

Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia for 2022–2030

Bratislava, August 2022

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
<i>Definitions.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Structure</i>	<i>5</i>
Policy Area 1: Active Citizenship	7
<i>Main Challenges.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 1</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 1.1.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 1.2.....</i>	<i>11</i>
Policy Area 2: Cooperation between the Public Sector and Civil Society	12
<i>Main Challenges.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 2</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 2.1.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 2.2.....</i>	<i>14</i>
Policy Area 3: Favorable Environment for the Development of Civil Society and its Increased Systemic Resilience	15
<i>Main Challenges.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 3</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 3.1.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 3.2.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 3.3.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 3.4.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 3.5.....</i>	<i>21</i>
Policy Area 4: Systematic Collection of Data on Civil Society.....	22
<i>Main Challenges.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 4</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 4.1.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Measures for Strategic Objective 4.2.....</i>	<i>24</i>

Introduction

In democratic countries, creating favourable conditions for the development of civil society is a strategic objective of all pro-democracy socio-political actors, including public authorities. The government formed after the 2020 parliamentary elections was also able to agree to support this intention, which has found expression in the current Program Statement of the Government of the Slovak Republic (SR) and is also reflected in the strategic document Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia for 2022 - 2030 (hereinafter referred to as the "Strategy"), which defines the basic starting points and the idea of the priority areas of civil society development.

The preparation of the concept was organizationally and professionally implemented by the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society (hereinafter referred to as "OPG DCS") in cooperation with representatives of the Chamber of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations (hereinafter referred to as the "Chamber of NGOs") at the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations (hereinafter referred to as the "Council of the Government of the SR for NGOs").

The Strategy builds on the previous document Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia¹ and its evaluation report.² The Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia was approved by Government Resolution No. 68 of 22 February 2012 and implemented through its individual action plans. The last Action Plan for 2019 - 2020 in Commitment No. 13 set out the preparation and development of a new conceptual document until 2030.

On the one hand, the need for the preparation of such a strategic document is based on the experience and needs of the actors of the non-governmental non-profit sector, and on the other hand, it is also demanded by the public administration, which is increasingly coordinating and aligning its activities with the organizations of the non-governmental non-profit sector.

The basic input for the development of the Strategy were analyses and recommendations from the national project funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds from the Operational Program Effective Public Administration titled "Better Public Policies through a Better Understanding of Civil Society" aimed at mapping the status and trends of civil society and the socio-economic contribution of non-governmental non-profit organizations, implemented by the OPG DCS. Based on the data and recommendations received, a draft of this concept paper was prepared by experts from non-governmental non-profit organizations.

The Strategy represents a synthesis of several materials - research, analytical and working documents created in the public sector, as well as policy proposals coming from the environment of civil society or non-governmental non-profit organizations. Specifically, it is based on the following documents:

- a) [Program Statement of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the period 2021 - 2024](#),
- b) outputs of the [National Project Better Public Policies through a Better Understanding of Civil Society](#) (hereafter referred to as "NP Research on CSOs"),

¹ Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society: Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/koncepcia_rozvoja_os/Koncepcia-rozvoja-OS_2020.pdf.

² OPG DCS: Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia for 2012 – 2020 Evaluation Report. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/koncepcia_rozvoja_os/KROS%2012-2020_vyhodnotenie_FINAL.pdf.

- c) outputs from the May 2020 Nonprofit Sector Crisis Coordination Board,³
- d) [Statement from the national conference of civil society organizations - Orbis Civitates](#), held in November 2019,
- e) recommendations from the [Declaration of the Chamber of NGOs at the Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations \(NGOs\)](#) of 22 September 2020,
- f) outputs from three meetings of the Working Group for the Creation of the Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia for 2021 - 2030, whose members included representatives of OPG DCS, the Chamber of NGOs at the Government Council for NGOs and selected experts of the non-governmental non-profit sector.

Definitions

The material uses terms whose meaning needs to be clarified:

- *Non-governmental non-profit organizations* are understood as organizations that simultaneously meet the conditions of formal structure, non-state character, non-profitability, self-governance and voluntary character.⁴
- *Civil society* is a broader concept, defined as "a transitional area located between the state and the family, containing organized groups or associations that are separate from the state, enjoy a degree of autonomy from the state, and are voluntarily formed by members of society to protect or extend their interests, values, or identities".⁵ It encompasses both the *formalized sphere* (i.e. non-governmental non-profit organizations) and the *informal sphere* of civic associations and other non-profit activities, as well as the *sphere of hybrid forms*, including social entrepreneurship and philanthropy.⁶
- *The environment for the development of civil society* is the context in which fundamental rights and freedoms and the values of freedom and democracy are realised. This environment consists of citizens, civil society organizations, academia, the media and other democratic institutions.
- *The support infrastructure* includes networks, umbrella organizations, platforms and an overall ecosystem of support that serves to strengthen the human, organizational, intellectual and financial capacities of organizations. It also includes services designed to help and facilitate civil society actors. Support can include legal assistance, advice on fundraising, information brokerage, or organizational advice. Services in the areas of fundraising support, donor support and volunteering are also part of the support infrastructure and can also include projects that aim to provide support.
- *Civic participation* includes *civic-political participation*, in which citizens engage in various activities to influence public affairs or public policy, and other forms and

³ Crisis Coordination Board of the Non-Profit Sector: the Contribution of NGOs and civic initiatives to the Corona Crisis, 2020, and Proposals of measures for NGOs in the context of the Corona Crisis, 2020. Available at:

https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/rada_vlady_pre_mno/rokovania/2020/22_rokovanie/MNO_pomahaju%20a%20zdroje.pdf.

https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/rada_vlady_pre_mno/rokovania/2020/22_rokovanie/priloha_2_MNO_navrh.pdf

⁴ Strečanský, B. et al.: Proposal for a basic research framework aimed at identifying the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the status and development trends of civil society, 2017. Available at:

https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2019/Navrh%20ramca%20vyskumu_finalna%20verzia.2017.pdf

⁵ Vašečka, M., Žúborová, V.: Civil Society in Slovakia. In: Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020, p. 21. Available at:

https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

⁶ Same, p. 28.

expressions of active citizenship focused more on *social participation*, such as engaging in formal and informal volunteering, donating, as well as membership in non-governmental, non-profit organizations. Political and social participation are intertwined.⁷ According to research, individuals who are involved in formal and informal volunteering, members of non-governmental non-profit organizations, as well as people who have made a financial donation to a charitable or generally beneficial cause are more active in the area of civic and political participation. Volunteering, donating and membership in organizations has a broader societal impact: it also promotes the development of civic and political participation and contributes to the formation of a participatory political culture.

