DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

23SK04 – INCREASE ESIF ABSORPTION, ELIMINATE GOLD-PLATING AND PROVIDE RESULT-ORIENTED INVESTMENTS IN THE 2021-2027 PERIOD

REFORM/OECD CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

REFORM/IM2023/005

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Beneficiary EU Member State(s) authority(-ies), target groups and other Stakeholders

The Slovak Republic has requested support from the European Commission under Regulation (EU) 2021/240 establishing a Technical Support Instrument ("TSI Regulation").[1] The request for technical support was assessed by the European Commission in accordance with the criteria and principles referred to in Article 9 of the TSI Regulation and was selected for funding.

The national authority that requested technical support and will benefit from this Project is the Government Office of the Slovak Republic (*Úrad Vlády Slovenskej Republiky*). Other beneficiaries will include:

- The Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Digitalisation (*Ministerstvo investícií, regionálneho rozvoja a informatizácie Slovenskej republiky*).
- Regional and local governments of Slovakia and their associations
- European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) managing/intermediate/implementing bodies

1.2 Contracting Authority

The Contracting authority is the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM). The mission of DG REFORM is to promote the European Union's economic, social and territorial cohesion by supporting EU Member States' efforts to implement reforms.

1.3 Context of the Project

The Slovak Republic suffers from chronically low distribution and absorption capacity of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). In 2014-2020, the Slovak Republic benefited from a total Cohesion Policy envelope of EUR 20.8 billion, allocated to nine national programmes[2] and accounting for 60% of total public investment in the country. Even though 2014-2020 was the third programming period in which the Slovak Republic participated, the system of effective implementation of Cohesion Policy is showing signs of inefficiency. By the end of 2022, the Slovak Republic had spent only EUR 13.2 billion/ 63% of the total planned investments. In particular, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) were among the least spent funds, with only 55% and 30% respectively implemented by the end of 2022. This is in part due to the insufficient administrative capacity of the Managing Authorities, the complexity of the existing management system, the system of financial management and control of the ESIF and delays in implementation of projects due to complex and lengthy public procurement procedures. Indeed, the ESIF-related public procurement procedures involve additional layers of controls and a broader set of stakeholders at multiple stages of the public procurement lifecycle. Despite a set of simplifications developed by the central coordination body between 2020-2022, only some of them were put in place by a critical mass of Managing Authorities.

In the programming period 2021-2027, the Slovak Republic will benefit from EUR 15.6 billion from the ERDF, the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), Cohesion Fund (CF) and Just Transition Fund (JTF),

[1] Regulation (EU) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 February 2021 establishing a Technical Support Instrument, OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p. 1–16. http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/240/oj

[2] In 2019, the Programme Research and Innovation was merged with the Programme Integrated Infrastructure, leading to a total of eight national programmes.

hereinafter 'the Funds'; by 2026, the country should also implement its Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) with a total of EUR 6.3 billion in grants (about 6.7% of 2019 GDP) to address the country's main socioeconomic and environmental challenges.

Despite this inefficiency and the fact that most public investments come from the Funds, there has been no effective reform effort up to now to improve their administration. The Slovak Republic is now adopting steps to reform the governance structures that manage the Funds for period 2021-2027 by combining all programmes into one, i.e. Programme Slovakia. The EMFAF[3] programme will continue to be managed separately by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Slovakia is also centralising the oversight of these funds (except the EMFAF programme) within one single Managing Authority in the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatisation, i.e. the 'MIRDI', which is also the central coordination body in Slovakia, with multiple intermediate bodies. This reform opens up new opportunities to review the legislation and management system of the funds and find opportunities to simplify, streamline and speed up the implementation of the Cohesion Policy.

