



Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic
Geneva

OHCHR REGISTRY

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The Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the Office of the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to attach the written response of the Slovak Republic to the communication of the Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights – questionnaire on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications.

The Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 1 December 2011



Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais Wilson
Geneva

Annex: 4 pages

Questionnaire on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications

Answers of the Slovak Republic

1.

In view of the opportunities that scientific progress and technical innovation have created in the area of broadcasting and audiovisual services, legislation has been put in place that requires broadcasters and the providers of on-demand audiovisual media services to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to television broadcasts and on-demand audiovisual media services. Specific duties for broadcasters and the providers of on-demand audiovisual media services in relation to this social group are laid down in Act No. 308/2000 Z.z. on broadcasting and retransmission and on the amendment of Act No. 195/2000 Z.z. on telecommunications, as amended.

The act obliges a broadcaster to ensure multimodal access to programme services whereby every television programme service that it broadcasts digitally must have hidden or open subtitles for at least 50% of all programmes and a translation to deaf sign language or an original broadcast in deaf sign language for 3% of all programmes, and a voice commentary for the blind for 20% of all broadcast programmes.

The act obliges a licensed broadcaster to ensure multimodal access to programme services whereby a television programme service that it broadcasts digitally must have hidden or open subtitles; a translation to deaf sign language or an original broadcast in deaf sign language for at least 10% of all programmes and a voice commentary for the blind for 3% of all broadcast programmes.

Broadcasters and providers of on-demand audiovisual services are also obliged to clearly identify all programmes that have hidden subtitles, open subtitles, voice commentaries for the blind or are translated in to deaf sign language or broadcast or provided in deaf sign language. A broadcaster is obliged to include this identification in the broadcast of programmes, in notices about the broadcast of such programmes and in the programme schedule that it offers, and also in the summary of programmes that it provides for publication in the periodical press and other mass information media; a provider of on-demand audiovisual services shall include the identification in its programme catalogue.

This duty to ensure access to broadcasting shall not apply to local broadcasting or broadcasting to foreign countries.

Research and development shall contribute to the social (social cohesion) and economical development of the Slovak Republic – as stated in the strategic document approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic Update of the Long Term Plan of State Research and Development Policy until 2015 (Strategy Phoenix).

Examples of funding schemes to support related projects:

Projects are supported under the horizontal activities Operational Programme Research and Development (EU Structural Funds).

- marginalised Roma communities;
- equality of opportunities;
- sustainable development;
- Information Society.

Projects can be also supported under the General Call administrated by Slovak Research and Development Support Agency – based on bottom up priority selection.

Projects carried out by universities are supported by specific scheme administrated by Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic “VEGA”. It includes basic research projects also in areas of environment, health, human sciences.

2.

Lack of public and private investments to the research and development, Lagging development of Technical infrastructure of Research and Development (this issue is being addressed by the support from EU structural funds).

3.

No general national codex for ethics in research and development (Ethical codices can be issued by the research organisations for example the Ethical Codex of Slovak Academy of Sciences).

Specific rules for Biomedical research are set under the national laws (ban on research using embryonic stem cells, ban on human cloning, ban on research which could endanger the health or human life, need of informed consent). Ethical Committee for Health Care and Biomedical Research was established as the consultative committee for the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic.

4.

Freedom of the scientific research is guaranteed under the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. Freedom of expression, association and information is guaranteed under the Constitution of the Slovak Republic.

5.

The legal basis for the application of standards of freedom of expression in the Slovak Republic is the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and international treaties establishing freedom of expression and the right to information, in particular the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Under Article 26 of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic the right to freedom of expression and the right to information are guaranteed, everyone has the right to express their opinions in words, writing, print, images or by other means and also to seek, receive and disseminate ideas and information regardless of the state borders. No approval process shall be required for press publishing, although radio and television enterprises may be subject to permission from the state, whose conditions shall be governed by law. Censorship is prohibited but freedom of expression and the right to seek and disseminate information may be limited by law where measures are necessary in a democratic society for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others, state security, public order or the protection of public health and morality.