- *Volunteering* is a conscious, unpaid activity or work carried out of one's own free will for the benefit of other people or society or the environment outside the volunteer's family and household. Formal volunteering refers to voluntary activities carried out within or through organizations. Informal volunteering is defined as direct assistance provided to individuals outside the volunteer's family and people living in the volunteer's household.

Structure

The material is structured into four thematic areas (see Figure below): 1) active citizenship, 2) cooperation between the public sector and civil society, 3) favorable environment for the development of civil society and its increased systemic resilience, and 4) systematic collection of data on civil society.

Each thematic (policy) area is presented in a similar structure: an introduction sets the topic in a broader framework and explains its relevance and importance in the context of the development of civil society and the logic of its relationship with the environment, and then identifies the main challenges.

This is followed by a section that identifies strategic objectives for the period of 2022-2030. These strategic objectives address the identified challenges and further flesh them out in the form of measures. The measures of the Strategy are elaborated in the form of specific tasks or commitments, which are the subject of the Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia Action Plan for 2022 - 2026 and subsequently the Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia Action Plan for 2027 - 2030.

⁷ Plichtová, J., Šestáková, A. et al.: Dictionary of participation. Bratislava: Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic (OPG DCS), 2020, p. 171. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/participacia/2020/publikacie/parti_slovnik_web.pdf

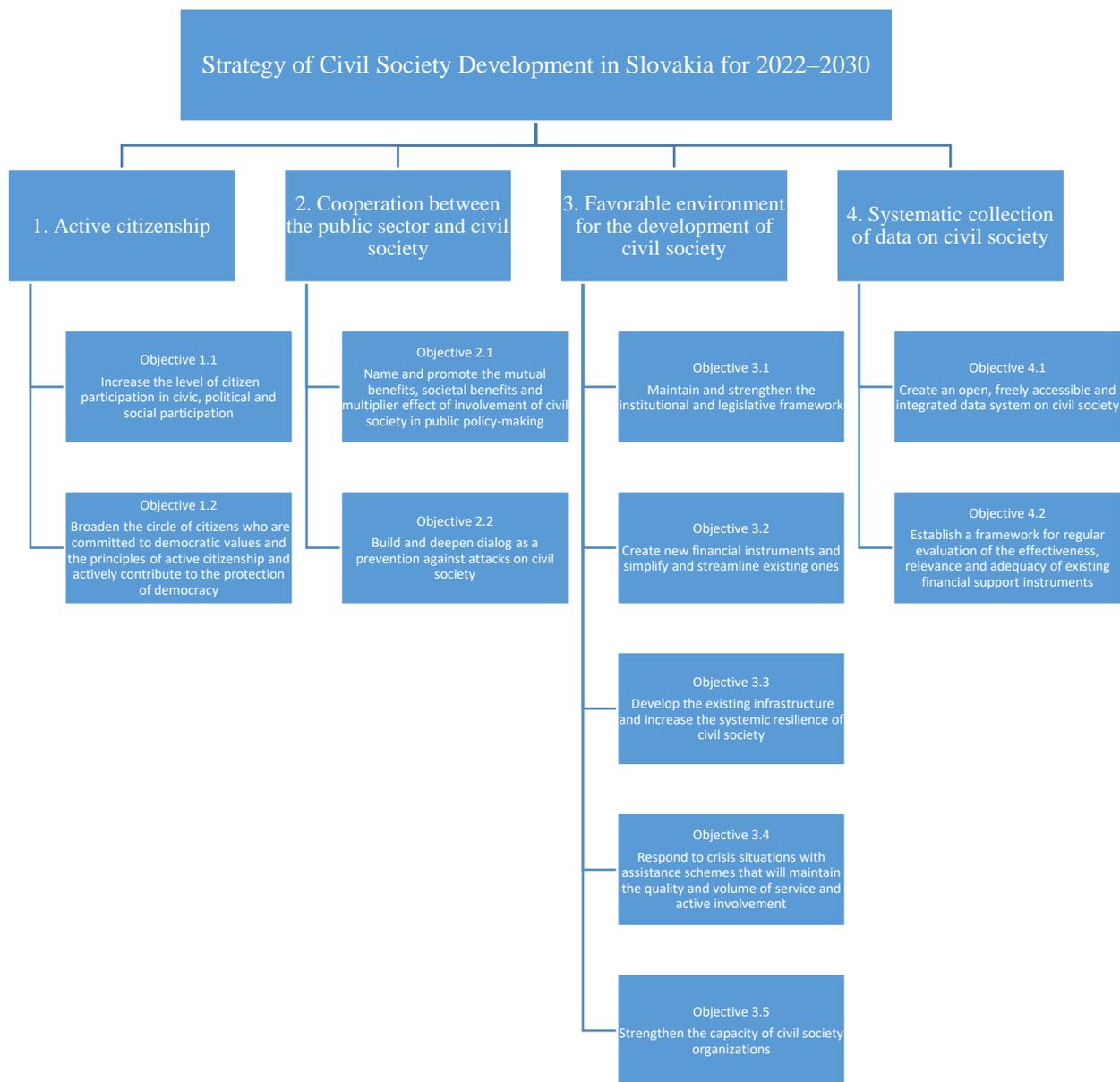


Figure: Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia

Policy Area 1: Active Citizenship

An active citizen is a key element of a developed civil society. The concept of active citizenship is based on the fundamental idea that a citizen has rights guaranteed by the state that enable him or her to pursue individual or collective interests. An active citizen not only meets his or her needs, but also promotes his or her values and interests and even thinks as a member of a larger (political) community. One of the basic manifestations of active citizenship is civic participation, i.e. the active participation of individuals in solving societal problems and managing public affairs. Another basic manifestation of active citizenship is volunteering.

