled distribution of contribution from the Funds at the level of the programme within the first three categories. With the category “priority topics” in the operation programme an indicative share of the contribution from the Funds is set apart to such

activities, that aim at support of competitiveness and establishing jobs, thus to the so-called “Lisbon activities”. The given enables to monitor and assess the contribution of the operational programmes to the fulfilling of Lisbon Strategy and the National Reform Programme in the course of implementation of the programme and after its termination. In case of the ROP, contribution to fulfilling the goals of the Lisbon Strategy and of the National Reform Programme has an indirect character.

In monitoring through the categories of assistance from the SF, the following procedure is applied: at the time of the project approval, the data are stored into the ITMS, and after the project finishing the actual values achieved in the given categories are stored. Data aggregates through the ITMS for categorisation from the levels of individual into the higher levels of the programme structure, and they are a component part of the annual reports on the programme submitted to the MC for the ROP, and to the EC.

9.3 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

In accordance with the System of Management of the SF and the CF, assessment represents the process that examines systematically benefits from the implementation of programmes and their compliance with the goals/targets set in the operational programmes and the NSRF, analysing effectiveness of implementation processes and suitability of setting of individual programmes and measures. Assessment prepares recommendations for increasing effectiveness of individual OP. Assessment is based on information collected for this purpose and interpreted separately to obtain assessment.

The tasks of the CCA in the area of assessment:

- Provision of *ex ante* evaluation of the main strategic document for the programming period after the year 2013,
- Provision of ongoing, topic-focused evaluation at the central level,
- Coordination and methodological guidance of the individual MAs in the area of assessment.

The tasks of the MA for the ROP in the area of the programme assessment:

- Provision of procedures in accordance with the CCA methodology in the area of assessment,
- Provision of *ex ante* and ongoing evaluations of the operational programme and submission of results of the ongoing evaluations to the MC for the ROP and to the EC; (process of *ex ante* evaluation of the ROP is described in the section 2.2 ROP),
- Providing communications with the EC and inputs for the following assessment of the ROP, and for possible strategic assessment performed by the EC.

In terms of the Article 47 of General Regulation, assessment can have the strategic character (e.g., examining of a programme development, or of groups of programmes development in relation to the EU priorities and the national priorities), or the operative character (with the aim of supporting the course of an operational programme). Assessment is carried out prior to the beginning of the programming period (*ex ante* evaluation), over it (ongoing evaluation) and after the termination of the programming period (final evaluation).

Assessments are carrying out within the responsibility of a Member State (i.e., the CCA, the MA) or the EC, in accordance with the principle of proportionality. Results are publishing in accordance with applicable regulations on the access to information.

Ex ante assessment of the ROP

The process of *ex ante* assessment in relation to the ROP describes the section 2.2 ROP.

Ongoing evaluation

The process of ongoing evaluation has the form of a series of evaluations; the goal thereof is over the implementation of the programmes to examine continually the scope of resources utilization and to examine effectiveness and efficiency of the programming of funds, social and economic impact, and impact on the priorities of the EU. Concurrently it identifies factors, contributing to success or non-

success of the operational programme implementation, including sustainability and identification of suitable procedures.

Evaluation is carried out systematically and ongoing over the entire duration of the operational programme, till to submission of the Final Report on the operational programme, in terms of the Article 67 of Regulation EC No. 1083/2006. The process of evaluation split into internal and external evaluations, from the view of its conducting. The basic assumptions for preparation of evaluation are the monitoring reports on projects implemented within frame of the respective operational programme and the annual reports submitted to the MC for the ROP. Results of evaluation are groundwork document for decisions of the MA for the ROP and the MC for the ROP in managing of the programme implementation, with aim of achieving required progress in the course to achieving the main economic, social and environmental objectives.

Internal evaluation

Internal evaluation of the ROP is ongoing conducted at the level of every Priority Axis, and it has operative character. Managers for evaluation and monitoring conduct internal evaluation in competence of the MA for the ROP. In addition, the respective administrative capacities of the IBMA contribute in processing and summarisation of data for Priority Axes and measures implemented in the decentralised manner. Results of internal evaluation are a component part of Annual Report on the programme.

