



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

SLOVAKIA DESTINATION GUIDE

1. Basic info

Capital: Bratislava

Population: 5 418 374 (July 2009 est.)

Area: 48,845 sq km

Currency: EURO (€)

Unemployment rate: 9.5% (as of February 2009)

2. General conditions of entry and visa information

Special conditions regarding Schengen

Slovakia is a member of the Schengen Area and therefore issues Schengen visas. Schengen visas allow holders to enter the entire Schengen Area¹. After entering the Schengen Area, you are allowed to travel to all the Schengen countries without any other visa or passport control but must be able to prove your visa status on request.

You can apply for Schengen visa at Slovak embassies if Slovakia is the main destination of your visit within Schengen or the first point of entry into Schengen.

In case of not meeting the requirements for a Schengen visa, it is possible to apply for a special visa allowing entry only into Slovakia (not all Schengen countries (e.g. for special humanitarian reasons)).

The Slovak legislation has undergone several modifications covering the area of visa issuance in accordance with the Regulation establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code). Foreign nationals may apply for two basic types of visas. The Schengen visa is mainly regulated by the Visa Code, whereas the national visa is governed by national legislation. Contrary to the national visa, unsuccessful applicants

¹ Schengen refers to a group of European Union member states which have abolished passport controls on their internal borders and strengthened controls at their external boundaries. The 24 member states of the Schengen Area as of 2008 are Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

This Guide has been updated as part of the Migration for Development in the Western Balkans (MIDWEB) project, which received financial assistance from the European Commission IPA 2009 Multi-beneficiary Programme 2.



Revised in April 2011

for Schengen visa have the right to appeal and be notified of reasons for refusal of their application. However provisions stipulating these particular rights enter into force as of April 5, 2011.

Types of visa

(A) Airport Transit visa: This visa enables those foreigners who are required to have it to stay in the international transit area of an airport while awaiting their connecting flight, but does not permit entry into the country.

(B) Transit visa: entitles you to pass through the Slovakia from the territory of one state to the territory of the third state. The duration of the respective transit must not exceed five days.

- Transit visa for two entries allows you to transit in and out of Slovakia. The maximum validity of the visa is 90 days.

- Transit visa for multiple entries allows you to make an unlimited number of transits through Slovakia. The maximum validity of the visa is 180 days.

(C) Short term visa: This visa entitles a foreigner to enter and stay in the Slovakia (and Schengen territory) for tourist, business, personal or any other visits or similar purposes of entry. A short-term visa may be issued for single, double or multiple entries into the country where neither a single uninterrupted stay nor the collective duration of a number of successive stays may exceed 90 days within a period of six months, starting from the day of first entry.

Citizens of Serbia, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, who are holders of biometric passports can travel visa free to and throughout the Schengen area. As of 15 December 2010, citizens of Albania, and Bosnia & Herzegovina are also exempt from visa requirements when crossing the external borders with those EU countries members of the Schengen Zone². According to the visa 90/180 days rule, citizens of Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina can stay in the Slovak Republic area for a maximum of 90 days (3 months) within a half-year, counting from the first day of entry. After a 90 days long stay, it is necessary to travel out of the Slovak Republic/Schengen area. He/she can return only in the next half-year. Citizens of these countries travelling to Slovak Republic/Schengen area can not engage in employment activities or lodge an asylum application in any of the EU Member States. If the purpose of stay is either employment or study, then Schengen visa or residence permit is required. Citizens of Kosovo (UNSCR 1244) should apply for visa (short or long term depending on the purpose of stay prior to travelling to Slovakia).

(D) Long-term visa: allows you to enter the territory of the Slovakia and stay on its territory or travel to other member states (outside the territory of the Slovak Republic) for a period longer than 90 days in one half-year, if this is necessary for the fulfilment of commitments of the Slovakia arising from international treaties, or in case it is in the interest of the Slovakia (see sections 3 and 4 below)

Where to apply?

Office of the Slovak Embassy in Albania

Rr. Skenderbej, 8

Tel: +355 4 2274917

Fax: +355 4 2274918

Email: emb.tirana@mzv.sk

²Citizens of Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Bosnia & Herzegovina need to apply for visa when travelling to UK and Ireland since these countries that are not part of the Schengen Zone. They also need to obtain visas in order to enter in the territories of Bulgaria, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Romania which are part of the European Union but have not yet implemented Schengen zone member rules.

Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Trnovska br. 6,
71000 Sarajevo,
Bosna i Hercegovina
Tel: + (387 33) 716 440
Tel: +(387 33) 716 441
Fax: + (387 33) 716 410

Embassy of the Slovak Republic in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Budimpeštanska 39
1000 Skopje
Tel: +389 2 3090 360
Fax: +389 2 3090 367
E-mail: emb.skopje@mzv.sk

Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Montenegro

Crnogorskih serdara 5, 81000 Podgorica
Tel: +382 20 601 440
Fax: +382 20 601 456
Email: emb.podgorica@mzv.sk

Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Serbia

Bulevar umetnosti 18, Novi Beograd
110 70 Belgrade, Serbia
Phone: 00381-11 / 22 23 800, 00381-11
Fax: 00381-11 / 22 23 820
E-mail: embassy@belehrad.mfa.sk

In what form is the visa issued? The visa is issued in the form of a sticker affixed in the travel document (passport)

What do you need to request a Schengen visa?