Thanks to the active involvement of citizens, networks are built in which part of people's needs can be met without state intervention, more efficiently and less expensively. This was demonstrated by the activities of many organizations and informal groups during the management of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The deployment of active citizens and non-governmental non-profit organizations in times of any crisis and beyond has its limits, and the personnel and economic resources of many non-governmental non-profit organizations are limited and, in many cases, already exhausted.

In recent years, the whole of civilization has faced new global threats and challenges (threats to democracy and democratic institutions, mistrust and questioning of representative democracy, climate change, pollution, pandemics, migration, disinformation, conspiracies, hybrid threats, the growing negative impact of social networks, issues of freedom of speech and expression, terrorism, extremism, radicalism, wars, and more). On the one hand, active citizens and the formalised part of civil society have an unmistakable and original role to play in highlighting these threats and challenges and their solutions, but at the same time they themselves have to face their consequences in their daily functioning and in the pursuit of their goals, visions and needs.

Main Challenges

Active citizenship in the Slovak Republic currently faces the following main challenges: persistent low levels of interpersonal and general trust, low levels of civic participation, low levels of citizen awareness of civil society and its functions, and other barriers related to inadequate capacity of organizations working with volunteers and focused on the development of formal volunteering.⁸

Low level of interpersonal and general trust

Since the beginning of the 1990s, several studies⁹ have documented that interpersonal or general trust is very weak among people in Slovakia. In principle, people who experience interpersonal trust also transfer it to a greater extent to social and political institutions. On the one hand, the army, local government, the European Union, the Public Defender of Rights or the President of the Slovak Republic enjoy trust of the majority of people. On the other hand,

⁸ Bútorová, Z. et al.: Civil society 2019 in the eyes of the adult population (representative opinion poll). In: Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020, p. 39. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

⁹ For example: Bútorová, Z. and Gyárfášová, O.: Civic participation: trends, problems, context. *Sociology* 42(5), pp. 447-491, 2010; Bútorová: Civil society through the eyes of the public. A report on sociological research. In: Status, trends, needs and possibilities of civil society development (analytical study). Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, PDCS and Center for Philanthropy, 2016, pp. 175-226; Bútorová, Z. et al., 2020.

low trust in the courts, the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the Government of the Slovak Republic and political parties has persisted for a long time. In this context, a higher level of civic and political participation is characterized by people who are supporters of the principles of participatory democracy and who approve of the Euro-Atlantic anchoring of the Slovak Republic. Mutual trust is one of the important prerequisites for building and strengthening social capital, which has a positive impact on the economic development and building a political culture based on trust and cooperation.

Civil society creates a space in which people can participate on the basis of shared values, common interests and mutual trust, thereby strengthening groups and building social capital. People who are active in civic life are characterized by greater trust in people in general as well as in public institutions and non-governmental non-profit organizations, have a greater and more active interest in public affairs at different levels, are more likely to follow diverse sources of information and are often more active in public life.

The research results also suggest that society is highly polarized, and in the last year the overall social atmosphere has been marked by low trust in the government and the mobilization of protest by different sectors of society.¹⁰ The diversity of values in society is taking on a sharply exacerbated form. Appeals for solidarity and accountability are having less effect on ordinary people and, as a result of these adverse circumstances, an internally differentiated, diverse civil society is facing difficult challenges.

Low level of civic participation

The results of research in Slovakia¹¹ and internationally¹² show that despite the flourishing of citizens' association after the fall of socialism, the involvement of citizens in various forms of civic participation has not become a majority phenomenon. The lower level of people's involvement is especially in formal volunteering.

Low level of citizens' awareness of civil society and its functions

Citizens' awareness of civil society itself and its various forms is generally low. A significant majority of respondents to the OPG DCS opinion poll¹³, agreed that civic initiatives and non-governmental non-profit organizations belong in a democratic society. At the same time, there is a widespread public expectation that the state should provide more support for civic initiatives and the activities of non-governmental non-profit organizations. However, the distribution of views on the economic aspect of the functioning of non-governmental non-profit organizations and civic initiatives is no longer so favorable. Only slightly more than half of the

¹⁰ Bútorová, Z. et al.: Civil society 2019 in the eyes of the adult population (representative opinion poll). In: Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020, p. 39. Available at:

https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

¹¹ For example, Baťová: Volunteering and Donation in Slovakia (Analysis of data from public opinion research). In: Volunteering in the light of research. Edition Third Sector and Volunteering, 8/2002. Bratislava: S.P.A.C.E. (Center for Social Policy Research), 2002; Brozmanová Gregorová (ed.): Volunteering in Slovakia - research reflections. Bratislava: Iuventa - Slovak Youth Institute, 2012. Brozmanová Gregorová, 2012; Bútorová et al., 2020.

¹² European Union Open Data Portal, 2017, 2021.

¹³ Bútorová, Z. et al.: Civil society 2019 in the eyes of the adult population (representative opinion poll). In: Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020, p. 39. Available at:

https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

respondents are convinced of the financial cleanliness and transparency of the management of most non-governmental non-profit organizations. A significant part of the public does not know any particular non-governmental non-profit organization. Citizens are often unaware that many useful services or activities are not the product of civil servants, but come from the non-governmental non-profit environment. Also, few people are aware of how diverse the scope of civil society organizations is and of the wide range of functions they perform.¹⁴

Other barriers to support for people's civic participation

Research¹⁵ has highlighted some of the bottlenecks that prevent the full realization of the potential of non-governmental non-profit organizations and informal components of civil society in supporting people in civic participation, and the barriers to involving different groups in these activities. One of the fundamental principles of a democratic society is the requirement to create equal opportunities for all people to participate in life, including in the field of participation. The main problems identified were: insufficient financial sustainability of long-term and systematic volunteering programs in different types and areas of activity of organizations, insufficient spatial, financial and personnel capacities of volunteer centers as a key element of volunteering infrastructure, insufficient capacities of organizations to work with volunteers, which in turn are reflected in lower quality of work with volunteers, and insufficient targeted support for the involvement of young people and seniors in volunteering.

Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 1

Objective 1.1: Increase the level of citizen participation in civic, political and social participation (volunteering, donorship and membership of organizations), which is a key factor in fostering interpersonal and general trust and building social capital.

Objective 1.2: Broaden the circle of citizens who are committed to democratic values and the principles of active citizenship and actively contribute to the protection of democracy and its institutions, including participatory democracy, promote the protection of rights and freedoms, including the rights of minorities, monitor the exercise of public authority, and thus reduce socio-political risks arising from national and global threats.

Measures for Strategic Objective 1.1

Objective 1.1: Increase the level of citizen participation in civic, political and social participation (volunteering, donorship and membership of organizations), which is a key factor in fostering interpersonal and general trust and building social capital.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

¹⁴ Same.

¹⁵ Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

- 1.1.1. In cooperation with civil society partners, consistently involve the public (with an emphasis on vulnerable groups and the general public) in selected public policy-making processes. The selection and number of public policies to be developed in a participatory manner involving the public, as well as the selection of vulnerable groups to be involved in participatory processes, is fully within the competence of individual ministries, other central government bodies and other advisory bodies to the government of the Slovak Republic, which will prepare the public policies. Vulnerable groups include, in particular, children and young people, the elderly, national and ethnic minorities, the disabled, etc. The OPG DCS will provide support to public policy makers in the preparation and implementation of public participation in public policy making processes.
- 1.1.2. Ensure regular evaluation of opportunities for public participation in governance (also beyond the scope of legal obligations, i.e. within the meaning of the Rules for Public Involvement in Public Policymaking, adopted by Government Resolution No. 645/2014) and obstacles to their use, and use the findings of this evaluation to amend these rules and improve the current state of the art so that these opportunities for participation are increasingly accessible and comprehensible.
- 1.1.3. Ensure, with the participation of civil society, the expansion of volunteer programs in different areas of the organizations' activities, ensure their financial sustainability, ensure adequate staffing, financial and spatial capacities of volunteer centers as a key element in the development of volunteering infrastructure through the implementation of a financial mechanism to support long-term volunteer programs and volunteer centers from public funds.
- 1.1.4. In line with the concept of inclusive volunteering, identify ways to increase the participation of those population groups that are least involved in volunteering and are most at risk of lacking social capital (including seniors).
- 1.1.5. Establish mechanisms to increase the capacity of both civil and public sector organizations to work with disadvantaged groups in volunteering, including training.
- 1.1.6. Create opportunities and support tools to increase volunteering and education in managed participation among public sector employees.
- 1.1.7. Promote education and training for volunteering at all levels of education in schools and educational establishments and organizations dedicated to non-formal education and work with youth according to the Strategy of Education and Training of Children and Youth for Volunteering.
- 1.1.8. Promote training in volunteer management, the provision of consultations and advice in this field and a quality label in the area of work with volunteers with the objective to improve the quality of work with volunteers.
- 1.1.9. With the participation of civil society, prepare amendments to Act No. 211/2000 Coll. on Free Access to Information and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Acts (Freedom of Information Act), as amended, so that it reflects the current requirements of the informatization of society, guarantees the improvement of the processes of providing information and provides more useful information for the requesters.

- 1.1.10. To open a discussion on the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 350/1996 Coll. on the Rules of Procedure of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, as amended, on the possible reduction of the quorum for petitions that must be discussed by the National Council of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as "NC SR"), as well as on further modification of the introduction and justification of the petitioning action in the committees and in the plenary session of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, which is not specified at all in today's legal regulation.

Measures for Strategic Objective 1.2

Objective 1.2: Broaden the circle of citizens who are committed to democratic values and the principles of active citizenship and actively contribute to the protection of democracy and its institutions, including participatory democracy, promote the protection of rights and freedoms, including the rights of minorities, monitor the exercise of public authority, and thus reduce socio-political risks arising from national and global threats.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 1.2.1. With the participation of civil society, design and implement concrete measures to support existing and increase the supply of new civic education programs that develop knowledge, skills and competences for active participation in social problem-solving and governance. These programs will be implemented both in formal/school and non-formal/non-school education.
- 1.2.2. Support research in the social sciences and humanities on the themes of civil society and active citizenship.

Policy Area 2: Cooperation between the Public Sector and Civil Society

The environment for the development of civil society is the context in which fundamental rights and freedoms are realized and the values of freedom and democracy are exercised. This environment consists of citizens, civil society organizations, academia, the media and other democratic institutions. When analyzing the environment for the development of civil society, it is also important to take into account the relationship between the different actors with each other - between the state and civil society, civil society and the market, citizens and the non-governmental non-profit organizations, as well as the relationship between civil society actors and public sector actors.

The benefits of cooperation between the public sector and civil society can be seen in various areas of society. In our current circumstances, the importance of this mutual cooperation lies in ensuring the very reproduction of a quality environment for the development of civil society and the creation of better conditions for participatory democracy.

Main Challenges

Replacing the public sector with the work of civil society

Civil society complements and replaces public services in many areas.¹⁶ At the same time, it is forced to secure resources through a combination of volunteering, private donations or foreign funding and subsidies. Nevertheless, civil society is largely invisible in this service delivery role in the eyes of the public sector and the public itself. This does not allow it to secure adequate resources, create conditions for financial stability and systematic development

Unclear position of civil society

In Slovakia, despite the overall growth of civil society in the last decade, there is still a lower representation of non-governmental non-profit organizations in the field of service delivery.¹⁷ This fact may also be an expression of the unclear role of civil society in the field of public service delivery and social innovation.

Lack of perception of civil society as a partner in the public sphere

Despite the existence of mechanisms and platforms that create space for civil society to engage with the public sector, the extent to which these are regularly and consistently followed has many bottlenecks.¹⁸ Public sector actors often show a lack of interest and understanding of the functioning and objectives of civil society. This is one of the reasons for the lack of civil society involvement in public policy-making processes, strategic documents, action plans and legislation or debates at national level as well as at lower levels of regional and local government.

¹⁶ Findings of the experts who prepared the proposal of the Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia for 2022 - 2030.

¹⁷ Same.

¹⁸ Same.

