

## **Main messages – Slovakia**

Sustainable development is our duty towards future generations. While it has been an established concept for decades, the adoption of Agenda 2030 transformed it profoundly, both in terms of its global significance and complexity. In order to achieve these new and comprehensive sustainability objectives, innovative approaches are in great need. Slovakia, a small but committed country, contributes to sustainable development at home and abroad through the following three main principles of implementation:

1. Sustainable development must lie at the heart of all public policies.  
Slovakia is dedicated to implement Agenda 2030 by integrating it into all public policies at all levels. To accomplish this ambition, Slovakia has established Agenda 2030 as the centrepiece of its strategic governance framework.
2. Individual commitment and cross-generational engagement is vital.  
Slovakia's dedication, as a country, to Agenda 2030 is necessary but not sufficient to achieve sustainable development. The effort must be shared by all – women or men, young or elderly.
3. Partnerships are essential for finding sustainable solutions.  
Slovakia's government recognises the importance of synergies between various stakeholders to boost capacities and resources for Agenda 2030 implementation, and it is dedicated to sustain an enabling environment for partnerships.

## **National priorities for Agenda 2030**

In its VNR, Slovakia will introduce its six priorities for Agenda 2030 implementation, which exhibit its tailor-made road towards a more resilient and sustainable society. Committed to the principle of partnership, Slovakia defined its priorities in a broad stakeholder participation process.

The six national priorities integrate the 17 Sustainable Development Goals along with country-specific objectives. Slovakia's VNR will present the country's main challenges within each priority, existing policies and good practises to tackle these difficulties, and finally, a review of how Slovakia endorses the outlined priorities internationally.

The first priority focuses on education. It incorporates SDGs 4, 8 and 10, and thus contains aspects of decent employment as well. More than that, this priority emphasises that education is a life-long process, which should enable a life in dignity under rapidly changing circumstances and requirements.

The second key area concentrates on transformation towards an environmentally sustainable and knowledge-based economy in the context of demographic change. It integrates SDGs 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 but also adds a significant local factor – population aging.

Priority three pertains to the sustainability of settlements, regions and the countryside in the context of climate change, and incorporates SDGs 6, 7, 11, 13 and 15. While a relatively wide-ranging priority, it lays special emphasis on diminishing regional disparities.

The fifth national priority focuses on social inclusion. It integrates SDGs 1, 2 and 10, but even more importantly it underscores the pledge of Agenda 2030 to leave no one behind. On a global scale, Slovakia performs very well on eradicating poverty. Averages can be deceptive, however, therefore this priority highlights the most vulnerable groups of society.

Key area five underlines the significance of rule of law, democracy and security for Agenda 2030, once again in the Slovak context. It supports SDGs 5 and 16, and moreover, it emphasises the role of strong institutions and data-based governance.

Finally, achievements in the sixth priority, good health, should contribute mainly to SDGs 3 and 10. Apart from addressing health issues in the aggregate population, it articulates Slovakia's ambition to tackle health disparities.

### **Way forward**

The next step will be to integrate the outlined priorities into a national development strategy until 2030, as well as into sectoral policies and investment plans, in order to ensure a whole-of-government approach and adequate financing. To turn this ambition into reality, a robust institutional framework involving key stakeholders is inevitable. In Slovakia, the coordination of Agenda 2030 is shared by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. A Government Council involving key line ministers, as well as representatives of NGOs, academia, private sector, and city and regional associations has also been established.

Finally yet importantly, Slovakia recognises that continuity is essential for the successful implementation of Agenda 2030. To this end, a stronger involvement of the national Parliament is foreseen in the coming period and partnerships with the non-governmental sector will be reinforced to safeguard Slovakia's steadiness on the way towards sustainability objectives.