After the operational programmes approval by the EC, the MA for the ROP is responsible for the preparation of guide values of output and result indicators (i.e., benchmarking). The guide values (benchmarks) are set out as a share of financial resources allocated for the given measure in the key indicator of output, or in a result given in the operational programme. For the area of technical assistance of the operational programme, benchmarks are prepared with respect to the data of the preceding programme period, and to data for the technical assistance given in the indicator code list.

Comparison of the progress achieved in meeting the output, result and financial indicators at the level of individual Priority Axes is the subject of internal evaluation. Internal evaluation ensures linkage between monitoring and management of the ROP, and its results can be impulse to make decisions aimed at modifications of the operational programme.

Regular outcomes of internal evaluation are included into the respective reports on the programme in transparent table form and graphic depiction.

Part of the process of internal evaluation is also collection of context data, or indicators given in the analytical section of the operational programme, with the aim to document current socio-economic and environmental trends at the respective territorial level.

External ongoing evaluation

The independent experts conduct external evaluation outside of the Managing Authority structures, with aim of determination mainly relevance and suitability of supported measures, in relation to the set general objectives of the programme as well as to identified needs. The basic principles of evaluation are proportionality (i.e., extent and identified risks of OP), independence from the MA, partnership (i.e., participation of the involvement parties in evaluation) and transparency.

External evaluation can be conducted at the level of a large project (it is not applicable in case of the ROP), Priority Axis, operational programme, horizontal priority and/or position and conditions of certain target group. External evaluation can have operative or strategic character.

Operative evaluation aims at the area of performance, with respect to effectiveness of incurred resources amount, efficiency of achieved results, and implementation of the programme from the financial and realization views. Operative evaluations results from the arising circumstances and from the need of their solution and they are not a part of evaluation Plan.

Strategic external evaluation aims at the area of relevance of measures and Priority Axes to the solution of identified problems, suitability of achieved results comparing to anticipated impact on the target groups, and the consistence of support from the SF (i.e., complementarity of individual Priority Axes in achieving the general goals set for the Operational Programmes and the NSRF). Results of all strategic evaluations of the operational programme are a component part of Annual Reports, submitted to the MC for the ROP and the EC.

It is necessary to conduct external evaluation in the following cases:

1. If the achieved outputs and results at the programme level differs based on the findings of monitoring and internal evaluation from anticipated values more, than by values determined in the ROP Evaluation Plan, with an aim of taking required remedy measures;
2. In case of proposed revision of the operational programme, in relation to the social and economic changes in the environment of the programme, with significant changes in priorities at the European, national or regional levels, or with significant problems in the programme implementation (e.g., problems having financial, material or realization nature).

The MA for the ROP compiles an Evaluation plan, in accordance with the CCA instructions, within 12 months since the adoption of the operational programme by the European Commission. The MA for ROP forwards the evaluation plan to the CCA, and submits it for approval to the MC for the ROP. The operational programme as a whole has be assessed over the programming period minimally once, while the evaluated period of the operational programme implementation is not shorter than 2 years and not longer than 4 years since the beginning of the programme implementation. In relation to ongoing evaluation of the ROP, the MA for the ROP establishes and nominates the Managing Group for the ROP Evaluation, what has the following tasks:

- Participates in the preparation of the Evaluation Plan, that is approved by the MA for the ROP (i.e., this Plan contains minimally one strategic evaluation over the programming period),
- Evaluates the results of monitoring at the programme level and the results of ongoing internal evaluation of the operational programme, of its Priority Axes and measures,
- Evaluates the results of external strategic or operative evaluations,
- Recommends to the MA for the ROP to initiate external evaluations of the programme above the framework of operational programme evaluations,
- Submits to the MA for the ROP and to the MV for the ROP motions for taking decisions based on the results of all evaluations of the programme,
- Cooperate with the MA for the ROP in specifying contents of external evaluations.

The permanent members of the Managing Group for the ROP are representatives of relevant sector Ministries, regional self-governments, and entities representing local self-governments. Beside the permanent members, also non-permanent members can participate in the Managing Group for the ROP. The non-permanent members are inviting in dependence on the character of external evaluations (e.g., representatives of the MENV SR and NGOs acting in the environmental field may be invite for evaluation of environmental impacts).

Membership of the Managing Group for ROP goes from the composition of the Monitoring Committee for ROP. In case that sessions does not initiate the Managing Authority for ROP, nor its permanent members, then the role of evaluation in connection with ROP may operative performs the Monitoring Committee for ROP.

