Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME BRATISLAVA REGION

operačný program bratislavský kraj

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OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME BRATISLAVA REGION

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1. SUMMARY

The Slovak Republic territory falls, according to Article 5 Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) 1260/1999 (hereinafter "General Regulation") under Objective Convergence[1] which covers 88,84% of the SR population. Provisions of the above mentioned Article are not applicable to the territory NUTS 2 level Bratislava Region that with 601 132 (11,16 %) inhabitants falls under Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment[2] (hereinafter "Objective RCE"). Objective RCE, with the exception of the least developed regions, aims at reinforcement of competitiveness and attractiveness of the regions as well as employment through the predicting the economic and social changes, including changes connected to the opening of market through innovation and support knowledge-based economy, entrepreneurship, protection and improving the environment and advancing accessibility, adaptability of the workers and enterprises as well as through development of labour markets based on the principle of social inclusion. In the programming period 2007-2013, Objective RCE is supported from the European Regional Development Fund (hereinafter "the ERDF") and from the European Social Fund (hereinafter "the ESF").

Under the EC Decision No. 2006/593/4C from August 2006 (announced by the document No. C (2006) 3472), the Slovak Republic should withdraw in the programming period 2007-2013 an amount of €449 018 529 in current prices. Based on the set compulsory rate of co-funding of the SR, these financial resources are supplemented by the national public resources (from the State and Local Self-Governments budget).[3]

The basic strategic programme documents for the field of Cohesion and Regional Policies is National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 (hereinafter "the NSRF"). The NSRF priorities in Objective RCE are implemented in accordance with the given financial allocations through the three multi-objective operational programmes[4] and one operational programme for Objective RCE - Operational Programme Bratislava Region (hereinafter "OPBR"). The OPBR links up to the objectives and priorities of the NSRF and represents the programming document of the Slovak Republic for withdrawal of assistance from the ERDF for the selected fields of infrastructure and knowledge-based economy of the Bratislava Region for the years 2007-2013.

The OPBR implements and works out in more details the NSRR strategic priorities: No. 1 *Infrastructure and Regional Accessibility* and No. 2 *Knowledge-Based Economy*, through the specific priorities: 1.1 *Regional Infrastructure*, 1.2 *Environmental Infrastructure and Protection of the Environment*, 1.3 *Transport Infrastructure and Public Passenger Transportation*, 2.1 *Informatisation of Society*, and 2.4 *Support Competitiveness of Enterprises and Services Mainly through Innovations.*

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[1] Regions eligible for funding from the Structural Funds within the Objective Convergence are the regions NUTS 2 where their GDP in purchasing power parity (PPP) for the term 2000-2002 is lower than 75% of the EU25 average of GDP for the same reference term. The Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund are such states whose GNI in PPP for the years 2001-2003 is less than 90% of EU25 average of GNI and the Member States that have a Programme for compliance with the conditions for economic convergence given in Article 104 of the Treaty.

[2] Regions eligible for funding from the Structural Funds within the Objective RCE area such areas to which is not applicable Article 5, paragraph 1 not Article 8, paragraphs 1 and 2.

[3] Financial allocations are given in current prices. Determination of the rate of co-funding from the national public resources is given in Strategy for funding Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for the programming period 2007 to 2013 prepared by the MF SR.

[4] Joint programme for Objective Convergence as well as Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment. This concerns Operational Programme Research and Development - the ERDF, Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion - the ESF, Operational Programme Education - the ESF

The OPBR is elaborated based on the General Regulation and the Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Regional Development Fund repealing Regulation (EC) 1783/1999 (hereinafter "Regulation on the EDRF"). From the contents point of view, the key sections of the OPBR are the social-economic analysis of the Bratislava Region, the strategy, its division into the priority axes and funding of the OPBR.

Analysis of the current situation in the Bratislava Region examines, in particular those social-economic issues of the Bratislava Region of which the solution can be effected by the contributions from the Structural Funds. This involves mainly regional accessibility, regeneration of settlements and knowledge-based economy through competitiveness of enterprises, innovation and informatisation of society. Moreover, the lessons learned are presented in a form of SWOT analysis and its results are to determine the key disparities and main development factors of the Bratislava Region based on the selected priority axes. The OPBR defines the following three priority axes: priority axis 1 *Infrastructure*, priority axis 2 *Innovation and Informatisation* and priority axis 3 *Technical Assistance.*
The strategic section of the OPBR comes from on the vision of economic and social development of Slovakia formulated as follows: Overall convergence of the SR economy to the EU-15 average through sustainable development (hereinafter "SD"). The strategy of the OPBR is based on the results of analyses of the current situation, the vision and the strategy of the NSRR based on how the global objective of the OPBR has been formulated.