- Completed Application Form for Visa Schengen Form
- Passport
- Photograph 3 x 3,5 cm
- On request, a document confirming purpose of stay
- Financial coverage of the stay
- Ensuring means for the return travel
- Accommodation-related documents
- Travel medical Insurance

** If requested to do so, you must personally attend an interview in the Embassy*

Upon entry in Slovakia

Irrespective of the length of your stay in the Slovakia, you are obliged by the law to personally register with the local bureau of police according to your place of temporary residence in the Slovakia within three days from your entry in the territory of the Slovakia.

3. Immigration for Employment Purposes

Conditions of entry and stay of foreign workers

In order to be able to work in the Slovakia, you need to obtain:

- (i) a visa (***see section 2 above***),
- (ii) a work permit (before you start your professional activity in Slovakia)
- (iii) a temporary residence permit (***see section 5 below***)

Explanation: a third country national who wants to find a job usually comes to Slovakia on a Schengen visa, he/she finds a job, applies for a work permit and leaves back to his/her country of origin to submit an application for a residence permit. Once the residence permit is approved a so called "entry visa" is issued for travelling. After arrival, a temporary residence stamp is pasted into the passport. There is also a possibility to receive a temporary residence permit stamp through the embassy - but it takes 2-3 weeks.

Work permit

Duration: a work permit is issued for the maximum period of 2 year for permanent work, and 6 months for seasonal work (there needs to be a break of at least 6 months between an individual's employments in Slovakia). The work permit can not be transferred, meaning that it can only be granted for a particular job with a particular employer, and in case of changing employers than a new application form should be submitted with the competent authorities. In Slovakia, the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family is the responsible authority for granting work permits to foreigners.

Steps you need to take to obtain a work permit:

1. Complete an application form "Žiadosť o udelenie povolenia na zamestnanie" (to be found at: <http://www.employment.gov.sk/index.php?SMC=1>)

* Note: you can apply for the work permit individually or this can be done on your behalf by your future employer, other legal entity, or an individual for whom you will work. If you apply for a work permit through your future employer, you have to enclose your authorization with such instructions and your signature must be notarized in compliance with legislation of your country or in compliance with the Slovak legislation.

2. Attach the following documents to your application:

- An employment contract (or other contract) between you and your future employer in Slovak, with notarized signatures;
- Notarized copy of the proof of your education (diploma), officially translated into Slovak and bearing a stamp of a court certified translator;
- Notarized power of attorney, if the future employer authorized a third party to communicate with the Labor Office;
- A copy of your passport
- The Labor Office may request additional documents, such as:
 - a letter confirming that the future employer duly fulfils its tax obligations, etc.,
 - other documents depending on a respective bilateral treaty,
 - an extract from the Commercial or Trade registry.

3. Submit your application to the local Labour Office in Slovakia in the district corresponding to your employer's address (a map of districts can be found at: www.upsvar.sk).

Decision on your application

Decisions regarding individual work permits are made by the local Office of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovakia within 30 days upon receipt of the application. The decision in writing is sent to the mailing address specified in the application.

The granted work permit can be canceled if:

- The foreigner has violated the binding legal regulations
- He/she does not enter into employment, for which the work permit was granted

You will **not** be required a work permit in the following cases:

- you have a permanent residency permit in the territory of the Slovakia
- you have a temporary residence permit for the purpose of unification of your family and you are entitled to enter labor relations or similar terms on the grounds of special legislation
- you were granted a temporary residence permit for the purpose of study – you can work without work permit no longer than 10 hours a week
- you are a Slovak expatriate
- you were granted asylum
- you are an asylum seeker for more than 1 year in asylum procedure
- you were granted temporary shelter
- your employment in the territory of the Slovakia is of temporary nature and does not exceeded 7 subsequent calendar days or a total of 30 calendar days in 1 calendar year and you are:
 - an educator, a university academic, a scientist, a researcher or a developer taking part in a special profession-related event,
 - an artist, taking active part in an artistic event,
 - a foreigner ensuring delivery or delivering goods and services in the territory of the Slovakia, or undertaking assembly works on the grounds of a commercial contract, or undertakes warranty or repair works
- you are a family member of a staff member of a diplomatic mission, a consulate or an international governmental organization servicing in Slovakia, if the respective international treaty signed in the name of the Slovak government guarantees reciprocity
- you are a member of a rescue team and are providing help on the grounds of an interstate agreement on reciprocal aid in eliminating damages caused by accidents and disasters and in cases of humanitarian aid
- you are a member of armed forces or civil unit of the armed forces of an authorized government
- you are a working student who does work within continuous training for profession and the training is organized by schools or school facilities
- you were appointed to Slovakia by your employer based in another EU member state
- you are a co-owner of a commercial company or a statutory body of a commercial company or a co-operative, or a member of a commercial company's or a co-operative's statutory body, undertaking activities for the company in the territory of the Slovakia
- you are employed in an international transport organization and have been sent to the territory of the Slovakia by your employer based abroad
- you are an accredited journalist.