Selection of an independent external evaluator provides the MA for the ROP, in accordance with the current regulations for the process of public procurement implementation.

Reports of external evaluations are submitting to the MC for the ROP and to the EC. Results of evaluations are groundwork document for decision-making process in managing of the programme.

***Ex post* assessment**

Subsequent, or *ex post* assessment of the operational programme is carried out in terms of the Article 49 of EC General Regulation in close cooperation with the RO for the ROP. The EC usually appoints an external evaluator to conduct the *ex post* evaluation. *Ex post* assessment is conducted for every operational programme. It examines extent of resources utilization, effectiveness and efficiency of programming of the Fund, and socio-economic impact, aiming at drafting conclusions for the policy of economic and social cohesion. *Ex post* assessment identifies factors contributing to success or non-success of the operational programme implementation, and determines proven procedures. The *Ex post* assessment in relation to the programming period 2007-2013 is terminated by December 31st, 2015.

Evaluation of every of these three stages must concern the set of specific questions with respect to performance of the programme. Monitoring indicators represents the main source of information based on what the evaluation should have done. Concurrently, these indicators are subject of specific evaluations in various stages.

9.4 IT MONITORING SYSTEM FOR THE STRUCTURAL FUNDS AND THE COHESION FUND

The IT Monitoring System for of the SF and the CF (hereinafter "the ITMS") is a central information system serving for recording, processing, exporting and monitoring data on the programming, project and financial management, control and audit of the CR and the CF. It comprises of the two parallel working sub-systems for the programming periods 2004-2006 and 2007-2013. The sub-systems for both two programming periods cooperate closely, utilising the shared database and within it, the common records of objects.

All operational programmes utilize the ITMS to the same degree. The joint monitoring system has the task to ensure the unified and compatible system of monitoring, managing and financial managing of the programmes financed from the SF and the CF.

The system divides into the three main sections:

1. Non-public section of the ITMS ensures the programme, project and financial management, control and audit, in interconnection to the Information System of Accounting Funds (hereinafter "the ISAF"), and through it to the State Treasury and the Budget Information System,
2. Output section ensures compiling of static and dynamic data exports,
3. Public section ensures communication with beneficiaries, with the information system of the EC SFC2007, and with the monitoring systems of surrounding countries for the programmes of cross-border cooperation.

Eligible users of the public section of the ITMS system can be, based on applications, all entities that have opportunity to submit a grant application from the Funds. Communication of the applicants/beneficiaries with the ITMS public section provides the SSL protocol. The CCA elaborates a manual for beneficiaries for using the public section of ITMS. Applicants/beneficiaries of contribution from the Funds can perform through the public section of ITMS the following:

- Electronic submission and receipt of grant applications from the Funds,
- Acquisition of well arranged information about the processes status of their projects, including requests for payment /refund of expenditures,
- Other opportunities (data updating on beneficiaries, electronic receiving applications for payment, electronic receiving of monitoring reports).

The ITMS and the communication processes of beneficiaries on grant from the Funds at the project level are as follows:

- Establishing account, signing of agreement on using between the MA and beneficiaries of the grant from the Funds, account activation,
- Data entry into electronic forms and their transfer into the public section of ITMS,
- Verification of information compliance in the electronic and paper form by the user of non-public section of the ITMS,
- Further processing of applications after control and correction of the applications potential discordances between the computerised and paper form.

Tasks of the CCA in relation to the ITMS:

- Responsibility for development, operation and maintenance of the system, providing operations of all ITMS sections,
- Managing the commission where every MA has its representative; this commission suggests aiming of development, communicate the MA requirements to the CCA, manage and regulate users of the system according to the CCA instructions and guidelines, answers for data initialisation of the system,

- Elaborating guidelines for the ITMS utilization,
- Keeping the initialisation data at the level of the NSRF updated.

Tasks of the MA in relation to the ITMS:

- Keeping the initialisation data of its programme updated,
- Responsibility for data entry on the programme, projects and subordinated structures, pursuant to the CCA instructions to the ITMS utilization,
- Responsibility for appointing roles to the users pursuant to the internal manuals,
- Providing the first levels support for users of the public and non-public sections of the ITMS.

Tasks of the IBMA in relation to the ITMS:

- Keeping the initialisation data of its programme updated,
- Responsibility for data entry on the programme, projects and subordinated structures, pursuant to the CCA instructions to the ITMS utilization,
- Responsibility for appointing roles to the users according to the internal manuals,
- Providing the first level support to the users of the public and non-public sections of the ITMS.