The strategy links up to the strategic documents at the EU level, the SR level, levels of sectors and the region. This involves, in particular, the documents as Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion, Competitiveness Strategy of Slovakia by 2010 (so-called Lisbon Strategy for Slovakia) and National Reform Programme of the SR, Slovakia Spatial Development Perspective (2001), National Sustainable Development Strategy (2001) and Action Plan Sustainable Development of the SR for 2005-2010[5]. The highest importance among the regional documents has Development Strategy of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region and Regional Innovation Strategy of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region.

The system of the OPBR implementation anticipates gradual refraining from the centralised approach, establishing in accordance with the relevant SR and EU legislation, intermediary body under the Managing Authority (hereinafter "IBMA") at the level of NUTS 3 level region, under Slovak conditions with the current decentralisation system, can be considered as an innovative approach. The aim of the Managing Authority for the OPBR (hereinafter "MA for the OPBR") is that during the programming period 2007-2013 the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (the level of NUTS 3 level) will perform the role of the IBMA in the field of support focused on the settlements regeneration and regional and urban public transport (priority axis 1). Other fields of the OPBR (namely, priority axes 2 and 3) are implemented directly by the MA for the OPBR that is the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter "MCRD SR") under the SR Government Resolution No. 832 as of 8 October 2006.

[5] Action Plan of Sustainable Development for 2005-2010, adopted by the SR Government on 13 July 2005, links up to the National Sustainable Development Strategy adopted in 2001. It specifies the goals in the field of sustainable development with respect to the external incentives and the internal needs and way of funding.

2. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME PREPARATION

2.1. Process of the OPBR preparation and application of the partnership principle

The MCRD SR is appointed as the MA for the OPBR by the SR Government Resolution No. 832/2006 as of 8 October 2006.
The partnership principle is one of the key principles based on which the process of the OPBR elaboration followed. In preparing this document, the perspective, analytic and groundwork materials of the involved institutions were used, and in formulating separate sections of the document, opinions and comments of the all involved partners were considered. The partnership principle had followed the general regulation during the OPBR preparation according to which the partnership is dealing with the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the operational programmes.

The MCRD SR started in the 2005 to prepare the Operational Programme in cooperation with the Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region. The preparation of the OPBR took place in accordance with the relevant SR Government Resolutions. Based on drafts of the regulations at the bilateral discussions, the priorities of the region were defined for the programming period 2007-2013.

In 2006, the process of partnership continued through establishing the Working Group for the OPBR preparation (hereinafter "WG"). With respect to the thematic focus of the OPBR, the entities were selected which are sponsors of the proposed measures of the OPBR (i.e., the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunication of the SR, the MF of the SR, the Ministry of Education of the SR, the Ministry of Environment of the SR), further the significant and local partners (i.e., Bratislava Self-Governing Region, Magistrate of the SR capital town of Bratislava, Slovakia Towns and Municipalities Association) and the professional association (e.g., Slovak Commerce and Industry Chamber) and non-profit and non-governmental organisations (e.g., Regional Platform of the Third Sector Panel Bratislava) had been selected. Based on the delivered nominations and in accordance with the SR Government Resolution 457/2006, on 19 May 2006 WG was established**.** Whereas the Regional Platform of the Third Sector Panel Bratislava did not nominate any deputy, the MA for the OPBR addressed in May 2006 the Human Rights and Minorities Section with the SR Government Office (hereinafter "SRGO") with application for nomination of the non-governmental organisations representative for the WG. Whereas the MA for the OPBR did not receive any nomination from NGOs, during selection of NGOs involved in SD the Society for Sustainable Life in the Slovak Republic (SSLSR) was addressed. Based on this nomination, the representative of SSLSR attended the meetings of WG since 15 November 2006. In 2007, the Republic Union of Employers asked for participation in meetings of the WG. The representative of the Republic Union of Employers was nominated as a member of the WG, since then he was invited for the WG meetings as well. In the period from 19 May 2006 till 30 May 2007, the WG meetings were held on the followings dates:

- **6 June 2006**
- **26 June 2006**
- **27 July 2006**
- **15 November 2006**
- **5 February 2007**
- **13 March 2007**
- **22 May 2007**

The information for the WG members on the performed changes in the OPBR and consultations concerning these changes with the WG members were the subject of the meetings. The relevant comments of the members are included into the document. Every member of the WG was able directly or through its representatives to present her/his opinions and positions not only during the WG meetings but also after the WG meetings on the negotiations to the NSRR or to other OPs.

Besides the WG meetings, the MA for the OPBR organised the bilateral meetings with the partners. The representatives of Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, representing the most significant partner in implementing the OPBR priorities, attended these meetings. The meetings took place several times since September 2005. Besides these meetings, the representatives of MA for the OPBR and the representatives of the Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region attended on 4 July 2006 the common negotiations held in Brussels with the EC representatives (i.e., DG Regional Policy) concerning the OPBR contents.
The important meetings were the negotiations with the representatives of Magistrate of SR town of Bratislava as the representatives of the largest settlement in the Bratislava Region area. Topics of the negotiations were focused, in particular, on the fields of regeneration of settlements, solutions of traffic situation and support knowledge-based economy. The representatives of Slovakia Towns and Municipalities Association attended the negotiations aimed at regeneration of settlements as well.