This Project aims at helping to redesign the governance and implementation of the Funds' investments in the Slovak Republic from its foundations with a view to addressing the issues mentioned above. The Project will include a detailed review of the existing legal frameworks, management and control systems and guidance to identify opportunities to reduce overlap and gold plating, boost the overall administrative capacity of the various actors across the management, implementation and control systems, and better understand the needs and capacities of beneficiaries. The Project will result in a specific proposed action plan and will include support for its implementation; it will take into consideration the results of project "Action Plan for Research and Innovation ESIF Implementation" implemented by the OECD with the support of DG REFORM under TSI 2020 (SRSP2020/44.01).

[3]The EMFF has been renamed to 'European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund' (EMFAF) under the 2021-2027 Programming Period.

2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

2.1 Objective

The general objective of this Project is to support the Slovak Republic in its efforts to implement reforms, which could encourage investment, increase competitiveness, and assist in achieving sustainable economic and social convergence, resilience and recovery. This should also strengthen its institutional and administrative capacity, including at regional and local levels, to facilitate socially inclusive, green and digital transitions, to effectively address the challenges identified in the country-specific recommendations and to implement Union law.

The specific objective of this Project is:

- to support the Slovak Republic to design, develop and implement reforms.

The achievement of the objectives of this Project will depend on the follow-up actions undertaken by the Slovak Republic.

2.2 Purpose

The technical support will be provided in the area of ESIF management, with the purpose of simplifying, streamlining and speeding up the cohesion policy implementation processes, identifying bottlenecks related to the overall ESIF investment environment, including overall capacity of key public beneficiaries, with a view to reducing gold-plating and increasing ESIF absorption to provide result-oriented investments in the 2021-2027 period, under the conditions set in the Contribution Agreement REFORM/IM2023/005 (hereinafter "the Agreement").

The implementation of the Project contributes to the ongoing reform of the administration of ESIF and other EU funds in the Slovak Republic.

The expected long-term effect of this Project (**impact**) is to contribute to increased ESIF absorption to provide results-oriented investments in the 2021-2027 period.

In addition, the Project is expected to produce additional effects in short and/ or medium term (**outcome**). The outcomes are the following:

- Simplified procedures and the proposed action plan for improving ESIF absorption are adopted
- The implementation of the proposed action plan is initiated and the Project's results are disseminated by relevant Slovak authorities

The Slovak Republic will be responsible for achieving the outcomes contributing to the long-term impact of this Project, by following the necessary actions to ensure the implementation of the outputs linked to this Project and subsequent enforcement of wider policies, which remain outside the responsibility of the European Commission and the OECD. The Slovak Republic therefore remains in control of their national structural reform, and of the adoption and implementation of the required policy options and legislation needed to achieve it.

2.3 Implementation of the Project: outputs and activities

Output 1: Kick-off meeting

A kick-off meeting will be organised with the Advisory Group (AG)[4]. The objective of this meeting is to discuss all relevant operational aspects of the Project in accordance with provisions of the Agreement and this DPD (this may include, for example, activities and their timing, focus areas, identified risks and mitigation measures, etc.) with the view to ensure clear understanding of the Project among the participants. In addition, any other point relevant for implementation of this Project could be presented and further discussed. The OECD will present preliminary findings as regards the processes and guidance developed by MIRDI for the management of the Funds.

The OECD will prepare the meeting; this will include preparing agenda and presentation, liaising with the participants, and, following the meeting, drafting short minutes for distribution to the AG.

Output 2: Review of the ESIF ecosystem in the Slovak Republic

The OECD will review the legal, institutional and management frameworks that govern the entire Funds' ecosystem in the Slovak Republic, with a view to identify bottlenecks and opportunities for simplification. The review will include: (i) legal and sub-legal frameworks, (ii) management and control system documentation at national level, including simplified cost options and financing not linked to costs, (iii) public procurement guidance and practices, (iv) the structures and division of responsibilities for the Funds' implementing bodies (including the central coordination body, Managing Authority, intermediate bodies, regional governments, audit authorities including Government Audit Office, certification body, and the public procurement office), (v) a mapping of challenges of the Funds' beneficiaries, focusing on overall capacity of key public beneficiaries.