9.5 ELECTRONIC DATA EXCHANGE WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

In terms of the Section 7 of Implementation Regulation, electronic communication of the Member State with the database EC SFC2007 is compulsory.

The following two alternatives of electronic communications are available:

- Web interface SFC2007,
- Integration of the monitoring systems (of individual Member States) with the SFC2007.

In Slovakia, was chosen the second method, namely the integration of ITMS II with the SFC2007 system. ITMS II provides data collection and communication with SFC2007. It is possible to use the web interface of SFC2007 for individual MA; however, the interface ITMS II utilization assures integrity of data in both systems and saves time for data entry. In case of any failure or malfunction of the ITMS or its interface it is possible to use the web interface for data entry into the SFC2007, after the consent of the CCA, however, person entering this data is responsible for data harmonization in both systems.

The ITMS II and SFC2007 interfaces enable the following:

- Import of the allocated amount from the SF and the CF for the SR breakdown according to the objectives, in fixed prices of the year 2004 and in current prices,
- Export of the NSRF,
- Export of the operational programmes and Priority Axes,
- Export of the large projects,
- Export of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance,
- Import of the EC Decisions on the operational programmes,
- Categorisations of the EU Funds breakdown,
- Export of estimates of the expected expenditures,
- Applications for payment to the EC,
- Declaration on the partial closure of a programme,
- Export of the management and control systems descriptions,
- Export of annual reports,

- Export of final reports,
- Export of final payment,
- Settlement according to the rule (n+2), or (n+3),
- Export of non-structured data: the NSRF,
- Import of non-structured data (the EC Decision on the NSRF and on the operational programmes).

Ensuring the ITMS II and the SFC2007 communication at the system level use advanced/guaranteed electronic signature issued for the ITMS II.

The so-called MS Liaison in every Member State is responsible for identification of the users and client systems within the SFC2007. As far as to the SR, the role of the MS Liaison for the ERDF, ESF and CF discharges an appointed responsible person of the CCA. All applications for access to the web interface SFC2007, and for change in the access rights are forwarding to the CCA. The MS Liaison after formal and content check of application communicates with the European Commission in establishing and activation of the user's account. The European Commission forwards the access passwords in two parts; the user receives the first part, and the MS Liaison receives the second part.

9.6 INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

Information and publicity about the opportunities of obtaining support from the SF, and on impacts of individual interventions aims at visualisation and increasing of awareness on the EU Cohesion Policy in the individual EU Member States realized through the targeted directing of resources from the SF into the priority areas of assistance. In terms of Article 69 of General Regulation, the Member State and the Managing Authority provide information for citizens and beneficiaries on the co-financing programmes, with an aim to emphasize role of the Community, and to ensure transparency of assistance coming from the Funds.

For the purposes of ensuring information and publicity, the Managing Authority elaborates a Communication Plan for the respective operational programme, and submits it to the EC within four months of the operational programme approval. In the Communication plan implementing, the MA ensures performing of all measures on information and publicity, in terms of the Articles 5 to 7 of Implementation Regulation.

The Communication Plan for the ROP (hereinafter "the CP") represents the basic framework for the area of publicity and information in relation to the ROP implementation in the programming period 2007-2013. Contents and aiming of the CP arranges the Chapter II of Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006. In terms of the given regulation, the CP is submitting to the EC for approval, while the MA for the ROP may conduct activities of information and publicity before its approval by the EC as well. The CP hereby defines detailed strategy of the MA for the ROP for achieving goals in the area of information and publicity. Concurrently, the CP identifies target groups for information and publicity, and describes implementation of activities in accordance with indicative budget and time schedule. In addition, the CP comprises a guide for evaluation of measures in the area of information and publicity, as far as to visualisation of the operational programme and awareness regarding it, and on the role of the EU.