More information

Ministry of Interior of the Slovakia: www.minv.sk

Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovakia: www.employment.gov.sk

• Migration Info Center: <http://mic.iom.sk/>

• Helpdesk of the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny): 0800 191222

Labour market sectors experiencing shortages

At present Slovakia has one of the highest unemployment rates in the European Union, estimated around 14 percent at the end of 2010. The average number of job vacancies in the Slovak Republic during the 4th quarter of 2010 was 13,895. The highest number of advertised job vacancies as per the 4th quarter of 2010 are in the following economic sectors: manufacturing industry, wholesale and retail trade, and public administration. The economic sectors with the lowest demand for labor are: agriculture, forestry and fishing, mining and quarrying, education, arts, entertainment and recreation. The region with the highest number of job vacancies in the 4th quarter of 2010 is Bratislava (7202 job vacancies), while the regions with the lowest numbers of job vacancies are those of Trnava (802) and Prešov (833), Unskilled

migrants are frequently employed in the construction industry, while seasonal work opportunities are provided in the agricultural sector (cooperative farms particularly in times of harvesting). Skilled migrants are usually employed in big multinational corporations, high-tech firms or regional centers. Those economic sectors experiencing increased shortages of labor are: the infrastructure and public sector, special healthcare services, information technologies, and new energy and eco sources.

Job search

Information on job vacancies is available on the internet, in daily newspapers, advertisement newspapers, regional and local newspapers.

Websites:

www.profesia.sk - search database of job vacancies (also in English and German), contact phone numbers and addresses of personnel agencies/recruitment agencies

www.greenpages.sk – see the section „Personnel agencies“ (Personálne agentúry)

www.ponuky.sk/default_en.aspx

<http://www.indexnoslus.sk/>

<http://www.manpower.sk/>

<http://www.trenkwald.com/sk/Pracovne-ponuky/Vyhľadavanie-zamestnania.html>

www.eures.sk European Employment Service (EURES) is a co-operation network of public employment services within the European Economic Area and Switzerland. The EURES system website provides information on job vacancies in the EEA Member States.

Quotas and bilateral agreements where they exist

N/A

Au-pair and other specific foreign labour programmes

N/A

4. Studying in Slovakia

Conditions of entry and stay for students

The permit for temporary stay for the purpose of studies may be granted by a police section for attendance in an elementary school, a secondary school or a university in the Slovakia.

The application for granting the permit for temporary stay shall be submitted in person, abroad. The police department decides on your application for a temporary residence permit for the purpose of studies within 30 days following the receipt of the application

A permit for temporary stay for the purpose of study is not required, if the stay of the alien on the territory of the Slovakia does not exceed 90 days in one half-year.

Foreign students (who have been granted a temporary residence permit for the purpose of study) may start business activities, employment or similar labour relation under special conditions stipulated by separate Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment services as amended.

(See section 5 below on Residence permits)

Graduate and post-graduate scholarships

Conditions for awarding scholarships to college students are specified in the Ordinance of the Ministry of Education no. 326/1990 Coll. on Provision of Scholarships to College Students as later amended. This ordinance applies also to the foreign students who have permanent residence in Slovakia. The full version of the ordinance is available at www.medic.upjs.sk/studium/1990_326.pdf

A college student may be awarded:

- a social scholarship from the State Budget funds
 - a scholarship from the college's own funds (subject to the internal rules of the respective college)
- Within the framework of the Modernization Program Slovensko 21 (Slovakia 21) directed by the Ministry of the Education, Science Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic, graduates from secondary schools of Belarus, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Moldova, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, Montenegro, and Croatia, will have the opportunity to attend free of charge 10 months of language and academic preparation at the Institute of Language and Academic Preparation for Foreign Students of the Center of Further Education of the Comenius University in Bratislava (UJOP) . In addition, students will receive scholarships granted by the Government of the Slovak Republic in the amount of 280,- EUR/month + single contribution in the amount of 70,- EUR towards accommodation, board and other expenses related to his/her study in the Slovak Republic. After the completion of the 10-month preparatory courses, students are expected to finish at least the 2nd degree of university study in the Slovak Republic, i.e. engineer/master study.

List of main universities and colleges

Public higher education institutions

- Academy of Arts Banská Bystrica (www.aku.sk)
- Academy of Fine Arts a Design, Bratislava (www.afad.sk)
- Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, Bratislava (www.vsmu.sk)
- Alexander Dubček University of Trenčín (www.tnuni.sk)
- Catholic University, Ružomberok (www.ku.sk)
- Comenius University, Bratislava (www.uniba.sk)
- Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra (www.ukf.sk)
- Jan Selye University, Komárno (www.selye.sk)
- Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica (www.umb.sk)
- Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice (www.upjs.sk)
- Slovak University of Agriculture, Nitra (www.uniag.sk)
- Slovak University of Technology, Bratislava (www.stuba.sk)
- Technical University of Košice (www.tuke.sk)
- Technical University, Zvolen (www.tuzvo.sk)
- University of Economics, Bratislava (www.euba.sk)
- University of Prešov, Prešov (www.unipo.sk)
- University of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Trnava (www.ucm.sk)
- University of Trnava (www.truni.sk)
- University of Veterinary Medicine, Košice (www.uvm.sk)
- University of Žilina (www.utc.sk)