The working meetings with the representatives of the institutions aimed at the determination of demarcation lines between the supported activities from other operational programmes and the OPBR as well as at the determination of a unified procedure in implementing common priorities.

Annex No. 4 gives includes the WG list of the members as well as information on negotiations with the partners.

An important instrument for ensuring the partnership principle is the internal institutional commenting proceedings (hereinafter "ICP") taking place to the all documents submitted to the Slovak Government sessions (also to the NSRF, as well as to the OPBR). The submitted materials published at the web pages of the MCRD SR and the SRGO. There were options to comment the published documents either by the addressed entities as well as by the involved public. All comments to the submitted documents are kept in records and given in section. The internal institutional Commenting Proceeding to the submitted materials. The complete materials with the Government Resolution are also published on website www.rokovania.sk.
In the process of the OPBR preparation, the documents were included into the ICP in the following months as follows:

- November 2005: Document titled "Proposal of the Priorities for the Objective RCE financed by the European Regional Development Fund" submitted to the Government session without conflicts, adopted by the SR Government Resolution No. 1032/2005 as of 21 December 2005

- June 2006: Draft document titled Operational Programme Bratislava Region had to be submitted to the Government session till 30 June 2006 based on the SR Government Resolution No. 457/2006 as of 17 May 2006. By this resolution, the priority axis 2 Knowledge-based Economy was transferred from the OPBR to the OP Research and Development governed by the Ministry of Education of the SR. The MCRD SR continues in processing the OPBR in accordance with the given resolution. The MA for the OPBR submitted a draft document titled Operational Programme Bratislava Region to the Government discussion on time, however the Government did not negotiate about the document due to updating of the NSRF which the institutions started to negotiate in August 2006.

- **November 2006**: Document titled "Draft Operational Programme Bratislava Region" was submitted without conflicts to the Government session and adopted by the SR Government Resolution No. 1013/2006 as of 6 December 2006 (document submitted to the SR Government session based on point B.6. of the SR Government Resolution No. 832/2006 on the NSRF).

Based on the SR Government Resolution No. 832/2005 as of 19 October 2005 on the first version of the NSRF, the MCRD SR was imposed to define priorities for Objective RCE financed by the European Regional Development Fund in cooperation with the Vice-Prime Minister of the SR Government and the Minister of Economy, the Vice-prime Minister of the SR Government and the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education and submit them to the Government session together with a distribution of the financial resources by till November 2005. Document titled "Draft Priorities for Objective RCE Financed from the European Regional Development Fund" was adopted by the SR Government Resolution No.1032/2005 as of 21 December 2005.

The MCRD SR is appointed as the MA for the OPBR based on the SR Government Resolution No. 457/2006 as of 17 May 2006. The Operational Programme has to be implemented through the priority axis Infrastructure with the financial allocation totalling to EUR 31 mill. from the ERDF. Based on the updating the NSRF adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 832/2006 as of 8 October 2006, financial allocation to EUR 82 mill. for the OPBR was approved for the following two implementation priority axes: No. 1 Infrastructure and No. 2 Innovation and Informatisation and the supportive priority axis: Technical Assistance aimed at support the Operational Programme effective management, its promotion and support the evaluation.

In the course of the ICP in November 2006, financial allocation for the OPBR increased to EUR 87 mill. (i.e., transfer from the OP Research and Development). The financial Plan of the current OPBR version is elaborated based on the total sum of EUR 87 mill. from the ERDF in current prices. Through the SR Government Resolution No. 1013/2006 as of 6 December 2006, the Operational Programme Bratislava Region was approved to serve as a groundwork documentation for starting the informal technical consultations with the EC.

Ex ante evaluation was elaborated in parallel to the preparation process of the OPBR. Based on the results of *ex ante* evaluation and the informal technical consultations with the EC in January 2007, the OPBR was re-elaborated into version 1.0 and formally submitted to the EC through the SFC 2007 in this arranged version. The OPBR is registered under code CCI 2007SK162PO001.

On 13 March 2007, the MA for the OPBR received a registered letter confirming acceptability of the OP. On 30 April 2007, the MA for the OPBR received the evaluation by the EC Services to the OPBR version 1.0.

2.2. Ex ante evaluation

Ex ante evaluation of the OPBR[6] was carried out in parallel to the process of preparing the OPBR from May 2006 till January 2007. Evaluation was formally divided into the three separate stages, at the end of each of them, an on-going report was elaborated depicting the evaluation of the relevant sections of the Programme. Final Report gives the main findings and recommendations for the whole evaluation process (and a rate of their acceptation) taking into account the contents of the last evaluated version of the Programme submitted to the SR Government for approval on 6 December 2006.