Activity 2.1: Support the establishment of a Joint Working Commission

The Slovak authorities will establish a Joint Working Commission (JWC) composed of the representatives of government bodies that are responsible for the implementation of the Funds, including the MIRDI as a managing authority for Programme Slovakia, representatives of intermediary bodies, the Ministry of Finance, the Public Procurement Office, key public beneficiaries, the Antimonopoly Office and the OECD. The MARD (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development – as a Managing Authority for EMFAF programme), the associations representing regional and local governments, the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Civil Society could be invited as observers. The OECD will advise the Slovak authorities on the establishment of the JWC, provide input on the agenda of the first meeting and help to facilitate this meeting. In addition, the OECD will continue to participate in JWC meetings as a member for the duration of the Project, establishing agenda items in accordance with project progress.

The JWC will act as a consultative body during the review phase of the Project and will provide advice on the development and implementation of the action plan, as defined in outputs 3 and 4. This will include identifying areas where changes are needed to legal frameworks, as identified by the Review, and presenting

[4] According to Annex I attached to the Agreement *"an Advisory Group will be established at the beginning of each project and will be composed of representatives of the relevant EU Member State beneficiary authority(-ies), DG REFORM and OECD. This Advisory Group will convene regularly to take stock of the status of activities, review output progression and advice on the implementation of the relevant project"*.

concrete suggestions for change. The Slovak project team will be responsible for inviting members and ensuring their engagement throughout the project.

Activity 2.2: Collect documents and scoping interviews

The OECD will collect and review relevant documentation from the Slovak authorities including legislation, regulations, management and control system documentation, public procurement guidance and practices and other relevant material. The OECD will also conduct a small number of online scoping interviews with key stakeholders in the MIRDI, to contextualise the documents and identify key issues to be further explored in activity 2.3.

Activity 2.3: Organise stakeholder interviews and workshops

Based on the document collection and review developed in Activity 2.2, the OECD will, in coordination with the JWC, conduct a fact-finding mission of one week to interview relevant stakeholders and develop a deeper understanding of the documentation collected and analysed during the previous activity. The objective of this analysis is to develop a common understanding of the system as it works in practice, and to gather ideas and insight from a wide range of stakeholders on opportunities and constraints for simplification. These stakeholders may be from MIRDI or other key national authorities and may include key government experts and senior leaders from the relevant implementation bodies of the Funds (MAs and IBs, certification authorities, procurement office, etc), representatives of public and private beneficiaries including municipalities, relevant NGOs and other stakeholders deemed necessary. The interviews will be supplemented with a multi-stakeholder workshop which will take place during a second in-person mission, bringing together the aforementioned stakeholders to work together to identify opportunities for simplification and administrative capacity building. The Slovak project team will be responsible for inviting key stakeholders to participate in the interviews and workshop.

Activity 2.4: Synthesize key findings in a diagnostic analysis

The OECD will draft the findings emanating from the relevant activities in output 2, to outline the main issues identified in the ecosystem of the Funds, to be addressed in output 3. It will also identify the strengths to build upon based on the results.

Output 3: Comprehensive report summarising the recommendations from the conducted reviews and a proposed action plan for adoption of recommended measures

To address the key challenges identified in output 2, the OECD will develop a comprehensive report with recommendations for legislative reforms and simplification of procedures. The report will contain a proposed action plan for the adoption of the recommended measures. The recommendations will focus on both the ability to efficiently absorb the financial resources, as well as the ability to achieve the targets and objectives defined in the key programming documents for the 2021-2027 period (Partnership Agreement, Programme Slovakia). The recommendations will be supported by international good practices from other countries in (but not limited to) the eastern European region such as the Czech Republic and Poland. The proposed action plan will include specific actions to be deployed, the bodies that should lead these actions and the bodies that should contribute, the expected results and a timeline.

Activity 3.1: Select and create working groups to focus on aspects of simplification

Building on the results of output 2, the OECD will propose 4-6 working groups that will each focus on different areas of simplification for the system. For example, these may be structured around the project lifecycle, with separate groups working on the design of calls (including documentation for submissions); project evaluation; project implementation (including certification and auditing); and public procurement.