Lack of adoption of civil society social innovations by the public sector

Initiatives in promoting social innovations often come spontaneously, thanks to the direct contact of non-governmental actors with the situation, which is usually the responsibility of a state or public administration institution. Non-governmental non-profit organizations carry out pilot projects in most areas of social life, but innovation is by no means always taken up by state and public administration structures. The need for broader and deeper cooperation between civil society and the public sector has been most evident in a number of natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, in which a broadly defined civil society has played a positive role. We see the position of civil society in the war conflict in Ukraine as absolutely crucial.

Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 2

Objective 2.1: Name and promote the mutual benefits, societal benefits and multiplier effect of cooperation between the public sector and civil society, which also arises from the increased involvement of civil society in public policy-making processes.

Objective 2.2: Build and deepen partnership and transparent dialogue between civil society and public administration as a prevention against attacks or the spread of negative attitudes towards civil society.

Measures for Strategic Objective 2.1

Objective 2.1: Name and promote the mutual benefits, societal benefits and multiplier effect of cooperation between the public sector and civil society, which also arises from the increased involvement of civil society in public policy-making processes.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 2.1.1. Define public services, establish quality criteria and, in agreement with civil society, define a transparent model for their evaluation. Open up the debate in the basic social network of these services provided by state bodies and organizations, also creating space for non-state service providers and for partnerships with them. Facilitate access to public funding to cover such services. Ensure quality control (cost-effectiveness, efficiency) of the services provided.
- 2.1.2. Strengthen the participation of civil society representatives and non-governmental non-profit organizations in participatory processes at national and regional level, especially in various working groups/committees developing or monitoring public policies,

legislation and major decisions through institutional grants¹⁹ to non-governmental non-profit organizations.

- 2.1.3. In cooperation with civil society, develop and implement a tool to assess the involvement of non-governmental non-profit organizations and other organized civil society actors (platforms and associations of non-governmental non-profit organizations, trade unions, churches, etc.) in the decision-making of public administration bodies, from the local to the national level.
- 2.1.4. Increase public administration staff awareness of the benefits of public sector cooperation with civil society and strengthen the participatory capacities of public administration, for example through training, methodological guidelines and direct participation in the activities of non-governmental non-profit organizations.
- 2.1.5. Encourage the development of social innovations by putting in place mechanisms to support grassroots, local experimental approaches to (new types of) service delivery and their widespread replication, as well as mechanisms for networking and partnerships between civil society organizations.
- 2.1.6. In the event of a pandemic, environmental or natural disaster or other emergency, invite representatives of development non-governmental non-profit organizations with substantial experience in dealing with humanitarian crises to advisory bodies (e.g. crisis staffs).
- 2.1.7. Strengthen the capacity of the OPG DCS to ensure continuity of staff capacity outside national projects, including autonomous analytical staff, to ensure the implementation of the commitments arising from the Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia for 2022-2030 and the development of a supportive environment for civil society.

Measures for Strategic Objective 2.2

Objective 2.2: Build and deepen partnership and transparent dialogue between civil society and public administration as a prevention against attacks or the spread of negative attitudes towards civil society.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 2.2.1. With the participation of civil society, develop tools to improve and promote communication about the way and results of non-governmental non-profit organizations' activities and thus increase the visibility and transparency of their social contribution.
- 2.2.2. With the participation of civil society, strengthen existing and develop new tools to combat misleading and deceptive information about non-governmental non-profit organizations. Implement these tools in partnership with civil society.
- 2.2.3. Strengthen partnership communication with civil society through the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations and the OPG DCS.

¹⁹ Institutional grants are mechanisms of financial support from public institutions for NGOs or other organizations (as opposed to funds from e.g. small donors) that are not linked to specific NGO activities and their outputs in a specific timeframe (such as relatively competitive project funding), but allow funding for the core operations of the organization or for the development of additional capacities.

Policy Area 3: Favorable Environment for the Development of Civil Society and its Increased Systemic Resilience

A functioning legislative and financial framework is essential for a well-functioning and healthy civil society. The Slovak Republic has a well-functioning basic legislative and financial framework governing the registration, operation, support and control of non-governmental non-profit organizations. In the context of political developments in recent years in the neighboring countries of the V4 region, Slovakia has also managed to maintain a relatively high level of stability in the sector as well as government support thanks to these developments. This support has manifested itself in the form of civic participation, open governance and the preservation of important institutional actors such as the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society, or the Council of the Government for NGOs with the Chamber of NGOs.

Compared to neighboring countries, we are in a better position, but this does not mean that there are no voices questioning the role or contribution of civil society in, for example, legislation and public policy-making. These have been translated into legislative proposals²⁰, 1 that have sought to stigmatize non-governmental non-profit organizations, or outright restrict the activities of non-governmental non-profit organizations across the board. These attacks materialize in the media discourse and translate, for example, into public attitudes. As research²¹ has shown, although non-governmental non-profit organizations are trusted by 55% of respondents, only 45% of respondents consider the organizations involved in public policy-making to be useful. Therefore, it is not only necessary to maintain the existing legislative framework and network of institutional actors, but also to legislate instruments to increase the systemic resilience of civil society.

Main Challenges

Low share of formalized civil society of GDP

The Slovak Republic has set up a basic financial framework for supporting civil society, but in comparison with its neighboring countries it is seen to be lagging behind its neighbors in the size of the formalized civil society sphere. The undersizing is visible, for example, when comparing indicators such as the added value of non-governmental non-profit organizations on total GDP or employment in the V4 region. In the Slovak Republic, this sphere accounts for just under 1% of GDP, in the Czech Republic the NGO sector contributes twice as much to GDP and in Poland 1.5 times as much as in Slovakia. In terms of employment, the non-governmental non-profit sector in Slovakia also lags behind, with 2.5 times as many people employed in this sector in Hungary, and almost 1.5 times as many in the Czech Republic.²² This comparison is particularly striking because both the starting point and the growth dynamics of non-governmental non-profit organizations were similar in the countries being compared after the fall of communism, and the economic growth dynamics in Slovakia has been above average in the region in the last few years. In the longer term, it is desirable to

²⁰ Findings of the experts who prepared the proposal of the Strategy of Civil Society Development in Slovakia for 2022 - 2030.