[6] Carried out by the extenral evaluator, the company Consulting Associates, s.r.o

The final report on *ex ante* evaluation of the OPBR is available on the official website of the MA for the OPBR, the MCRD SR (www.build.gov.sk) containing an overview of the main recommendations with the rate of acceptation and working in as well.

2.2.1. Assessment of social-economic analysis and relevance of the strategy to the identified needs

The aiming of the analysis was accommodated to the regional character of the operational programme; the assessed version covered formally the key social and economic fields, elements of the environment and their territorial projection in the region. The processor accepted the recommendations of the evaluator and improved the quality of analytical section of the programme to provide a sufficient overview on the current situation in the region and about the main development trends that are assumptions for setting out the suitable strategy and objectives.

The strategy of the OPBR links up to the social-economic analysis, comprising of the global objective and the two thematic priorities (priority axes) with the specific goals. The strategy is suitably based on a combination of thematic, territorial and financial concentration. In the course of processing the OP, its quality and relevance was increased with respect to the needs of the region for its further development as the centre not of the regional importance but also in terms of national economy and international importance. With respect to the region's position in the national and international context and the priority themes of Objective RCE, the *ex ante* evaluator considers that within the strategy a higher emphasis should be given on the fields which are important for maintaining the competitiveness of the region from the longer-term point of view (e.g., creation, utilisation and valorisation of new knowledge and technologies).

2.2.2. Justification and consistency of the strategy

The strategy of the Operational Programme links up and responses to the required extent to the conclusions of the analytical section, focusing mainly on removal of the weaknesses and shortcomings. It is obvious that the identified priorities cover the important problematic fields of the region with a necessity of interventions. The strategic section is based, only to the limited extent, on the utilisation and valorisation of the strengths of the region and opportunities despite the fact that the Bratislava Region has been profiling as the metropolitan region. From this point of view, it would be more effective and efficient to concentrate interventions on the reinforcement of its global competitive position in the future.

The strategy features the acceptable rate of internal consistence. Despite of the gradual reduction of the circle of supported interventions, according to the *ex ante* evaluator, the OPBR comprises still the relatively high number of diverse interventions proposed within the two priority axes. With respect to the relatively small volume of financial resources, the principle of thematic and financial concentrations of the contributions for the Structural Funds is reduced. It is required to pay attention to the concentration of resources in the implementation stage otherwise there is a risk of resources´ dispersal which finally can lead to non-delivery of the expected qualitative effect (improvement) in the selected fields.
The strategy identified the interconnections and links to the interventions aimed at the region from other operational programmes.

2.2.3. Coherence of the strategy with the relevant policies, strategies and documents

The OPBR is coherent to the significant extent with the strategic policies and documents on the EU level, as well as the national and regional levels. In relation to the Community Strategic Guidelines and adopted legislation for the Structural Funds, focus of the Operational Programme is reinforced in favour of competitiveness and establishing jobs[7] in accordance with the recommendations of the *ex ante* evaluator.
With respect to the specific position of the Bratislava Region in the national and regional context and the funding of interventions of Objective RCE from several programmes, the links of the OPBR to the NSRF are not such distinct. We can obtain a survey only if we take into consideration also the other activities supported in the Bratislava Region within the other programmes. Determination of coherence of the OPBR with the existing Development Strategy of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region has the limited predictable value due to the preparation of a new strategic development document of the region (ESDP) that is not yet completed in the time of preparing the programme and conduct of *ex ante* evaluation.

2.2.4. Anticipated results and impacts

With respect to the thematic focus of the priority axes, it is necessary to state that the interventions into the first priority axis deliver more quick, but on the other hand a shorter-term effect. On the other hand, a higher risk is connected to the proposed activities for the second priority axis, concerning mainly the absorption capacity, though they can contribute to the reinforcement of competitiveness of the region. The *ex ante* evaluator has the opinion that there is a room for increasing of financial allocation in favour of the second priority axis. To ensure as much as possible the value added of the interventions and establishing synergic effects, interconnection and coordination of the interventions is crucial, not only within the OPBR, but also within the other programmes reflecting the objective RCE (the territory of the BSR).

The anticipated results and the set target values for the priority axis 1 Infrastructure appear to be realistic and achievable. In assessing impacts of Integrated Transport System in the Bratislava Self-Governing Region in relation to the increasing share of public transport in distribution of the transfer work, it will be a little bit problematic to identify net effect that can be clearly attributable to the implementation. With respect to the size and performance of the economy of the Bratislava Region and financial allocation for the priority axis 2 Knowledge-based Economy within the OPBR, the interventions have only a limited direct effect on the regional economy. The defined target values of the outputs and results for the second priority axis would be higher (it will be important to set out a minimum and maximum size of the project). Selection and support high-quality projects with value added will be important as well.