One CP is elaborated within the context of the ROP implemented during the programming period 2007-2013; the MA prepared that for the ROP, individual IBMAs (i.e., self-government regions), regional development agencies, and eventually other entities. The target groups of the CP are mainly beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries, but also regional development agencies, territorial self-governments (not as beneficiaries), interest association of legal and natural persons, non-governmental sector, entrepreneur environment and the general public. The goal of the CP is the following:

- Inform about the roles of the EU, the MA for ROP and the IBMA for ROP, and the Monitoring Committee for ROP,

- Inform about the operational programme, its position and role within the NSRF, as well as about its objectives,
- Ensure informing of the potential beneficiaries on the ROP strategy, objectives and Priority Axes, measures and conditions of eligibility, that beneficiaries should meet to be qualified for financing of activities or measures within the operational programme,
- Inform about options and benefits provided through the SF in the interest to enhance positive picture of the SF, and on the role of the EU in cooperation with the SR within frame of the structural assistance, on contacts on the national, regional or local levels that can provide information about the operational programme,
- Inform about opportunities to acquire support within the ROP (e.g., current calls, frequent questions, counselling in preparing projects, etc.),
- Provide current, precise and understandable information about already implemented operations, their impacts, and on current state of the ROP implementation according to Priority Axes and measures, and on actual state of the financial resources drawing for the operational programme,
- Coordination of all information activities of the MA for the ROP and involved IBMAs,
- Ensure availability of information through various communication channels to the diverse target groups.

Considering the scope and method of implementation of information and publicity activities in 2007-2010 and the anticipated extent of activities for 2011-2015, the total indicative budget for the CP implementation for the ROP is set to amount of € 5 million. The given budget is co-financed through the Priority Axis 6 Technical Assistance of the ROP. The budget and the information and publicity activities are reflected in the CP and individual annual operative plans, in which the Managing Authority in cooperation with IBMA defines the budget and schedule of activities for a relevant year based on the current ROP implementation needs.

Implementation of the CP for the ROP during the entire programming period ensures the information managers of the MA for the ROP and at every IBMA. In addition, also other representatives of the MA for ROP and the IBMA for ROP participate in information and publicity, however mainly the representatives in position of chief managers. The given demand for administrative capacities is indicative, and may be reinforce operatively from the external or internal resources of the MA or the IBMA. The regional self-governments are involved mainly into the information activities with regional and local nature, and their more active participation in informing expects in relation with the ROP measures implemented in the decentralised manner. Activities of the partnership regional development agencies, acting in the territory of Objective Convergence, is aimed mainly at information and counselling to a broader spectrum of beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries in relation to elaboration and submitting grant applications, and in relation with monitoring of projects and submission of requests for payment. An external agency is involved into the activities of information and publicity, which requires professional approach; this agency selected in the process of public procurement participates in the preparation of information publications, medial presentations of the ROP, organising all-national information events, and other activities requiring professional approach in the area of public relations. The main sources of information about the current state of implementation of the ROP, its Priority Axes and measures, is the Internet page of the MA for the ROP and pages of separate IBMAs.

Detailed description on activities of information and publicity is in the contents of the CP. The framework content of activities at the minimum level is set as follows:

- Main information activity; publicizing activation of the operation programme, within one month since the adoption of the ROP by the EC, also in case on non-existing final version of the CP (i.e. medial presentation of the ROP, publishing of the operational programme and, following of programme manual and guide for beneficiary, all-national event linked with presentation of the ROP for the relevant actors of regional development, and following presentations in the individual NUTS 3 level regions),
- Minimally one large information activity (e.g., all-national conference) per year during the programming period, as stipulated in the CP, through that are presented results of the operational programme, and following regional conference,

- Hoisting European flag for one week from May 9th, in front of the MA premises,
- Publicizing a list of beneficiaries, name of operations and amounts of public resources allocated for these operations at the Internet page of the MA for the ROP, the IBMA page, , ongoing over the entire programming period.

Several entities from the level of the NSRF and individual operational programmes are involved into activities of information and publicity, in relation to the Structural Funds in the programming period 2007-2013.

The tasks of the CCA in the area of information and publicity:

- Elaborates and implementation of the Central Communication Action Plan for the SF and the CF (hereinafter "the CCAP"), comprising the sectional activities for the all operational programmes,
- Coordinates and methodologically guide the Managing Authorities in the area of information and publicity,
- Provides the integrated network operation of the regional development agencies, coordination of working group for publicity, and operation of the information portal, which is a joint instrument for all managing authorities for the operational programmes in years 2007-2013, issues information bulleting on the SF,
- Acts as contact body to the European Commission and to the EU's communication networks, and notify the individual Managing Authorities.