However, the final decision of the focus of the working groups will be adopted by OECD in consultation with the JWC based on the findings of output 2. Working groups will be composed of the most relevant stakeholders for each area, including government officials, beneficiaries, and economic, social and trade organisations, to include a broad range of perspectives. The Slovak project team will be responsible for inviting relevant stakeholders to join working groups and for ensuring their participation.

Activity 3.2: Identify specific recommendations for simplification

In the first instance, the OECD will convene the working groups and present the diagnostic assessment created in output 2. The OECD, together with the working groups, will use this diagnostic analysis to identify concrete recommendations for simplification within their respective areas of focus. These will be discussed together at the JWC to ensure coherence across the different areas/working groups.

Activity 3.3: Develop action plans for transformation

Once the recommendations are identified, the OECD will conduct a second multi-stakeholder workshop with the working groups to identify specific actions for the implementation of the recommendations, including the bodies that should lead these actions and those who should contribute, the expected results and a timeline. The Slovak project team will be responsible for inviting participants to the workshop and for ensuring their participation.

Activity 3.4: Draft one comprehensive report and a proposed action plan

The OECD will integrate the recommendations and actions produced under activities 3.2 and 3.3. above to create a comprehensive report and a proposed action plan, highlighting possible complementarities and synergies in the proposed actions. The OECD will share the comprehensive report and the proposed action plan with the JWC for comment before its finalisation. Following this, the report and the proposed action plan could be adopted by Slovakia at a high-level meeting.

Output 4: Implementation report

The OECD will support the Slovak government to establish structures and processes to implement the roadmap developed in Output 3. This will be done through workshops, the established working groups in Activity 3.1, monitoring and oversight as described in the following activities. The implementation report will be composed of the various written elements developed through this support.

Activity 4.1: Organise an implementation workshop

The OECD will work with the JWC to design and deliver a third multi-stakeholder workshop focused on the implementation of the roadmap. This workshop will launch the implementation phase and include reflection on good practices for monitoring implementation and change management. The workshop will be addressed to the members of the JWC, the working groups established in activity 3.1, and other key actors deemed necessary. The Slovak project team will be responsible for inviting participants to the workshop and for ensuring their participation.

Activity 4.2: Establishing a monitoring mechanism

The OECD will work with the JWC and the working groups to establish a monitoring mechanism that can help to ensure progress implementing the action plan developed in activity 3.4 and identify any roadblocks. Once established, the JWC, in coordination with the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, will be responsible for monitoring progress of the action plan.

Activity 4.3: Organise regular meetings with the JWC to assess progress and address any bottlenecks.

For the duration of the Project, the OECD will meet every 2 weeks with the Slovak project team. These meetings may happen less frequently if agreed by the OECD, DG REFORM and the Slovak project team. At each meeting, the OECD will receive a status update from the Slovak project team and summarise this update in a short status note, which may include any updates to the monitoring mechanisms, description of problems encountered and/or emerging risks, and measures adopted. Every 8 weeks, the meeting will also include the JWC, to discuss the progress made on the Project, challenges encountered and steps to take to overcome these challenges. For each of these meetings, the OECD will prepare an agenda, a short stock-taking presentation, and produce minutes of the meeting. The Slovak project team will be responsible for inviting relevant participants from the Government and ensuring their participation.

Activity 4.4: Produce the implementation report

The OECD will compile the various materials developed through this output, including workshop materials (activity 4.1), the monitoring mechanisms (activity 4.2), status updates and meeting minutes (activity 4.3) into an implementation report.

Output 5: Workshops/seminars for representatives of key actors on the simplification measures

Once the simplification measures are determined and being implemented, the OECD will support the Slovak project team to conduct up to 4 online seminars to communicate and disseminate the results of outputs 3 and 4, with a view to enabling a common understanding across the actors of the Funds. The seminars will target a broader set of actors than those involved in the project up to this point, aiming to include all actors implicated by the simplification measures, including those working within the Funds' system, beneficiaries of the Funds and other important actors at national/regional and local government levels, businesses and civil society organisations. These seminars will include a description of the actions in the action plan, and the expected impact it will have for the various stakeholders involved.