[7] For the original Members States EU-15 it is recommended that the expenditures for the priority fields of competitiveness and establishing jobs within Objective RCE are 75 % of the total expenditures. The Member States accessed the EU after 1 May 2004, are not obliged to observe this condition.

2.2.5. Assessment of the proposal of the implementation system

The management system complies with the EU legislative requirements for the SF and KF for the years 2007-2013 as for defining responsibilities and management processes at the operational level and the level of financial management. All the relevant authorities involved in the system of management, their functions and tasks are defined and described. Gradual refraining from the centralised approach to the implementation anticipates establishing an IBMA for the priority axis 1 at the level of the NUTS 3 level region, the Bratislava Self-Governing Region. The setting of the management system and management processes appears to be as transparent and adequate.
It is possible to anticipate that the proposed implementation system respecting the requirements set out in the regulations for the SF and the CF is capable of ensuring effective, efficient and proper implementation of the scheduled interventions in accordance with the EU and the SR requirements. The key factor is its development and functioning directly in practice.

2.3. Strategic environmental assessment

For the purposes of ensuring the environment protection and contribution to integration of the environmental aspects into the preparation and approval of strategic document with specific respect on supporting SD, the OPBR was subject for assessment according to Act 24/2006 Coll. on the assessment of impacts on the environment. Within this process, direct and indirect effects of the proposed strategy are examined and evaluated.

The strategic environmental assessment (hereinafter "SEA") was carried out within the *ex ante* evaluation of the OPBR. The company "*Consulting Associates, s.r.o.*" was selected by the public procurement in accordance with Act 25/2006 Coll. on public procurement as an external evaluator.

The public had opportunity to make comments on the proposal of the OPBR within 15 days from publishing the Announcement about the Strategic Document on web site www.enviro.gov.sk on 21 July, 2006.

In accordance with the Act 24/2001 Coll. on the assessment of impacts on the environment, the *ex ante* evaluator elaborated Report on Assessment of the Strategic Document (hereinafter "Report"), following submitted to the Ministry of Environment of the SR (hereinafter "the MEnv SR"). The non-technical summary of the provided information given in the Report (in Slovak language) is a part of Annex 5A.

The public had the opportunity to make comments on the Report on Assessment of the Strategic Document OPBR from 27 December, 2006 till 19 January, 2007 on the website: www.enviro.gov.sk. The public discussion of the Report on Assessment of the Strategic Document OPBR under Act No. 24/2006 Coll. took place on 10 January 2007.

The MEnv SR appointed professionally qualified person, IBECS - RNDr. Ingrid Belčáková, who elaborated till 7 February 2007 an expert's opinion to the Report. Based on this expert opinion, the MEnv SR elaborated the Final Position based on the assessment of the strategic document while the EC was recommended to accept the strategic document. The Final Position of the MEnv SR (written in Slovak language) is a part of Annex 5 B.

As a result of the reviewing process, the impacts of the OPBR on environment, announcements, statements to the announcement, scope of evaluation and schedule, report on evaluation, public discussions and consultations it is evident that it is not necessary to re-elaborate, finalize or modify the position paper to the strategic document. Based on the recommendations, monitoring the environmental indicators will be included into the OPBR and the following

measures trying to acquire the environmental optimalisation of the strategic document implementation will be realised.

1. Ensuring the relevant realisation of reviewing the impacts on environment on the particular projects level according to the act so that the optimalisation of the selected solutions and their localisation, selection of the environmental technologies, time and subject succession of the singular realisation steps as well as the harmonisation of the environmental, social and economic aspects of the realised projects.
2. Consistent reviewing the sustainable development aspect of the supported activity and harmonisation of the short and long term impacts within the projects selection and during their realisation.
3. Reviewing the harmonized local, regional and national impacts during the selection of the projects.
4. Transparency ensuring including the access to the information within the whole process of the calls announcing, selection and the grants approval as well as monitoring and evaluating the projects of the particular priority axes and programme for respecting the protection of the economic competition.
5. Incorporating the environmental criteria into the total evaluation and projects selection system.
6. Incorporating the criteria respecting the protected areas and species according to the Act No. 543/2002 Coll. On the environment and country protection in the version of the next legislative rules into the total system of evaluating and projects selection.
7. Executing the system of the environmental evaluation of the projects with monitoring the impacts of the OPBR implementation.
8. Arrangement of the satisfactory informing the beneficiaries on the environmental problems and on the possible connections of the submitted projects on the environment
9. Making the administration of the preparation and realisation of the projects more effective and easier so that there could be more accessible to the wide circle of the beneficiaries without the special requirements in their financial, technical and personnel capacities within the current management of the objectivity of the selection and control processes.

Respecting the changes in the sphere of environment protection which were executed within the OPBR after the incorporation of the assessment by the Commission Services, MA for the OPBR asked the MEnv SR by letter No. 4530/138665-42 as of 1 October, 2006 for the statement to the OPBR version 2.0. In this application MA for the OPBR explained the changes related to the sphere of environment protection which were done in the version 2.0 in comparison to the version 1.0. As of 23 October, 2007 the statement of the MEnv SR was delivered to the MA for the OPBR (Annex No. 5C).