Tasks of the MA in the area of information and publicity:

- Elaborates and implementation of the Communication Plan for the ROP,
- Submits the Communication Plan to the European Commission within four months from the ROP approval,
- Including the area of publicity and information into the annual and final reports on the ROP implementation,
- Notifies to the Monitoring Committee for the ROP on progress of the Communication Plan implementation, as well as on activities performed and planned,
- Ensures compliance with the provisions of the Article 8 of Implementation Regulation on the part of the beneficiary (i.e., duty to inform the public on assistance provided from the Funds), namely through incorporating these matters in contract for grant provision, concluded between the beneficiary and the MA.

Tasks of the IBMA in the area of information and publicity:

- Ensures monitoring of compliance with the provisions of the Article 8 of Implementation Regulation by the beneficiaries (the duty to inform the public about assistance provided from the Funds), through incorporating these matters in contract for grant provision, concluded between the beneficiary and the MA,
- Notifies to the Monitoring Committee for the ROP on progress of the Communication Plan implementation, as well as on activities performed and planned,
- Collaborates with the MA for ROP in the preparation of the Annual operative plan for the following calendar year,
- Ensures activities of information and publicity on the basis of the Information Activities Plan, elaborated in accordance with the Communication Plan for ROP, which reflects the region's needs in the area of information and publicity,
- Organizes events (conferences, seminars, meetings), and provides for this purpose, brochures and other publications, in connection with the information and publicity activities within the region.

9.7 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, CONTROL AND AUDIT

The System of financial management of the SF and the CF includes a complex of mutually linked and interconnected sub-systems and activities, through that is ensured effective financial planning, budgeting, accounting, reporting, payments to beneficiaries, monitoring of financial flows and financial control and audit in implementing assistance from the EU. The following entities are involved into the System of financial management of the operational programme:

- Managing Authority,
- Intermediate Bodies under Managing Authority,
- Certifying Authority,
- Payment Unit,
- Audit Authority
- Central Coordinating Authority.

Functions of the **MA for the ROP** are set out in the section 9.1.2.

Functions of the **IBMA for the ROP** are set out in the section 9.1.3.

The MF SR performs the functions of the Certifying Authority. The Certifying Authority ensures, primarily, the following:

- Coordination and methodological guiding in relation to the financial management of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund, including coordination of Payment Units activities,
- Compilation and forwarding of the applications for continual payments and application for final payment to the European Commission,
- Administrative verification of the summary application for payment concerning preliminary financial control,
- Verification through certification at all levels of the financial management, including the level of beneficiary, with the aim of assuring on the procedures of the Managing Authority, of the Intermediate Authority under the Managing Authority, and the Payment Unit,
- Compiling, certification and submitting of statements of expenditure to the EC as an integral part of applications for continual and final payment based on partial statements of expenditures and approved summary applications for payment submitted by Payment Units and verification of selected administrative control notations elaborated by Managing Authorities,
- Receipt of resources from the EU to the specific off-budgetary accounts of the MF SR,
- Transfer of financial resources from the EU to the beneficiary through the Payment Unit,
- Compiling and submitting an estimate of the expected expenditures for the respective and subsequent year to the European Commission, based on the groundwork documents from the Managing Authorities, annually by the end of April,
- Keeping the book of debtors,
- Compiling the statement of resources refunded, to be refunded, excluded from the statement of expenditures, or where cannot be assumed that resources will be paid back as of December 31th of the preceding year, in structuring according to Priority Axes and years when was issued recovery order, and its submitting to the EC by March 31st,
- Financial corrections of resources from the EU, based on the requirements of the European Commission,

- Refunding of resources non-illegibly used or non-used to the European Commission, including of interest on late payment,
- Introducing of the uniform system of accounting for the Certifying Authority and the Payment Units (i.e., the Information System for Accounting Funds, abbreviated as the ISAF),
- Bookkeeping, financial reporting, and keeping and saving documents/records.

The Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the SR provided the function of the Payment Unit by June 30th, 2010. Based on Act No. 37/2010 Coll., which amended the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organisation of activities of government and the central state administration bodies, as amended by later regulations, a unit of the **Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR**, functionally separated from the body which performs the role of MA for ROP performed the tasks of the payment unit for ROP from July 1st, 2010 until October 31st, 2010. With effect from November 1st, 2010, under the amended wording of the Act No. 575/2001 Coll., on organisation of activities of government and the central state administration bodies, as amended by later regulations, the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development SR was renamed to the **Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the SR. The Payment Unit ensures primarily the following:**

- Preliminary financial verification of applications for payment concerning verification of formal correctness of the documents submitted by the Managing Authority or the IBMA, compliance verification between applications for payment with the project budget and with the budget limit for the relevant priority axis and measure,
- Transfer of resources from the EU and the State Budget for co-funding to the beneficiaries,
- Completing and submitting the summary application for payment and the partial statements of expenditures to the Certifying Authority,
- Book-keeping, financial reporting, and keeping documents/records;
- Keeping the partial book of debtors.

Within the ministry, the functions of the Managing Authority and of the Payment Unit provided separate, organizationally unrelated units.

The Audit and Control Division of the Ministry of Finance SR provides the functions of the Audit Authority.

Main tasks of the Audit Authority are:

- a) Elaboration of report on outcome from assessment of systems introducing, according to the paragraph 2, Article 71 of the Council (EC) Regulation No. 1083/2006,
- b) Ensuring, that system audits are performed with the aim of examining the effective functioning of the system of the operational programme management and control,
- c) Ensuring, that audits of operations are performed on a suitable sample with the aim to verify eligibility of declared expenditures to the EC,
- d) Submit the strategy of the audit to the European Commission within nine months from the operational programme approval. The strategy has cover the Audit Authority and the bodies performing the governmental audits under direction of the Audit Authority (in terms of the Act No.528 Coll., on assistance and support provided from the EU Funds, as amended by later regulations (hereinafter referred as "cooperating authorities")) given in letters b) and c). Moreover the strategy covers used methodology, method of samples selection for audits of operations, and an indicative plan of audits, with an aim of ensuring that the main entities are subject to auditing, and that audits are scheduled evenly during the whole programming period, . Where a joint system applies for several operational programmes, it is possible to submit the single strategy of audit,
- e) From December 31st, 2008 to the year 2015 every year is responsible for the following:
 - (i) Submitting annual control report for the operational programme to the European Commission, comprising found out facts of audits performed over the preceding 12-month

- period ending on June 30th of the concerned year, in accordance with the strategy of audit of the operational programme, stating deficiencies identified in the systems of management and control of the programme. The first report submitted by December 31st, 2008, covering the period from January 1st, 2007 to June 30th, 2008. Information concerning the audits performed after July 1st, 2015 will be included into the final audit report, that is a basis for the declaration on termination, given in letter f),
- (ii) Based on governmental controls and audits performed under its management, issuing attitude concerned whether the system of management and control of the operational programme functions enough effectively to ensure the adequate guaranty, that the statements of expenditures submitted to the EC are correct, and based on that an adequate guarantee that the respective transactions are legal and accurate,
 - (iii) Submission of declaration on partial closure, in the cases laid down in the Article 88 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, assessing which legality and correctness of the respective expenditures. Where a joint system applies on several operational programmes, the information given in point (i) can be summarised collectively into a single report, and the attitude and the declaration issued according to points (ii) and (iii) may include all the relevant operational programmes,
- f) Submission of declaration on partial closure of the operational programme to the EC at latest by March 31st, 2017, what assesses validity of the application for final payment and legality and correctness of the respective transactions included into the final statement of expenditures, attached with the final audit report.

The MF SR these functions ensures through organizationally unrelated units. Function of the Audit Authority performs the Audit and Control Division of the MF SR, what is under the direct managing competence of the Minister of Finance SR. Function of the Certifying Authority performs European and International Affairs Division, what is under the direct managing competence of the State Secretary of the MF SR.

Ministry of Finance as the Audit Authority concludes after fulfilling specified conditions Agreements on rules of cooperation between the Audit Authority and the Cooperating Authorities with the cooperating authorities. Condition for the Agreement concluding does not apply to the Financial Control Administrations (Bratislava, Zvolen, Košice), whereas they are departmental organizations of the MF SR. The Audit Authority and the Cooperating Authorities performs government audit in accordance with the Act No. 502/2001 Coll., on financial control and internal audit, and on amendment of certain acts as amended by later regulations, and in the audit performance they are governed by the applicable Procedures for government audit of the Structural Funds, Cohesion Fund and European Fisheries Fund, which are drawn by the Audit and Control Division of the MF SR. Details on the activities listed in the individual articles of these Procedures are defined in the methodological directions, elaborated by the Audit and Control Division of the MF SR. The Audit Authority ensures the coordination, supervision and methodical guidance in the exercising of the government audit.