State higher education institutions

- Police Academy, Bratislava (<http://www.akademiapz.sk/>), in Slovak only
- Slovak Medical University, Bratislava (www.szu.sk)
- Gen. Milan Rastislav Štefánik Academy of Military Forces, Liptovský Mikuláš (<http://aos.valm.sk>)

Private higher education institutions

- College of Management, Trenčín (www.vsm.sk/main-en.htm)
- St. Elizabeth Medical and Social Work University, Bratislava (www.vssvalzbety.sk)
- College of Economics and Management of Public Administration, Bratislava (www.vsemvs.sk)
- Bratislava Law College (www.uninova.sk)
- College of international business ISM Slovakia in Prešov (www.ismpo.sk)
- Central European College in Skalica (www.sevs.sk)
- College in Sládkovičovo (www.vssladkovicovo.sk)
- Dubnica Institute of Technology in Dubnica nad Váhom (www.dti.sk)
- Bratislava International College of Liberal Studies in Bratislava (www.bisla.sk)

- College of Security Management in Košice (www.vsbm.sk)

Foreign students' programmes where applicable

<http://www.scholarships.sk/>

5. Residence

Temporary residence permit

A temporary residence permit can be granted to you for the first time for a period of time equivalent to the duration of a purpose, with a maximum of two years. The permit is granted only for a specific purpose. In the case that the purpose still continues after period granted and you still fulfill the conditions for residence, your permit can be renewed for a further period of time according to the purpose of stay <http://www.minv.sk/?dokumenty-na-stiahnutie-1>

If the original purpose of the residence changes, you must apply for a new permit.

Required documents:

- a) Completed official application form
- b) Two colour photographs 3 x 3,5 cm
- c) Duty stamp for the temporary residence permit (you have to purchase a stamp at the Post office, in some newsagents and sometimes at state offices) varies according to the purpose of stay (business = 232.00 Euro, employment = 132.50 Euro, study = 99.50 Euro, special activities = 99.50 Euro)
- d) Valid proof of identification (ID card, passport) (without it your application cannot be accepted).
- e) Document confirming purpose of residence:
 - Entrepreneurship: different types of entrepreneurship (business) permits issued pursuant to separate acts (Commercial code, Act on Trade licencing)
 - Employment: an original or a notarized copy of the work permit decision issued by a labour office in the (a foreign journalist will need an accreditation issued by the Press Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovakia)
 - Study: letter of admission to a university/school; a certified copy of the document of the Ministry of Education of the Slovakia confirming participation in consultations, exchange of experience and exchange study stay, participation in arts, methodical and other specialized courses and educational activities; certified copy of confirmation from domestic university, Slovak Academy of Sciences, college, vocational school or special school, competent organization accredited by the Ministry of Education of the Slovakia and the like
 - Special activities: confirmation issued by particular institution accredited to perform special activities (research, lecturing, scientific and artistic activity); culture – confirmation of natural or legal person being engaged in cultural activities in the Slovakia
 - Family reunion: concerning a married couple, certified copy of marriage certificate; concerning a single child younger than 18 years, birth certificate; concerning other cases (e.g. parents), other document confirming family relations.
 - Performing professional duties in civil service of the armed forces
- f) Extract from the Slovak criminal registry; or extract from a criminal registry or a confirmation about clear criminal record that is issued in the country of origin; or extract from the criminal registry of every country where you lived last 3 years.

* Exceptions from the need to present a criminal registry: the following categories of foreigners in Slovakia do not need to submit confirmation about clear criminal record: those who perform activities according to special programs, those who perform professional duties in civil service of the armed forces, those who have a long-term stay in Slovakia, those who are only changing their purpose of residence or those who are younger than 14 years.

g) Financial coverage for the stay [Exception: when performing professional duties in civil service of the armed forces]

The residence must be financially secured in freely convertible currency, at least in the amount of a minimum salary for a month of the stay (as of January 2010, the minimum salary in Slovakia was 307, 7 €), at least for the period of one year = 3694, 4 €.

In case you have a work permit, the *work contract* with specified monthly amount of salary should be sufficient. A foreigner younger than 16 years is obliged to prove financial means for the residence in a half amount of a minimum salary.

Financial means can be also proven by *cash, account bank statement* of a bank based in the Slovakia, voucher, other document confirming payment for services in the Slovakia or by invitation and the like. Inability to prove financial coverage for the stay is legal cause for refusing entrance to the country.

h) Health insurance in the Slovakia and a confirmation of a health status [Exception: does not have to be proved when performing professional duties in civil service of the armed forces]

i) Accommodation during stay; the evidence is for example a rental contract or confirmation of accommodation reservation.

j) Permission of a parent (who has right to meet a child) for family reunion, if the child has not been put into personal custody

All the above documents cannot be older than 90 days and all must be either in Slovak or officially translated into Slovak by a certified translator!