²¹ Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

²² Meyer, M. et al.: Civil Society and Its Institutional Context in CEE. VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations 31, p. 811–827, 2020. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-019-00106-7>

gradually approach the model present in developed democracies, where the share of public resources in the income of non-governmental non-profit organizations is as much as 50% in relation to other income, with an increasing proportion of voluntary work.

Underfunding of non-governmental non-profit organizations

The conducted research²³ deepens the findings of Meyer²⁴ and adds the perspective of non-governmental non-profit organizations to the picture. As many as 80% of NGOs named lack of funding as a barrier to achieving their goals. Organizations also reported that project funding, as the predominant form of fundraising, does not allow organizations to achieve financial stability and brings with it a high administrative burden. When it comes to the use of EU funds, non-governmental non-profit organizations reported that administrative burden and complexity of projects are the biggest barriers.

Insufficient financial and human capacities of non-governmental non-profit organizations

The research²⁵ also pointed in some cases to the lack of capacity of non-governmental non-profit organizations in the areas of finance, human resources, and project management. This is due to the fact that donor organizations or grant schemes from public sources often do not allow funding for the administrative and overhead costs of the organization, and if they do, it is only to the extent necessary to keep accounting and provide reporting for project purposes. This leads to a lack of space for organizations to build and develop internal capacity (human and financial), to achieve a greater degree of professionalization, and to establish partnerships with government, public administration or the private sector. Corporate donations, which together with donations from individual donors account for up to a third of the sector's own income²⁶, are very important for civil society and contribute to the private sector's acceptance of co-responsibility for the state of our society. It is the private donations that come mainly from contributions and collections, many of which are increasingly moving online.

Economic impacts of the pandemic crisis on civil society

On the one hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the indispensable role of active citizens and a developed civil society in crisis management, as they are often closer to at-risk and affected groups in particular. On the other hand, however, it underlined the underdevelopment and vulnerability of civil society. The COVID-19 pandemic has already had negative economic impacts on non-governmental non-profit organizations that will be felt for years to come. The Proposals for Measures for Non-governmental Non-profit Organizations in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic²⁷ show that the revenue shortfall for non-governmental non-profit organizations due to the pandemic can be expected to reach EUR 70-

²³ Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

²⁴ Meyer, M. et al.: Civil Society and Its Institutional Context in CEE. VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations 31, p. 811–827, 2020. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-019-00106-7>

²⁵ Same.

²⁶ Strečanský and Batková, 2020. https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/rada_vlady_pre_mno/rokovania/2020/22_rokovanie/priloha_2_MNO_navrh.pdf

²⁷ Same.

80 million in 2021, with a 10 % decrease in GDP, of which approximately EUR 34 million is the shortfall from individual and corporate donations, and approximately EUR 22 million from corporate and individual donations.

The problem of systemic resilience of civil society

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how quickly modern society can shift from one normal to another and how unpredictably external circumstances can change. Crisis phenomena will continue to arise in the future and cannot be specifically prepared for. They can only be prepared for in a general way - by strengthening adaptive capacity at the level of citizens and civil society organizations, as well as the environment for the development of civil society and its overall ecosystem. What was also revealed during this period was the different expectations that the different actors (local governments, the state, NGOs) operating at the same time in dealing with the consequences of the pandemic had of each other, of the ways of communicating, of the degree of cooperation, of the capacities of the different actors, of the mutual understanding of each other.

The resilience of organizations will become more important during the COVID-19 pandemic - but attention must also be paid to the resilience of the civil society development space and its overall ecosystem (e.g. by applying principles of individual or organizational resilience to this larger, systemic scale). This systemic resilience is thus a strategic challenge for civil society, taking into account the dynamics of political, economic and global changes affecting the Slovak Republic. Part of the systemic resilience of the space for civil society development is a functional and stable infrastructure providing different types of support services and support for civil society - activists, individuals, informal or formalized organizations. The Slovak Republic needs not only to maintain the existing financial frameworks, but to review the existing ones and launch new support mechanisms that will strengthen the existing infrastructure and support the under-resourced capacities of the non-governmental non-profit organizations, thus increasing the systemic resilience of the whole civil society.

Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 3

Objective 3.1: Maintain and strengthen the institutional and legislative framework of non-governmental non-profit organizations and update this framework on the basis of experience from Slovak and international practice.

Objective 3.2: Create new financial instruments and simplify and streamline existing ones in order to broaden the range of beneficiaries, expand the range of financial instruments and make the delivery of financial support more efficient.

Objective 3.3: Develop the existing infrastructure of civil society and non-governmental non-profit organizations and support their capacities in order to increase the systemic resilience of civil society.

Objective 3.4: Respond to crisis situations with assistance schemes that will maintain the quality and volume of service provided by non-governmental non-profit organizations and ensure their active involvement in addressing the consequences of the crises.

Objective 3.5: Strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations in the areas of governance, human resources and funding, as well as their ability to participate in public policy processes.

Measures for Strategic Objective 3.1

Objective 3.1: Maintain and strengthen the institutional and legislative framework of non-governmental non-profit organizations and update this framework on the basis of experience from Slovak and international practice.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 3.1.1. Maintain the current legislation governing the establishment, functioning and dissolution of non-governmental non-profit organizations and improve the legislation in areas where the application practice shows the need for improvement.
- 3.1.2. Strengthen the competences of the Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations, the Chamber of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations and the OPG DCS.
- 3.1.3. Prepare an amendment to Act No. 162/2014 Coll. on Public Collections and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Acts to reflect the current state of technology in the online environment.
- 3.1.4. Reexamine Act No 116/1985 Coll. on the conditions of activity of organizations with an international element in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, as amended, since most branches of international organizations are now registered under Act No 83/1990 Coll. on the association of citizens, as amended, and not under this Act, or modify the criteria for allocating subsidies and financial contributions so that they can be an eligible entity.
- 3.1.5. Extend the Unified Methodology for the Assessment of Selected Impacts (approved by Government Resolution No. 234/2021) to include impacts on the activities of non-governmental non-profit organizations and other organized civil society actors and active citizenship. Support these aspects of the analysis with methodological guidelines.

