PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY TEMPLATE

Part I. PROJECT SUMMARY

23SK04 – INCREASE ESIF ABSORPTION, ELIMINATE GOLD-PLATING AND PROVIDE RESULT-ORIENTED INVESTMENTS IN THE 2021-2027 PERIOD
Project title for communication to a wide audience
Boosting administrative capacity for efficient management of EU funds in Slovakia
Summary
This project helped Slovakia's Managing Authority to boost capacity of the entire EU funds delivery system by focusing on strategic programming, human resource management, and public procurement. Through working groups composed of relevant stakeholders, including beneficiaries, the project developed specific initiatives such as an investment prioritisation framework, a workforce planning methodology, and better training on public procurement.
Context
Slovakia has long struggled with low capacity to absorb Cohesion Policy funds. To address this in the 2021-2027 period, the Slovak Republic merged all programmes into one unified initiative, known as Programme Slovakia 2021-27, in this way overhauling the governance structures responsible for managing the funds. This project supported the governance redesign and execution of Cohesion Policy investments in the Slovak Republic. The initial stock-taking exercise identified specific issues in areas related to strategic programming and project selection, beneficiary relations and support, human resource management and skills allocation across the management and control system, and public procurement.
Support delivered
The project began with a comprehensive review of the management and control system. Based on this analysis, the OECD and Slovak counterparts identified three priority themes (Strategic Programming, Project Preparation and Beneficiary Relations; Human Resources; and Public Procurement) and established Working Groups for each to develop bottom-up solutions in their respective areas. The OECD worked with each group to conduct diagnostic analyses and workshops to prioritise challenges and potential solutions, resulting in a detailed action plan. The project then shifted to implementation, during which the OECD held regular check-ins and seminars with the Working Groups to support their implementation process.
Results achieved
The project helped the Slovakian authorities to develop a more cohesive, forward-looking, results-oriented culture of continuous improvement across their EU funds system. The working groups will continue beyond the project to continue implementing the action plans and support ongoing coordination and communication. Some specific results include: - Stronger, evidence-based investment prioritisation and more targeted resource allocation to strategic projects for programming post 2027 - Bottom-up, broad stakeholder consultation to develop a project preparation roadmap and investment

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framework - More flexible and effective people management eco-system aligning training to career paths and mobility to improve skills allocation and workforce planning - Increased capacity of IBs and beneficiaries with better targeted learning content (procurement training) and stronger digital skills (ITMS 21+ training) - A whole-of-management and control system approach to address administrative capacity gaps
Mention of EU assistance
"This project is funded by the European Union *via* the Technical Support Instrument and implemented by OECD, in collaboration with the European Commission."

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