Procedure:

1. Official Application Form to be acquired from and submitted to: Diplomatic Representation (outside Slovakia), or Police authority (in the territory of Slovakia).

2. The competent authority - Border Police and Alien Police- decides about the application within 90 days of its dispatch (in the complicated cases it is possible to extend this period by 90 days) or within 30 days, if the applicant is a foreign student

Certain categories of foreigners are exempted from the obligation to hold a temporary residence permit during the first 90 days from entry to the Schengen area. These include for instance employees of strategic investors or specific cases of persons seconded to work in Slovakia by their employer. Such foreign nationals may start working immediately upon their arrival to Slovakia, provided that they hold a valid work permit, if required.

Another group exempted from the obligation to have a residence permit during the first 90 days from entry to the Schengen area includes students enrolled for studies with the duration exceeding 90 days. These are able to commence their studies immediately upon their legal entry to Slovakia. All students enrolled for studies at Slovak schools are entitled to apply for a temporary residence permit.

In case of employing foreign nationals, employers are obliged to notify the competent Alien Police Department of employment termination within 3 working days.

Legislation changes with regard to tolerated residence include for example extension of its maximum possible length for human trafficking related victims from 40 to 90 days. Moreover, appeals are not acceptable in connection with the length of granted or renewed tolerated residence. Generally, a tolerated residence is automatically terminated when its holder leaves the country.

Permanent residence permit

In order to get a long-term residence permit, you need a visa granted for the purpose of employment, and a work permit granted by relevant district labour office. See Section 1 above for the visa and section 3 above for the work permit.

Administrative expulsion

Reasons for administrative expulsion include submitting forged and modified documents or documents not belonging to the applicant pursuant to the Act on Residence of Foreigners. Such foreign nationals may face imposing of a ban on entry to Slovakia for a period of up to 5 years.

Detention of foreign nationals

The maximum length of detention may not exceed 6 months. However, the Police Department may extend this period for further 12 months, when assumed the process of administrative expulsion will take longer due to absention cooperation or delay of substitute travel document issuance.

6. Asylum seekers and refugees

Officially, the criteria for granting refugee status corresponds to the definition of the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

Procedure and legal basis

The Migration Office within the Ministry of the Interior is the first instance with the right to determine the refugee status of an applicant. As part of the refugee status determination procedure, applicants should undergo a number of medical examinations. During the period of the medical examinations, the freedom of movement for the applicant is limited. The applicant is free to leave the camp for limited periods of time, once these examinations are concluded. As part of the procedure, the Migration Office conducts a first interview with the applicant. Each applicant has the right to appeal against a negative decision brought against his application, period during which, they will be relocated to two refugee camps in Brezova and Bradlom.

According to the law, the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic should take a **decision within 90 days after the filing of the application request**. This time period can be extended by the Ministry. In the event of a negative decision, the applicant can submit another **appeal** with the same authority, and another decision is given by the Minister, on the recommendation of an advisory board, within 60 days. The decision of the Minister can be finally reviewed by the Supreme Court.

Recognized refugees are provided with assistance in job seeking, renting an apartment or obtaining other social services in the integration centre of Zvolen. Refugees may spend a maximum of six months in this centre.

Recognized refugees are automatically given a residence permit of indeterminate term, which puts them on an equal footing with Slovak citizens (with the exception of franchise and military service).

7. Family Reunification

Temporary stay may be granted by a police department for the purpose of family reunification to the following persons:

- a spouse of a foreigner who holds a permit for temporary stay or a permanent residence permit, if both of them are at least 18 years old
- a minor (single) child not older than 18 years of age of aliens who hold a permit for temporary stay or of a foreigner having a permit for temporary stay, or of his/her spouse or of a refugee or of a spouse of a refugee, who cares for the child based on the law or a decision of the respective authority
- a dependent child older than 18 years of age of an alien having a permit for temporary stay, or of his/her spouse
- a single parent dependent on the care of a foreigner who holds a permit for temporary stay for the purpose of business activity or employment (also having a work permit) or of his/her spouse
- a dependent person according to the international treaty

Family members of a foreigner have to submit the application for the granting of a permit for temporary stay for the purpose of family reunification in person in the corresponding Slovak Embassy.

A minor child not older than 18 years of age (eligibility criteria see above) and a dependent person according to the international treaty may apply for the granting of a permit for temporary stay for the purpose of family reunification also at the relevant police authority in the Slovakia.

The foreigner needs to demonstrate his/her financial stability through one of the following documents:

- a) an official statement of his/her Slovakian bank account;
- b) an official statement issued by his/her employer certifying the amount of paid wages

Proof of secure accommodation will be also required, implying that the foreigner should be able to provide with:

- a) an official statement of property ownership in the Republic of Slovakia;
- b) lease contract with the owner or user of the property, and any other official document attesting the right to use the property.

The police decides on the application for the granting of a permit for temporary stay within 90 days following the receipt of the application; in extremely complicated cases this period may be extended by 90 days at the maximum.

A foreigner applying for the granting of a permit for temporary stay for the purpose of family reunification with a family member who holds a temporary residence permit in Slovakia for carrying out research within the framework of specific activities, will be granted a permit by the police department with a validity till the expiration of the validity of the permit of the researcher.