Measures for Strategic Objective 3.2

Objective 3.2: Create new financial instruments and simplify and streamline existing ones in order to broaden the range of beneficiaries, expand the range of financial instruments and make the delivery of financial support more efficient.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 3.2.1. Create new support mechanisms for non-governmental non-profit organizations along the lines of the Fund for the Support of the Arts (Slovak Arts Council), where public funds are redistributed by independent, respected foundations or consortia of foundations (which have long been active at the national and community level in Slovakia, e.g. the so-called Norwegian Funds - ACF program or in the past the so-called Swiss Funds), while preserving the autonomy of civil society and following the arms-length approach, where the perceived distance between the donor and the recipient is increased.

- 3.2.2. Allow funding in the form of block grants²⁸ or other forms of redistribution of EU funds (and legislate accordingly) to increase the uptake of EU funds in the small and micro-beneficiary segment.
- 3.2.3. Create conditions for effective implementation of the principle of partnership and multi-level governance in EU funds in accordance with Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 of 7 January 2014 on a European Code of Conduct on Partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds, including capacity building on the side of the public administration and the establishment of a coordination and management structure under the auspices of the OPG DCS.
- 3.2.4. Seek opportunities to allocate funds for new ways of financing non-governmental non-profit organizations, including the possibility of an initial investment for the launch of a charity lottery (regulated in Act No. 30/2019 Coll. on Gambling and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Acts, as amended).
- 3.2.5. With the participation of civil society, introduce new financing models for social innovations that have social and environmental benefits as a key characteristic in addition to financial returns and are based on innovative financing approaches such as "pay for success"²⁹ or investing with the goal of social benefit (impact investing).
- 3.2.6. Modify the current grant mechanisms so that project funding includes institutional support for the applicant. Introduce a scheme of long-term, so-called institutional or strategic grants to support the organizational development of non-governmental organizations.
- 3.2.7. Support the funding of multi-year projects of non-governmental non-profit organizations from grant schemes and thus enable grant recipients to receive funding for a longer period than one calendar year.
- 3.2.8. Amend or propose legal regulations concerning the subsidy mechanisms of individual ministries in order to facilitate the spending of public resources, mainly by reducing the administrative burden.
- 3.2.9. Add the following areas as eligible purposes in the terms and conditions and wording of the grant calls for proposals from the Slovak Republic as well as from EU funds and the Recovery and Resilience Plan, and ensure that all legal forms of non-governmental non-profit organizations are eligible beneficiaries³⁰:
 - a) civil society capacity and infrastructure development,,
 - b) the work of platforms and organizations involved in the development and evaluation or revision of public policies,
 - c) communication and outreach to donors as well as the use of modern fundraising tools,
 - d) creation of a reserve fund for public service organizations.
- 3.2.10. Adopt legislation to ensure the recognition of volunteering as a form of co-financing in projects from public sources.
- 3.2.11. Centralize the publication of the grant calls of the ministries in one place and with sufficient time and support in the form of clear methodological guides.
- 3.2.12. Within the new programming period 2021-2027 of EU funds, propose specific aid schemes for all beneficiaries with simplified forms of implementation and reporting. In

²⁸ A block grant is a fund created with a clearly defined purpose from which financial assistance can be provided to individuals, organizations or institutions. Block grants are aimed at assisting in the implementation of projects where the beneficiary is too small for their project to be administered on an individual basis in terms of cost-effectiveness. Block grants are implemented through a selected intermediary.

²⁹ Pay for success and impact investing are investments in businesses, organizations or funds that are characterized by social and environmental benefits in addition to financial returns. In many countries, it is common for the state to step in to finance social innovation, as it has a proven track record of delivering long-term benefits from these changes.

³⁰ The legal forms of non-governmental non-profit organizations are defined by Act No. 346/2018 Coll. on the Register of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Acts.

the case of other funds, create a specific support unit to reduce the administrative burden of implementing the programs through non-governmental non-profit organizations.

Measures for Strategic Objective 3.3

Objective 3.3: Develop the existing infrastructure of civil society and non-governmental non-profit organizations and support their capacities in order to increase the systemic resilience of civil society.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 3.3.1. With the participation of civil society, introduce regulation of public services implemented through non-governmental, non-profit organizations. Also propose a method for their financing and public procurement.
- 3.3.2. Establish a program for the development, testing and transfer of social innovations into public services with the participation of non-governmental non-profit organizations, start-ups and municipalities beyond narrowly oriented social entrepreneurship programs, and then promote successful examples and support their widespread implementation.

Measures for Strategic Objective 3.4

Objective 3.4: Respond to crisis situations with assistance schemes that will maintain the quality and volume of service provided by non-governmental non-profit organizations and ensure their active involvement in addressing the consequences of the crises.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 3.4.1. With the participation of civil society, approve a compensation mechanism to assist non-governmental non-profit organizations that have had to reduce their public benefit activities as a result of the crisis, taking into account impacts on employment and other indicators.
- 3.4.2. Prepare a proposal for the additional redistribution of the unallocated portion of the 2% income tax for 2021 to compensate for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and to strengthen the role of non-profit organizations in assisting those displaced by the war.
- 3.4.3. Design or modify the institutional and legislative system of crisis management to take into account cooperation with non-governmental non-profit organizations, the effectiveness of aid and the added value and experience of non-governmental non-profit organizations working in the field of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The proposal will also include support, including financial, for their capacities, including the provision of humanitarian assistance in preventing and dealing with the consequences of crises in the Slovak Republic and those outside the Slovak Republic with a direct impact on the Slovak Republic.

Measures for Strategic Objective 3.5

Objective 3.5: Strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations in the areas of governance, human resources and funding, as well as their ability to participate in public policy processes.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 3.5.1. Support training, acceleration and incubation programs³¹ for non-governmental non-profit organizations to develop their capacities for management, communication, participation and financing (including self-financing and non-commercial activities), to be implemented by actors other than public sector organizations.
- 3.5.2. Improve the supply and accessibility of sectoral training in the area of social entrepreneurship in the form of applied (non-formal) education, incubators and other tools.

