

## Slovak Republic

### Delivering public services in times of fiscal consolidation

#### *Main implications of fiscal consolidation for service delivery*

As a part of its fiscal consolidation plans, the new government plans to decrease wage expenditures by 10%; the intention is to decrease costs and improve productivity in the public sector.

#### *Key initiatives*

##### *Partnerships with the private sector*

The new government is currently reconsidering planned public-private partnership (PPP) projects to build motorways, with an eye to decreasing costs and improving quality. PPP schemes will be subject to more rigorous cost-benefit evaluation than standard forms of financing, to ensure the highest possible efficiency.

The government is interested in having specialists from the private sector work with the Ministry of Interior to improve police work and strengthen the fight against bribery.

##### *Engaging citizens and the voluntary sector*

The new government will benefit from greater co-operation between the public administration authorities and non-profit organisations. A legislative framework will be designed that allows non-profit organisations to participate more fully in the decision-making process. That participation will help increase government's effectiveness in satisfying citizens' needs, raising the quality of their lives – and indeed the quality of governance. The new government will create conditions for the development of a vibrant voluntary sector.

##### *Better co-ordination with local governments*

The new government will review the results of the decentralisation of competencies at all levels of the public administration. In its efforts to cut public administration costs, it will consider further financial decentralisation.

##### *Using e-government and cutting red tape*

One of the government's priorities is to render its services in electronic form. E-government will substantially benefit not only state government and local self-government but also citizens and businesses, because it will reduce unproductive time spent on administration, it will reduce error rates, and it will eliminate duplication of actions. Citizens and businesses will conduct affairs via a central government portal, using a guaranteed electronic signature.

The most important projects are:

- digitising birth records;
- digitising the naturalisation registry;
- a computerised identification system for naturalised citizens;
- developing an electronic identification card;
- electronic services of central registration office for registration/change of residence;
- computerising property register services;
- computerising services relating to the Ministry of Labour, social issues and family, state social allowances, social assistance, and emergency assistance;
- computerising social insurance services;
- computerising healthcare services.

Information and communication technologies are used in education in order to improve the quality of public service provision in that sector. The portal [www.modernyucitel.net](http://www.modernyucitel.net) is run in co-operation with Microsoft. Its objective is to improve education and learning via modern information usage and information and communication technologies. The central information portal of the Ministry of Education, [www.iedu.sk](http://www.iedu.sk), became available to the public on 20 April 2010. It provides information on those activities of the Ministry of Education focused on regional schools and its main target groups are teachers, parents and pupils. The digital education content prepared should improve the use of information and communication technologies in schools.

To promote excellence in education and research, the government is encouraging large university projects focused on improving institutional quality smaller projects aimed at an inflow of internationally recognised scientists and teachers to the Slovak Republic, as well as top national post-graduate programmes focused on linking the best capacities within the country to their equivalents abroad.

An overview of progress in implementing e-government in the “National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic for 2008-10 – Implementation Report 2009” is available at [www.finance.gov.sk/en/Default.aspx?CatID=450](http://www.finance.gov.sk/en/Default.aspx?CatID=450).

### ***Policy initiatives to improve service delivery to specific groups***

The new government will explore the possibility of simplifying the process of issuing small business licences.

## **Towards a more effective and performance-oriented public service**

The previous government introduced centralised public procurement in an effort to make the process of public procurement as efficient as possible. However, the expected results never materialised and the deficiencies in public procurement need to be addressed. Public sector governance issues rank among the most significant problems for doing business in the Slovak Republic.

### ***Involving citizens and service users in the design, delivery and evaluation of public services***

The new government plans to allow citizens to actively participate in the process of cutting public sector costs by identifying areas of potential fiscal savings via the Internet. That input will be consulted when elaborating the public sector budget (see [www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-123044?prefixFile=m\\_](http://www.rokovania.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-123044?prefixFile=m_)).

## **Promoting open and transparent government**

### ***Key initiatives***

#### ***Making information available***

Open access to public institutions for the public is important in building public trust in the government and those institutions. Therefore, maximum transparency will be mandatory in the activities of public authorities and institutions in order to apply the principle “What is not secret is public”. That principle was the driver behind the Act on Free Access to Information, adopted in 2001; it is expected that the act will be extended to apply to all entities within the public sector.

#### ***Improving service delivery***

More rapid introduction of e-government services should make the processes more effective everywhere, so that integrity appears at the interface between the public and private sectors.

### ***Safeguarding integrity***

#### ***Conflict of interest***

The amendment of the constitutional Law on Conflict of Interest is expected to enable effective control of its observance, in particular regarding the property declarations of public officials. The intention is that the public could monitor whether the property increase of a public official corresponds to his/her income from public duties. Property declarations are expected to be accessible to the public. An act on the property liability of public officials will also be considered.

#### ***Transparency of interactions between the public and private sectors, for example in public procurement***

Public procurement reform is under way. Competition will be part of the process, even if it is not obligatory. Electronic auction will be obligatory in all cases. In order to make the process more transparent, the government will publish an electronic journal of public procurement, containing all public orders under way according to different criteria. Public institutions will be obliged to publish in this journal all invitations, offers, and evaluations of commissions as well as their results and their justification.

The Ministry of Education began to use electronic auctions as part of the public procurement system – see [www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=6608](http://www.minedu.sk/index.php?lang=sk&rootId=6608).

The government launched the Internet portal <http://zmluva.gov.sk/>, where all public procurement contracts and agreements must be published. The intention is to adopt a law that would make publication of a public procurement contract on the Internet compulsory before it comes into force. Indeed, the government intends to adopt a law requiring all court decisions to be published on the Internet.

The government of the Slovak Republic aims to have all unexercisable subsidies and contributions provided from public resources posted on the Internet, and it will introduce competition into any procurement process that follows.

The government will also achieve a duty to advertise economic analysis made relating to procured goods or a service to prevent making public orders more expensive.

The government will strictly adhere to the rule that it must make decisions about major investment projects based solely on a clear and published analysis. Advertising economic analysis, comprehensible and available to public will be a condition of approving financially important decisions in the government or in the parliament.

#### Electronic services of the public procurement office

The main objectives of this national project are to build an information system based on web services, and then integrate the current system of electronic public procurement into this system. This would enable delivery of announcements of all types electronically, and secure support for the digitisation of all public procurement processes currently used.

Fighting bribery effectively requires removing opportunities for it while at the same time strengthening the bite of sanctions. Public institutions, local self-governments, any disposing of national property, national and other subsidies, the granting of resources from EU funds, and public procurement can all be at least partially open doors for bribery.

The government of the Slovak Republic will support transparent and competitive forms of disposing of national property (public tenders, auctions) and of using national property, as well as property of public institutions and of self-governments. Any disposing of national property – whether it involves public procurement or the state selling or renting property – has to be open to public scrutiny.



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