System of financial flows

The European Commission transfers payments of financial resources from the EU to the specific account of the Certifying Authority of the Ministry of Finance of the SR, kept in the State Treasury within the liability adopted by the European Commission. Payments of financial resources from the EU to the beneficiaries are realized through the State Budget.

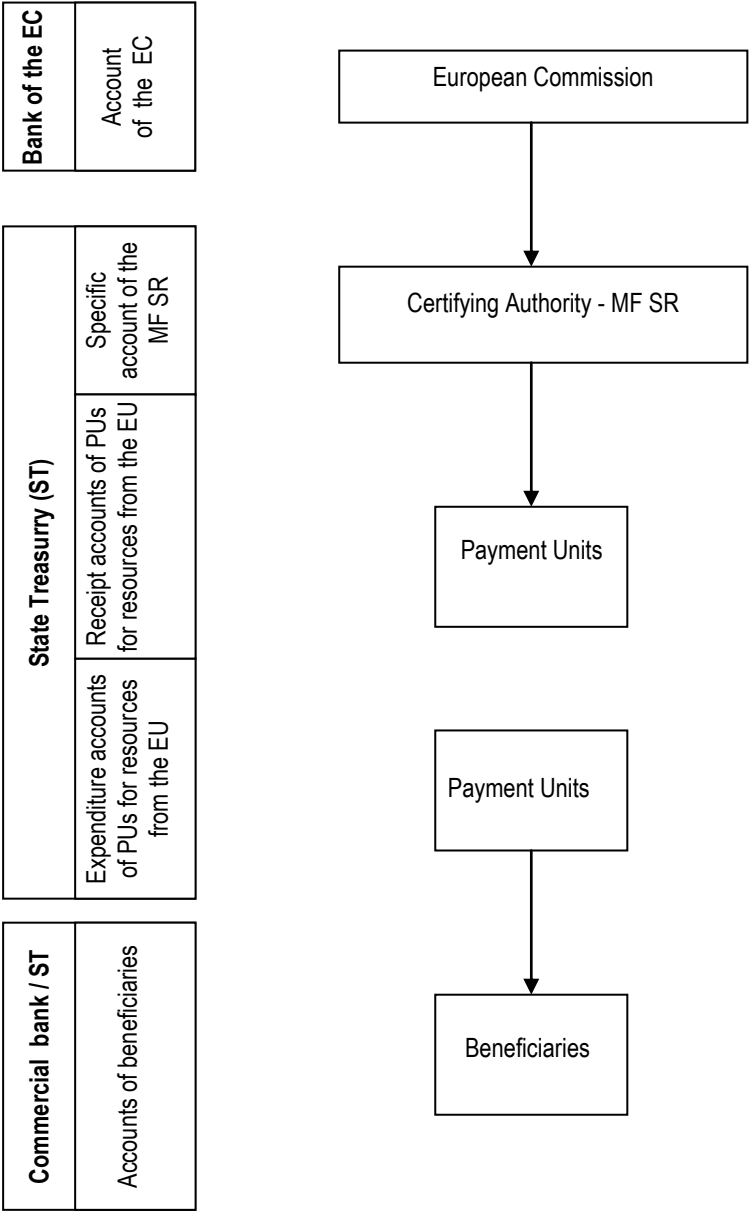
The financial resources from the EU and the resources from the State Budget for the co-financing are paid to the beneficiaries through the medium of the Payment Unit concurrently based on the contract on providing grant (i.e., non-returnable financial contribution) in the respective rate specified for the project.

The Payment Unit makes payment of resources of the EU and co-financing from the state budget to the beneficiaries in an amount approved by the Certifying Authority, based on application for summary payment in case of the refunding system. In case of system of advance payments or pre-financing, the

Payment Unit makes payments to the beneficiaries in an amount approved in application for advance payment or pre-financing, without the preceding consent of the Certifying Authority,

Detailed description of the financial management is determined in the Financial Management System of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for the programming period 2007-2013, approved through the SR Government Resolution No. 835/2006 of October 8th, 2006, and published at www.finance.gov.sk.

Scheme of financial flows of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund



Scheme of financial flows of national co-financing from the State Budget