Neither Act No. 167/2008 Z.z. on periodicals and news agency services and on the amendment of certain acts (the Press Act) nor any other legislation in any way limits the publication, public dissemination or availability of scientific literature and journals. Under Section 11 of the Press Act, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic keeps records of periodicals by entering periodicals in a list. Of the total number of periodicals (1 917) being

published in the territory of the Slovak Republic in November 2011, 174 were scientific journals (9%).

6.

As a principle information instrument of the State Science and Research Policy the Central Information Portal for Science, Research and Innovation was established. It provides comprehensive online information for the public about research programmes, activities, calls, and outcomes of projects supported by public investments.

One of the priorities of the Slovak Republic is popularisation of the Science and Research towards the public and to boost the attractiveness of career in science especially for young people.

Examples of activities:

National Science Week which includes popular contest for young pupils and students and hundreds of events organised throughout the Slovak Republic.

Activities of National Centre for Popularisation of Science aimed at public and young people.

7.

Legislative proposals are submitted for online legislative mark up which includes the public.

8.

The scholarships of the National Scholarship Programme of the Slovak Republic are intended for students and PhD students of the Slovak universities to cover living costs of their study at a second level of higher education, or of their study or research stay during their PhD study, at a foreign University or at a foreign research organization.

9.

Support of the international Cooperation in research and development is one of the priorities of the Slovak Republic. It includes support for both specifically EU and other international initiatives and activities.

Support for the participation in the EU programmes and initiatives (EU Framework Programmes, Joint Technology Initiatives, Joint programming Initiatives, European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures).

Slovak research and development organisations and researchers participate in many international research and development organisations and projects. For example: European Organization for the Nuclear Research CERN.

International activities include bilateral international co-operation in science and technology. The Slovak Research and development Support Agency supports the mobility of researchers on the basis of international agreements on scientific and technological co-operation.

10.

Lack of public and private investments to the research and development, some of the Slovak research and development organisations or researchers have no or little established contacts with experienced partners from EU and other countries which hampers their participation in EU and international programmes and initiatives.

11.

On 1 January 2009 there came into effect Act No. 516/2008 Z.z on the Audiovisual Fund and on the amendment of certain acts (hereinafter referred to as "the Act"), which established the Audiovisual Fund in the Slovak Republic as a public institution supporting audiovisual culture and the audiovisual industry.

The bodies of the Audiovisual Fund are the board, the supervisory commission and the director. The board has nine members appointed and recalled by the minister of culture at the proposal of persons working the audiovisual area.

The main activity of the fund is to support audiovisual culture and the audiovisual industry in the Slovak Republic, to develop strategies and plans in the audiovisual area and to grant co-production status in accordance with the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production. Support is provided through subsidies, loans and stipends. The Fund provides financing under a multi-source financing model in which contributions from the state budget are combined with contributions from enterprises that make use of audiovisual content or subjects who provide added value in relation to the use of audiovisual content on a commercial basis (their profitability directly or indirectly depends on the existence and use of audiovisual works); in this model the state's contribution must not be less than the total of the other contributor's contributions for a given calendar year. The detailed aims for the support of audiovisual production through financing from the Audiovisual Fund in each calendar year are determined by the structure of the fund's support activities. Programme No. 3 in the structure of support activities for 2011 includes support for research, training, education and publications in connection with audiovisual culture and the audiovisual industry. The programme supports the preparation development and publication of professional, scientific, theoretical and historiographical studies, the publication of periodical and non-periodical publications, scientific, theoretical and research activities in the audiovisual field (studies, expert reports, analyses, the implementation of monitoring, surveys and other specialised activities). The programme also supports the foreign study visits of specialists and academics in the area of audiovisual culture for the purposes of obtaining new knowledge relating to audiovisual culture and the audiovisual industry. The maximum amount of support provided for one project is EUR 50 000 although larger sums may be approved for individual projects in exceptional and justified cases, though for no more than the limit set for the given programme/sub-programme.

Each year Ministry of the Education Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic submits an Annual Report on the Research and Development in the Slovak Republic. Report includes the achievements of the Slovak research and development. Report is available for public on the website of Ministry.