Activity 5.1: Design seminars

The OECD will, in consultation with the JWC and the Slovak project team, design the online seminars. The seminars will include a presentation from the Slovak project team, followed by input from the OECD and others, tailored to the specific audience of each seminar (e.g. Managing Authorities, beneficiaries, regional branches of the Ministries, etc). The seminars will also include sufficient time for questions from the participants. The OECD will work with the Slovak project team to design the agenda, participants' list and presentation materials and guide on the best focus for each.

Activity 5.2: Support seminars delivered by the Slovak project team

The OECD will support the Slovak project team to deliver the online seminars. The OECD will be present and contribute to each seminar. The Slovak project team will host the seminars and present the main aspects of the reforms, to ensure local ownership and to be able to deliver these in local language to the greatest extent possible. The Slovak project team will be responsible for inviting participants to the workshop and for ensuring their participation.

Output 6: Project description summary

The OECD will develop a project description summary to create a standardised communication material, providing a general overview of the Project and lessons learned. The description will be used for communication purposes to other Member States and as a blueprint to replicate such Project and lead similar

reforms. The project description summary will be accompanied with a PowerPoint presentation summarising the Project aims, methodology, results and recommendations.

Activity 6.1 Develop a project description summary

The OECD will develop a project description summary in accordance with the Annex VII - Communication and Visibility Plan of the Agreement. The project summary may be used to communicate about the Project to the public.

Activity 6.2 Develop a project PowerPoint presentation

The OECD will develop a synthesis of the full Project into a presentation (PowerPoint). The final presentation will provide a technical overview of the Project and define context, approach, outputs, activities, key findings, and lessons learned.

3. LOCATION, INDICATIVE TIMETABLE AND LANGUAGE

3.1 Location

The activities will be carried out by the OECD Project Team located in Paris.

Presentations, workshops, conferences, and / or any other meetings where physical presence of the OECD Project Team is required are to take place in Bratislava, Slovakia.

In case of changing sanitary conditions or emerging travel restrictions, the meetings, where the presence of the OECD Project Team is required, might be organised via multimedia tools for audio-, videoconferencing agreed with DG REFORM and the authorities.

3.2 Indicative timeline for the activities

The operational implementation period of the Project is expected to last 20[5] months. The operational implementation period is measured from 5 July 2023.

The schedule of the activities and outputs is set out as indicated in the following table (indicative timeline) assuming continued support and commitment by the Slovak Republic and assuming no delays in establishing meetings with stakeholders, accessing relevant policy, legal and regulatory documentation and organising relevant presentations, workshops and conferences, including the availability of participants for the events.

[5] The change from 18 months in the High Level Description, to 20 months in the Detailed Project Description was agreed by DG REFORM and the OECD.

Indicative timetable

Result	The month of the implementation period																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Output 1																				
Output 2																				
Activity 2.1																				
Activity 2.2																				
Activity 2.3																				
Activity 2.4																				
Output 3																				
Activity 3.1																				
Activity 3.2																				
Activity 3.3																				
Activity 3.4																				
Output 4																				
Activity 4.1																				
Activity 4.2																				
Activity 4.3																				
Activity 4.4																				
Output 5																				
Activity 5.1																				
Activity 5.2																				
Output 6																				
Activity 6.1																				
Activity 6.2																				

3.3 Language

All meetings and technical (including preparatory meetings) discussions will be conducted in English.

Up to 15 days of simultaneous interpretation into Slovak will be provided by the OECD, if required. The associated costs are included in the Annex III – Budget – attached to Agreement. If the project requires more than 15 days of interpretation, the subsequent additional costs will be covered by the Slovak Republic.

All outputs under the Project will be produced in English.

The OECD will translate Output 3 into Slovak. The costs associated with the translation are included in the Annex III to Agreement (Budget).

4. ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

4.1 Organisation of the Project

The Project is organised in the following way:

4.1.1 OECD

The OECD team is responsible for the implementation of the Project, as well as for consulting with DG REFORM and with the Project team from the Slovak Republic, on the Project's activities and outputs.

The project will be implemented by the OECD Directorate for Public Governance (GOV) and the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE), in coordination with the Office of the OECD Secretary General. The team will primarily consist of policy analysts/economists under the executive leadership and supervision of the Director and Deputy Director for Public Governance and the Director and Deputy Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, and Head of the Public Management and Budgeting Division; Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division, and the Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division. The team will consist of:

- OECD Executive leadership will ensure alignment of the project with the OECD's broader relationship with its member countries and the EU. They will also contribute to the dissemination of results while providing overall strategic oversight and guidance to the process and fostering high-level partnerships.
- The Heads of the Divisions identified above will ensure that the work is policy relevant for project counterparts and policymakers, as well as aligning it with the other analytical work of GOV and ensuring methodological consistency.
- Senior policy analysts and heads of unit having experience in the management of EU funds will manage project operations and coordinate the team, managing the relationship with key project stakeholders and counterparts, providing general directions for analytical work and coordination activities while controlling content and quality of outputs and ensuring timely implementation and support the relationship with relevant OECD Committees and Bodies.
- Policy analysts/economists with relevant expertise in areas of the management of EU funds will lead analytical work, technical outreach activities, drafting and producing of the main outputs.
- Junior policy analysts/economists supporting the background desk research, data management, meetings organisation, presenting at workshops;
- Project administrative staff to provide logistical, editorial, and communications' support, including but not limited to organisation of events and missions (virtual and in-person), preparation of communications' materials.
- The advisors will review project advancement and key outputs to ensure consistency across projects and that key corporate priorities of the OECD are mainstreamed in its realisation. They will also be helping to prepare the substantive inputs for the launches of the reports or other outputs, which may involve senior officials
- Where necessary the team will benefit from the support of GOV and CFE Communications' officer for the production, editing and publication of outputs, refine key messages, devise and execute social media campaigns, create infographics related to the Action, and ensure general alignment with the Annex VII – Communication and Visibility Plan of the Agreement.

4.1.2 Resources to be outsourced

The OECD may hire one or more local consultants to support the project. The consultant will have a strong understanding of the Funds' system in the country and ideally know the key actors in the system and the legislation that governs it.

4.1.3 Resources to be made available by the Slovak Republic

The Slovak Republic will provide all necessary equipment, its experts and any documents, data and information necessary for the implementation of the Project. The Slovak Republic will also provide full support of technical equipment to the OECD, including available rooms for meetings, presentations, workshops, seminars and conferences in their premises, internet access, teleconference facilities and organisation of the meetings with other stakeholders.

4.2 Coordination with DG REFORM

Coordination of work with DG REFORM will be done in line with the provisions of Section 4.4 of Annex I to the Agreement.

The OECD and DG REFORM shall have regular exchanges on the progress of the Project and schedule of Project activities for the following month(s), including missions. A monthly video call will be set up with the DG REFORM, the OECD and the project team in the Member State to take stock of the project advancement. The OECD will submit by email a status point summary including the latest developments, issues identified and next steps of the projects to DG REFORM prior to the call.

The AG, established at the beginning of the Project, will convene every 4 months or whenever important milestones and results are to be presented. The beneficiary authorities will be represented in AG meetings by the Government Office of the Slovak Republic and MIRDI. Other Commission services apart from DG REFORM (DG REGIO/DG EMPL/DG MARE) may also participate, and the AG can invite other stakeholders as relevant. The OECD will prepare an agenda for the organisation of each AG meeting.

5. PROJECT-SPECIFIC RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following specific risks and mitigation measures have been identified as relevant for the implementation of this Project.