³¹ Acceleration and incubation programs are programs aimed at developing new solutions, which often require long-term testing, and at supporting and developing specific activities - e.g. there are social business support centers to support social entrepreneurship.

Policy Area 4: Systematic Collection of Data on Civil Society

Monitoring is the systematic collection of data on specified areas of interest in such a way as to convey relevant information to key stakeholders on the progress of change and the achievement of the objectives of ongoing interventions. Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of ongoing or completed activities or policies and their results, taking into account, in particular, criteria such as impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, sustainability and added value.

Main Challenges

When mapping non-governmental non-profit organizations and their socio-economic contribution in the framework of the conducted research³², it was found that there is no reliable data that could be quantified, compared and tracked over time in the individual thematic areas of civil society activities. There are also no reliable sector-specific analyses for several areas of activity of non-governmental non-profit organizations. Research³³ has also shown that the actual size of the non-governmental non-profit sector is significantly smaller than the number of organizations listed in the various registers by legal form. It also showed that the Register of non-governmental non-profit organizations has not fully solved the problem of the high number of registered but inactive organizations. The Register of non-governmental non-profit organizations also lacks representation of specific areas monitored in international statistics and research. Similarly, central and local government authorities do not have regular, reliable and comparable data on the level of involvement of people in volunteering and on the economic value of volunteering.

The area of results-oriented monitoring and evaluation will be a key building block of the Strategy. The purpose for its inclusion is to provide a framework for a set of tools to measure the results of the Strategy, on an area-by-area basis, in order to increase efficiency, ensure greater transparency and sustainability. By making objective assessment of results a transparent component of the political and public debate and an important vehicle for interaction between different stakeholders, the framework will also help to build long-term trust in civil society.

The Strategy will be evaluated through the application of an interdisciplinary methodology, including quantitative and qualitative methods, based on clear, easy to understand and relevant criteria. At the same time, monitoring and evaluation will be based on an open access strategy, which is a publication model that ensures immediate and free access to research results on the Internet (essentially free online access). This approach is also based on:

- a) Open Government Partnership:
 - a. in the subject of open data³⁴
 - b. in the subject of open access to scientific publications³⁵

³² Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society) and Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica: Analysis of the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and the condition and trends of the development of civil society. Bratislava, 2020. Available at: https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/rozvoj_obcianskej_spolocnosti/vyskum_neziskoveho_sektora_a_obcianskej_spolocnosti/2020/ANALYZA_NP%20VYSKUM_17.12.2020_FINAL.pdf

³³ Same.

³⁴ More information available at: https://www.minv.sk/?ros_od

³⁵ More information available at: https://www.minv.sk/?_ros_oa

- b) National Strategy for Open Science³⁶ adopted by Government Resolution No. 317/2021
- c) Council and European Commission Directives of April 2016,³⁷ *Open Access to Scientific Publications and Open Research Data*, and can be applied to all forms of research outputs, including peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers and abstracts, theses, book chapters, monographs, etc.

In our case, this means that although civil society activities based on the concept are not necessarily implemented without financial costs, monitoring data and evaluation of these activities are provided free of charge and paid services are not a barrier to the dissemination of knowledge.

Strategic Objectives of Policy Area 4

Objective 4.1: Create an open, freely accessible and integrated data system on civil society.

Objective 4.2: Establish a framework for regular evaluation of the effectiveness, relevance and adequacy of existing financial support instruments used by the public sector to support civil society.

Measures for Strategic Objective 4.1

Objective 4.1: Create an open, freely accessible and integrated data system on civil society.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 4.1.1. Propose a modification of the functionalities of the Register of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations.
- 4.1.2. Update and add other areas of general-purpose organizations to the register of non-governmental non-profit organizations so that the register is in line with the specifics of the sector in Slovakia and with the international classification of non-governmental non-profit organizations ICNP/TSO (International Classification of Nonprofit and Third Sector Organizations).
- 4.1.3. For the purposes of the satellite account and regular data collection on non-governmental non-profit organizations, harmonize the areas of generally beneficial purpose in the Register of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations with the International Classification of Nonprofit and Third Sector Organizations ICNP/TSO (International Classification of Nonprofit and Third Sector Organizations), taking into account the specificities of non-governmental non-profit organizations in Slovakia.
- 4.1.4. Modify, where possible, the existing system of statistical data collection, which, based on the UN's methodology for the satellite account of non-profit and related institutions and the measurement of volunteering, will enable the socio-economic contribution of the non-profit sector and volunteering to be statistically processed on an ongoing basis, and will also be helpful for improving the quality of services provided by non-

³⁶ National Open Science Strategy. Available at: <https://www.minedu.sk/narodna-strategia-pre-otvorenu-vedu-na-roky-2021-2028-a-akcny-plan-pre-otvorenu-vedu-na-roky-2021-2022/>

³⁷ Open Access to Scientific Publications and Open Research Data. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/research_and_innovation/strategy_on_research_and_innovation/documents/ec_rtd_background-note-open-access.pdf

governmental non-profit organizations and other civil society actors, as well as for the development of public policies.

- 4.1.5. With the participation of civil society, create a results platform, integrating the requirements of the different grant schemes, which will provide open access to the results of civil society activities in order to increase transparency and knowledge sharing.
- 4.1.6. With the participation of civil society, evaluate available data and analyses monitoring the consequences and impacts on civil society organizations during crisis situations.

Measures for Strategic Objective 4.2

Objective 4.2: Establish a framework for regular evaluation of the effectiveness, relevance and adequacy of existing financial support instruments used by the public sector to support civil society.

The following measures have been proposed for this strategic objective:

- 4.2.1. With the involvement of civil society and the governing bodies of grant mechanisms, design and test tools for assessing the impact of civil society activities (such as integrated impact assessment or value for money), taking into account existing tools and mechanisms (e.g. in the field of development aid) as well as experience with them.
- 4.2.2. Evaluate the contribution of charity advertising³⁸ in order to make it more effective and attractive.

³⁸ Charitable advertising is a designation for exemption from income tax, which is linked to the conditions set out in Section 13(1)(g) of Act No. 595/2003 Coll. on Income Tax, as amended.