Documentation to SEA of the OPBR (Report, extent of assessment, announcement of public discussion of the Report, Final Position of the MEnv SR) is available on the official website of the MA for the OPBR (www.build.gov.sk).

3. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE BRATISLAVA REGION

3.1. Basic characteristic of the region

The Bratislava Region with its area of 2053.6 km^2 (4.18 % of the SR) is the smallest SR region. Its number of inhabitants (601 132) represents 11.6 % of the SR population (SO SR, data as of 31 December 2004). The Bratislava Region lies in the south-west part of the SR where it forms the common border with Austria and the Republic of Hungary. It borders in the north, east and southeast with the Trnava Region. Density of population is 293 inhabitants per km^2 (maximum in the District Bratislava I with 4 464 inhabitants per km^2, minimum in the District Malacky with 69 inhabitants per km^2), exceeding almost three times the average of the Slovak Republic. The region is characteristic with the high level of urbanisation, exceeding significantly the SR average that is however strongly differentiated in terms of area.

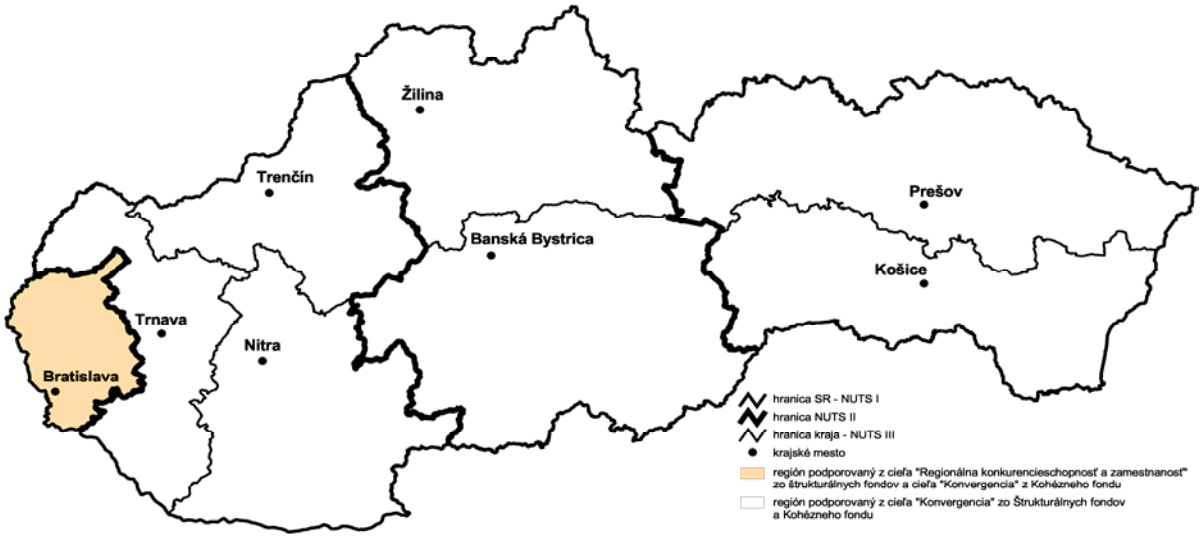
The territory of the region comprises partially of the Záhorska nížina [the Záhorie flat] from the southwest to the northeast there are mountains of the Small Carpathians, while the east and south part comprises of Podunajská nížina [the Along-Danube basin]. As far as to climate, this region belongs to the moderate warm area, while the southern section is contacted by the warm area. Average annual temperatures are about 8 °C to 11 °C. The water network belongs to basin the River Danube, the second largest river in Europe, running through the region territory in length of 37 km, a part thereof comprises the natural borders with Austria and Hungary. Inside the region, there are three protected landscape reservation areas (i.e., the Small Carpathians, Záhorie and Dunajské Luhy), nine national nature reservations, twenty one nature reservations, nineteen protected localities, six natural monuments and one national nature monument.

Concerning the resources of mineral raw materials, oil and natural gas deposits the Záhorie flat has the supra-regional importance (i.e., District Malacky). The flats' areas are resources of raw materials for the construction industry. The largest resources in terms of volume are the deposits of sand and gravel used in the production in the districts Senec and Malacky. Inside the Districts Bratislava IV (Devínska Nová Ves), Senec and Pezinok, there are resources of clays for brick. The mountains of Small Carpathians have been the resource of quality wood used as fuel as well as for other industrial purposes. Moreover, there are deposits of several mineral raw materials (e.g., gold, manganese from clay metal, sulphur ore and antimony ore, calcites and dolomites, building stone).