Risk	Mitigation measure
The organisation of the management and control system is not fully implemented and could be a source of uncertainty in the project.	The OECD will be in close communication with the Slovak officials to monitor these developments and will consider potential scenarios as they develop.

Elections planned for the autumn of 2023 may result in some level of change to the project teams and create some uncertainty.	The OECD will work with the Slovak authorities to establish a strong working level team that will likely remain in place, and will monitor developments and try to anticipate potential disruptions.
The SK Government Office (GO) may have trouble ensuring the active participation of a wide range of governmental actors (e.g. procurement office, Ministry of Finance, etc) to identify bottlenecks and implement simplification measures.	The OECD will provide any support needed to the GO to bring other stakeholders on board for this project and will recognise when/if potential limitations are imposed and adjust the focus of the work where needed.
Measures in the action plans may take longer to implement than the length of the project.	The OECD will support the GO to sustain the implementation of the action plans beyond the timeline of the project. This will be done through implementation support in Activity 4, to build capacity in the GO to continue the work without OECD support.

6. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS

Dissemination and / or publication of any materials (including outputs) produced under this Project shall respect the relevant provisions of the Communication and Visibility plan (Annex VII of the Agreement).

The overall communication objective under this project is increase the awareness of Slovak Republic's population about the role of the EU and the OECD in improving the administration and management of EU funds.

Publications and other outputs to be formally published	
Official OECD publication and other outputs to be formally published	None envisaged
Other written materials	
Other written materials not to be formally published	Outputs 2, 3, 4, and 6.
Communication activities	
Events	Activities 2.3; 3.3; 4.1; 5.2
Social media	Activity 5.2; Output 6
Supporting visuals	Activities 2.3; 3.3; 4.1; 5.2
Websites	None envisaged
Other	None envisaged

For the activities that are considered for public dissemination, the OECD will consult with the AG, and will fully take into account any concerns including those of confidentiality or political sensitivities.

ANNEX 1. INDICATIVE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

	Intervention logic	**Indicator**	**Values of reference** *(per indicator)*		**Sources and means of information**	**Assumptions**
			Baseline *(incl. source and reference date)*	**Target** *(incl. reference date)*		
Impact	Contribute to increased ESIF absorption to provide results-oriented investments in the 2021-2027 period	Absorption rate of ESIF (as measured by DG BUDG)	**63%**[6]	**77%**[7]	DG BUDG	
Outcome(s)	Simplified procedures and the proposed action plan for improving ESIF absorption are adopted The implementation of the proposed action plan is initiated and the Project's results are disseminated by relevant	The proposed action plan is adopted and simplified procedures are approved for implementation. Recommendations highlighted by the Project (and in particular the simplified procedures)	There is no action plan or simplified measures endorsed for implementation.	Action plans are endorsed for implementation Recommendations are implemented.	Government Office (GO)	

[6] Absorption rate as of end-2022 for the programming period 2014-2020

[7] This target pertains to the respective absorption of the Funds for the programming period 2021-2027, to be calculated at end-2028

	Slovak authorities	are implemented				
Output 1	Kick-off meeting	The holding of a kick-off meeting	Kick off meeting not held	Kick-off meeting is held	Communication with GO	
Output 2	Review of the Funds' ecosystem in the Slovak Republic	Status of the Review	The Review does not exist	The Review is finalised and transmitted to the GO	Communication with GO	
Output 3	Comprehensive report summarising the recommendations from the conducted reviews and a proposed action plan for adoption of recommended measures	Status of the Report	The Report does not exist	The Report is finalised and transmitted to the GO	Communication with GO	
Output 4	Implementation report	Status of the Implementation Report	The implementation report does not exist	The implementation report is finalised and transmitted to the GO	Communication with GO	
Output 5	Workshops/seminars for representatives of key actors on the simplification measures	Status of the workshops/seminars	The workshops/seminars have not taken place.	The workshops/seminars have taken place	Communication with GO	
Output 6	Project description summary	Status of the project descriptions summary	The project description summary does not exist	The project description summary has been finalised and transmitted to the GO	Communication with GO	