When seeking for a renewal of a temporary residence permit, the request shall be submitted no later than 60 days prior to the expiry of the temporary residence permit.

8. Health Care System

Employment

When you take up employment with an employer who has permanent residence in the Slovakia or you start self-employment activities in the Slovakia, you become subject to statutory public health insurance in the Slovakia. The Slovak health insurance company of your choice will issue a Slovak health insurance card after registering. For details, it is highly recommended to contact your home health insurance company before arrival in the Slovakia. As a foreigner you would need to prove adequate health insurance at the Police department within 30 days of entry or 30 days from the granting of a valid permit for temporary or permanent stay. In case of holding a temporary residence permit, it is not required that you have health insurance with a Slovak health insurance company. In case you are applying for a permanent residence permit in Slovakia, you need to be covered by the compulsory public health insurance and thus must obtain valid health insurance coverage in Slovakia.

International students (also PhD students)

A foreign student, coming to Slovakia to study within a programme arising from an international treaty that is binding for the Slovakia is subject to statutory health insurance covered by the Slovakia. The student shall submit the necessary documents certifying his/her study at a higher education institution in the Slovakia – proved by the Ministry of Education of the Slovakia.

List of Health Insurance companies („zdravotné poisťovne“ in Slovak):

Apollo Health Insurance Company - www.apollo.sk (only in Slovak)

Common Health Insurance Company (Spoločná zdravotná poisťovňa) - www.szp.sk (only in Slovak)

General Health Insurance Company (Všeobecná zdravotná poisťovňa) - www.vszp.sk (only in Slovak)

Union Health Insurance Company (as of September 2006)- www.unionzp.sk (only in Slovak)

Additional individual health insurance

Foreigners who are not duly insured can take up contractual health insurance on the territory of the Slovakia provided to foreigners only by the UNION health insurance company.

Doctors

General practitioners and specialists have their consulting rooms in hospitals or in health centres. Upon your arrival you should ask for details of a local doctor, who will be able to provide information on the standards. There are specialists taking care of children and youth. Family doctors are not very common.

For more information, visit the web site of the Ministry of Health of the Slovakia (www.health.gov.sk) or the list of health care establishments (Zoznam zdravotníckych zariadení) at www.zzz.sk (look for “ambulancie” - www.zzz.sk/?page=zoznam_ambulancii - only in Slovak)

Dentists

In every town there is either a private or state dental practice (“zubár”, “stomatológ” in Slovak language). Upon arrival you should ask for details of the chosen dentist. There are specialised dental technicians that have their own consulting rooms.

If you cannot obtain the necessary information, visit the Yellow Pages website (www.zlatestranky.sk)

Hospitals

In every town there is a hospital (“nemocnica” in Slovak) with an Accident and Emergency department (“pohotovosť” in Slovak) and many special clinics.

If you cannot acquire the necessary information, visit the web site of the Ministry of Health of the Slovakia (www.health.gov.sk – only in Slovak) or the list of health care establishments (www.zzz.sk – only in Slovak) that state hospitals, clinics, specialists and agencies providing domestic nurses.

Notice: Be prepared for long queues, but it is usually possible to call and book an appointment with a GP in advance

Emergency

If you need the emergency services ("pohotovost" in Slovak), dial telephone number "112" or "155". Ambulances are well staffed and equipped with life-sustaining apparatus needed to safely transport patients to hospital. Hospitals provide 24 hour emergency services. Some emergency health care providers can be found at: www.zzz.sk/?page=pohotovost (only in Slovak).

Useful links for different types of insurance

Slovak Association of Insurance companies: www.slaspo.sk

Slovak Insurer's Bureau: www.skp.sk

Insurance agencies portal: www.poistovne.sk

9. Social Insurance System

Social insurance is regulated by Act no. 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance and it covers all individuals except police corps, professional soldiers and soldiers attending preliminary service.

Foreigners, individuals without formal nationality or refugees are entitled to the following benefits under the Slovak social insurance system:

Social welfare system

Social welfare system provides aid to individuals in distress, especially to physically or mentally disabled individuals. Benefits include:

- day care/ round-the-clock care service
- communally-organized meals
- transport service
- care in social services facilities (e.g. crisis centers, sheltered accommodation facilities, day care service facilities)

In addition, contributions are paid to every person who is engaged in a gainful activity including:

- Sickness insurance
- Sickness benefits
- Nursing benefits
- Equalization benefits
- Maternity benefits
- Pension insurance
- Accident insurance
- Guarantee insurance
- Unemployment insurance

State aid system

The State aid system aims to support families in difficult social condition. It is oriented especially to situations that are a natural part of an individual's or a family life cycle. The system provides one-time and recurring social benefits including:

- a contribution for a funeral,
- a contribution when a child is born
- a parental benefit
- a one-time allowance to cover needs of a child in foster care

10. Housing

If you are a student or a researcher, some universities and research institutes have their own accommodation facilities for their employees.

You can find accommodation advertised in specialised publications, daily newspapers, the regional press and on the internet. You can also use the services of real estate agencies.