The Bratislava Region is considered to be the NUTS 2 region as well as the NUTS 3 region. It is the only area within the SR falling under Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment. The rest of the territory of the SR (NUTS 2: western Slovakia, central Slovakia and eastern Slovakia; or NUTS 3: Regions of Banská Bystrica, Košice, Nitra, Prešov, Trenčín, Trnava and Žilina) falls under Objective Convergence.

Seat of the region is Bratislava, the capital of the SR (425 155 inhabitants, 367,6 km^2, SO SR 2005) that represents a poly-functional centre of the regional and national (partially international) significance. According to spatial and administration arrangement under the Act of the NC SR 221/1996 Coll., the Bratislava Region is divided into eight districts: Bratislava I, Bratislava II, Bratislava III, Bratislava IV, Bratislava V, Malacky, Pezinok and Senec. The Districts Bratislava I until Bratislava V create the territory of SR capital town of Bratislava. The smallest district (with area of 9,6 km^2) not only within the region but also within the entire SR, is the District Bratislava I, comprising only of 0,5 % of the entire area of the region while the largest is District Malacky comprising of 46,3 % of the region's area.

Map 1 Eligible territory of the OPBR within the SR in the programming period 2007-2013



Source: Aurex, 2007

Table 1 Basic information about the territory of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region within the SR (as of 31 December 2004)

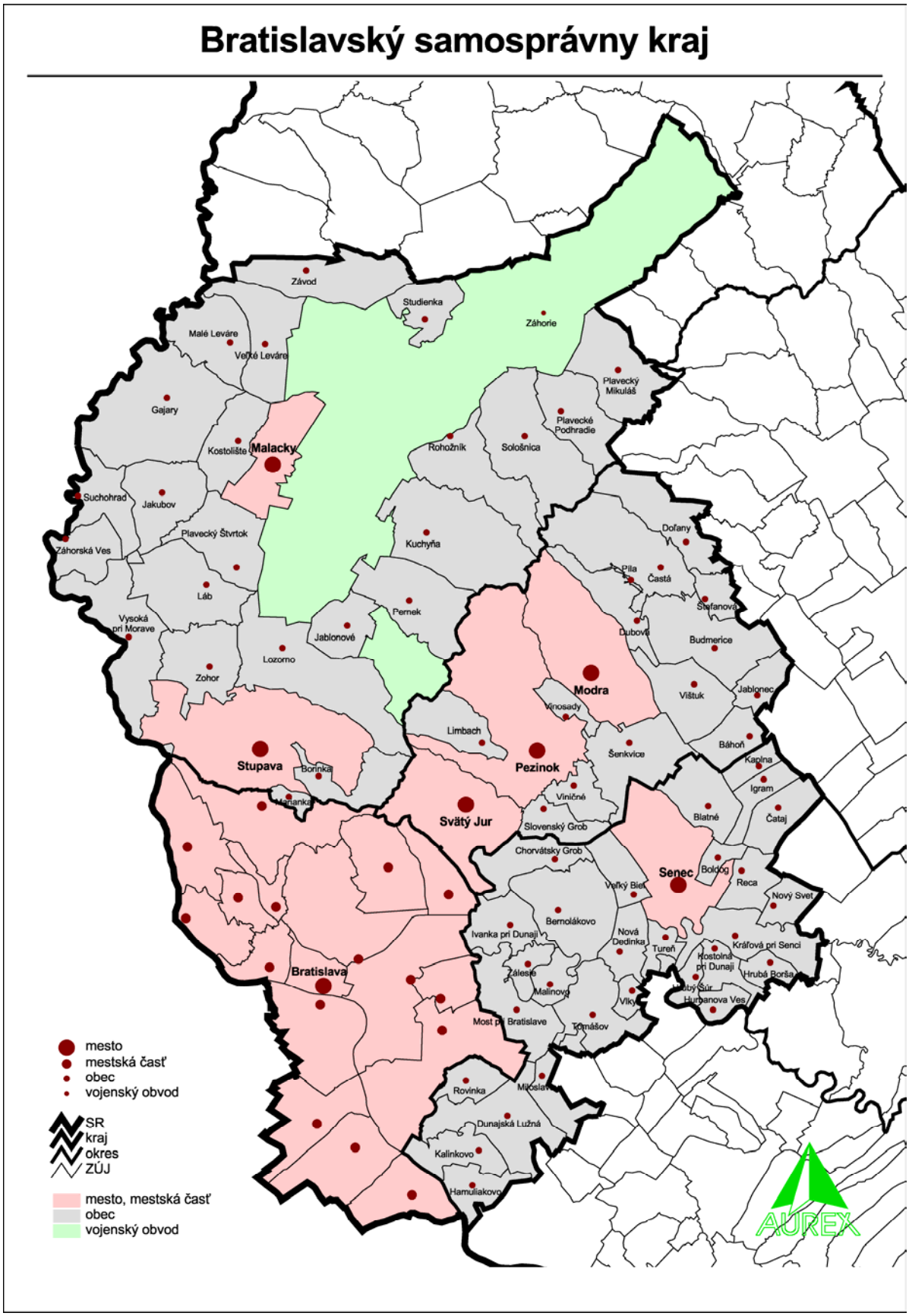
SR Regions NUTS 3	Area (km2)	Inhabitants as of 31 Dec 2004	Density of inhabitants per km2	Number of municipalities		Grade of urbanization in %[8]
				Total[9]	Towns of them	
Bratislava	*2 052*	*601 132*	*292,9*	*73*	*7*	*83,36*
Trnava	4 147	553 198	133,4	251	16	49,57
Trenčín	4 502	601 392	133,6	276	18	57,36
Nitra	6 344	709 350	111,8	354	15	47,47
Žilina	6 801	694 129	102,1	315	18	50,84
Bansá Bystrica	9 455	658 368	69,6	516	24	53,97
Prešov	8 981	796 745	88,7	666	23	49,25
Košice	6 752	770 508	114,1	440	17	56,27
Slovak Republic	**49 034**	**5 384 822**	**109,8**	**2 891**	**138**	**55,55**