Long-term accommodation

www.reality.sk – a nationwide search database (also in English), regularly updated rental offers by more than 400 real estate agencies, a list of real estate agencies with contact phone numbers, websites and E-mails

www.realityserver.sk – search database (in Slovak only)

www.narks-real.sk, www.narks-real.sk/default_en.htm - National Association of Real Estate Offices in Slovakia

www.greenpages.sk – a webportal "Green Pages" providing information and contact phone numbers, websites and E-mails of several organisations in Slovakia

www.slovakspectator.sk – see the advertising part of the newspaper also providing information in English on renting property.

11. Recognition of foreign diplomas and degrees

University degrees

Academic/Study purposes

The recognition of degrees of the 1st and 2nd level (Bachelor and Master) falls within the competence of the relevant higher education institutions in Slovakia which provides the same or similar study programme. If the contents of the studies are only partly identical, the higher education institution may ask the applicant to take additional examinations or to complete and defend his Bachelor thesis, diploma thesis, *examina rigorosa* or dissertation thesis.

If there is no higher education institution identical or related in Slovakia, a recognition of equivalence would be requested to the Ministry of Education, Centre for Recognition of Diplomas.

The diplomas issued by a foreign higher education institution or other authorised bodies of the State that has concluded an agreement with the Slovakia on mutual recognition of diplomas (a bilateral treaty has been concluded with Croatia) are equivalent with those issued by a higher education institution in the Slovakia, provided that these credentials are covered by the agreement.

In all cases the application is submitted to the Centre for Recognition of Diplomas, which either decides on the recognition of equivalence itself or issues the recommendation/assessment for the appropriate higher education institution in the Slovakia to decide.

Required documents

- Equivalence application for studies abroad
- Certificate (notary-certified copy and translation into Slovak)
- Certificate of the highest completed education and last term's certificate from the principal school (copies)
- Identity card/student's passport (copy)

The appropriate higher education institution or the Ministry of Education decides on recognition within 30 days from the date of the receipt of the application.

Employment/professional purposes

The recognition of diplomas is not necessary if you enter Slovakia for employment purposes. You can pursue a profession under the same conditions as a national of the Slovakia. You would need to get your diplomas recognized only if your employer requires it. The procedure is similar to recognition of diplomas for academic purposes (see above).

Primary and secondary education

According to the legislation in force, the foreign qualifications giving access to higher education are recognised by department of education and culture of the relevant regional authority according to the place of the residence (at present, there are eight regional authorities).

Procedure:

1. The application for recognition is submitted to the Centre for Recognition of Diplomas. The Equivalence Application Form available at: http://www.minedu.sk/data/USERDATAEN/SUDV/FORM/equivalence_form.rtf
2. The Centre for recognition issues the recommendation/assessment to the applicant.
3. The applicant delivers the recommendation of the Centre together with the appropriate documents to the Department of education and culture of the appropriate regional authority for the applicant's place of residence.

In case that the study in the foreign school only partially corresponds to the curricula of secondary schools in Slovakia or the graduate did not attach all the required documents to his/her application, the responsible authority could impose the obligation to take a supplementary examination. The supplementary examination is meant to verify the knowledge and skills of the graduate in subjects, or in their parts, which were not studied by the applicant in a foreign school and which have a direct relation to the graduate's profile or the field of study pursued. The regional authority determines the secondary school in which the graduate shall take the supplementary examination, the content and the date of examination.

A different procedure could apply when credentials were issued by a foreign school of the State with which an agreement has been concluded on mutual recognition of documents on education by which the Slovakia is bound (an agreement has been concluded with Croatia).

Further information is available on website of the **Centre for Recognition of Diplomas:**

www.minedu.sk/SUDV/sudv.htm (in Slovak only)

Stromová 1, 813 30 Bratislava

Office hours: Wednesdays 8.30 – 12.00 and 13.00 – 15.00

12. Support Services for Migrants

IOM International Organization for Migration (Medzinárodná organizácia pre migráciu)

www.iom.sk

IOM Migračné informačné centrum (IOM Migration Information Centre)

<http://mic.iom.sk/>

Úrad hraničnej a cudzineckej polície MV SR (Office of Border and Alien Police)

www.minv.sk/?uhcp-mv-sr

Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny SR - Odbor migrácie a integrácie cudzincov

www.employment.gov.sk

Slovenská humanitná rada (Slovak Humanitarian Council)
www.shr.sk

Liga za ľudské práva (Human rights league)
www.hrl.sk

Ľudia proti rasizmu (People against racism)
www.rasizmus.sk

Spoločnosť ľudí dobrej vôle (Goodwill Society)
www.cassovia.sk/sldv/

UNHCR (Regional Representation for Central Europe)
www.unhcr-budapest.org

13. Citizenship

Acquisition of the Slovak citizenship

By birth:

- both parents or the only one living parent is a Slovak citizen;
- a child is born in the territory of the Slovakia and his parents are stateless;
- child is born in the territory of the Slovakia, his/her parents are foreign nationals and the child has acquired neither citizenship by birth;
- was born in the Slovak Republic, and has a permanent residence permit for at least three years immediately preceding the lodging of the application;
- if a foreign citizenship is not proved and: (i) the child was born in the territory of the Slovakia, or (ii) it was found in the territory of the Slovakia, and its parents are not known, unless it has been proved that the child did acquire another state nationality by birth.

By legal act:

- a voluntary acquisition of nationality by parents' statement;
- a court's decision on the nationality;
- a child found in the territory of Slovakia without its parents (ius soli);
- an adoption by a Slovak national;
- determination of the nationality by law or choice of nationality;
- naturalization

Acquisition of Slovak nationality by naturalization

Slovak nationality may be granted to an applicant under the following conditions

- permanent residence for 8 consecutive years;
- proof of good conduct (an abstract from the criminal register of the Slovakia or by a similar confirmation issued in the applicant's domicile country);
- demonstrate command of Slovak language (Knowledge of Slovak is tested orally by the respective authority dealing with the application at its filing/ presenting), demonstrate a knowledge of history and general information about Slovakia;
- make a vow of acceptance;
- An applicant, who was granted a status of an expatriate Slovak, may be granted Slovak nationality without having met the conditions set above provided that such an applicant has been residing in Slovakia for at least 2 consecutive years immediately prior to filing the application for Slovak nationality.

Procedure

1. Submission of the application (+a questionnaire if the applicant is older than 14) to a REGIONAL OFFICE in the Slovakia, DIPLOMATIC MISSION OR CONSULATE of the Slovakia abroad. There is no official form of application, it can be written in any form but include all information required by the law.
2. Language and history interview is passed in the accepting authority.
3. Interview: the Ministry may invite the applicant to a second personal interview if there is a need for an explanation of some facts stated in his/her application
4. The Ministry may, but does not have to (even if all legal requirements have been satisfied), grant the nationality to the respective applicant. The Ministry of the Interior shall take into account the interests of the Slovakia in granting nationality, in particular from the view-point of its security, internal legal order, foreign-political interests, obligations of the Slovakia towards the third states and social-economic situation, as well as the viewpoints of the state authorities involved and of the Police Corps. The Ministry shall decide about an application for Slovak nationality at the latest within 9 months upon its receipt by the Ministry. If opinions of other state authorities are necessary and the final decision depends on those opinions, the Ministry shall decide at the latest within 1 year upon receipt of the application.
5. Documents enclosed to the application:
 - a brief CV (a resume);
 - an identification document ;
 - a birth certificate;
 - a document proving applicant's marital status, which means a marriage certificate, a divorce certificate or a spouse's death certificate, if the applicant is married, divorced or widowed;
 - a document proving applicant's authorized residence permit in the territory of the Slovakia; if a former Slovak national is concerned, a document confirming his/her last permanent residence address in Slovakia or an affidavit about such residence;
 - a document proving applicant's good conduct not older than 6 months, i.e. (1) an abstract from the criminal register of the Slovakia; or (2) an abstract from criminal register of the state of which he/she is a national, or another document proving his/her 'good conduct';
 - an expatriate Slovak certificate, if the applicant was granted such a status.

EXCEPTIONS:

An applicant with an authorized residence permit may be granted Slovak nationality without fulfilling the legal requirements provided that:

- a) an applicant lawfully married a Slovak national and has been living with his/her spouse in one household in the territory of the Slovakia for at least three years immediately prior to filing the application for Slovak nationality,
- b) an applicant has made a significant contribution for the Slovakia in the areas of economy, science, technology, culture or sport (description should be provided and document submitted)
- c) an applicant has a permanent residence permit in Slovakia starting at least 3 years before the applicant's 18 years of age
- d) an applicant is a child whose parent(s) was granted Slovak nationality after his/her birth and whose parent(s) did not apply for Slovak nationality for the child
- e) an applicant was granted asylum status,
- f) an applicant was born in the Slovakia and has been residing in Slovakia for at least three years immediately prior filing application for Slovak nationality,
- g) an applicant has been residing in Slovakia for at least ten consecutive years and has been granted a permanent residence permit at the time of filing the application for Slovak nationality, or
- h) an applicant is of no state nationality and has been residing in Slovakia for at least three consecutive years immediately prior to filing the application for Slovak nationality.

For further details please visit www.vs.sk/kunr/vvsobc/p1.htm

Dual nationality

Dual nationality is conditioned by the existence of a specific treaty with the applicant's country. Otherwise, acquisition of one nationality would cause loss of the other.

14. Governmental institutions in charge of immigration

Ministries, governmental bodies, regional and sub-regional offices

www.obcan.sk

Ministry of the Interior of the Slovakia

www.minv.sk/

Legislation - acts and amendments

www.zbierka.sk

www.jaspi.sk

www.justice.gov.sk

Information on employment, education, business, social security in the EU

www.eurest.sk

www.euroinfo.gov.sk

Sociálna poisťovňa (Social Security Agency)

www.socpoist.sk

Ústredie práce sociálny vecí a rodiny (Centre of Social Affairs and Family)

www.upsvar.sk

Information on social benefits, administrative forms

<http://www.employment.gov.sk/DIS/main.htm>

Social policy, compensations, assistance in material need

<http://www.employment.gov.sk/mpsvrsr/internet/home/index.php>