Sources: SO SR, 2005

[8] Share of inhabitants living in the towns of the total number of inhabitants in 2003.

[9] Including 4 military districts.

Map 2 Bratislava Self-Governing Region



Source: AUREX

The advantageous location of the region in the central part of central Europe represents an important development potential. The region is a part of the dynamically developing so-called gold triangle Vienna-Bratislava-Györ/Budapest. Relative close distances from the European cities (i.e., Vienna circa 45 km and Budapest circa 200 km) and the south Moravia administrative centre, dynamically developing city Brno (about 120 km) establish opportunities for advancing intensity of mutual bilateral and international cooperation.
From the point of view of the broader international relationships, location on the west-east development axis of the all-European importance, leading along the Danube River (Stuttgart - Ulm - Munich - Salzburg - Linz - Vienna - Bratislava - Budapest -Beograd) and on the multi-modal transport system of Europe have importance for the progressive development of the region. This fact pre-determinates transitiveness of the given area in the west-east as well as the north-south directions. In addition, important is location of the region centre on the international waterway Danube - Main - Rhein with interconnections to the North Sea and the Black Sea.

Summary:

- High level of urbanisation of the region, differentiated in terms of area
- Bratislava as the social, economic and administrative centre of the regional, supra-regional and international significance
- High development potential with respect to the advantageous geographic location - the development axes of the national and international importance pass through the region.

3.1.1. Settlement structure

The settlement system of the Slovak Republic is created by the network of core settlements, development axis (innovative and cohesion growth poles), centres of settlements and other urban and rural settlements. In terms of the polycentric variant defined in the Slovakia Territorial Development Perspective 2001 (hereinafter "STDP 2001"), the settlement centres are the municipalities that provide settlement as well as servicing functions also for the population living in their background. The settlement structure of the Bratislava Region comprises of 73 settlements, of which 7 are towns: Bratislava, Malacky, Stupava, Svätý Jur, Pezinok, Modra and Senec. The SSDP 2001 characterises through evaluation of specific factor from the Slovak point of view the centres laying in the territory of the Bratislava Region as follows:

- Town Bratislava as the national and international centre;
- Towns: Malacky, Pezinok and Senec as the centres of sub-regional significance with options to meet regional functions;
- Towns: Stupava and Modra as the centres of sub-regional significance.

The common characteristic of all districts is that there are mid and large towns equally located within their territories. These towns have relatively well established infrastructure that is the suitable starting point for their following development. Therefore these towns can develop as the basic development centres of regional significance, acting within the regions as the centres providing all the higher social and servicing activities, not only for their own population, but also for the population from their gradient areas. In the context of the NSRF, these centres

are considered to be the innovative growth poles. Centres together with their surrounding municipalities which they have intense relationships, in terms of the SSDP 2001 are considered to be cores of settlements where the most significant of them are classified as background of the innovative growth poles that main role is to balance inter-regional disparities. This involves in principle the regional and district towns and their urbanised surroundings. Besides the innovative growth poles, there is a system of smaller towns and bigger municipalities that as the centres of local significance provide their closest surrounding with the infrastructure of local significance. In context of the NSRF, these centres are considered as cohesion growth poles[10], the main role thereof is to balance intraregional disparities, ensuring accessibility of the basic civil infrastructure for all citizens in the territory. About 50,7% of the municipalities laying inside the territory of Objective RCE are the innovative growth poles or the cohesion growth poles. Approximately 95,1% of inhabitants live in growth poles included into the territory of Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment.
From point of view of settlement, the SSDP 2001 defined the territory of the Bratislava Region as a part of the Bratislava - Trnava core of settlement of the highest, national significance. These cores of settlement meet function of settlement spatial cores where there are concentrated activities with the national competence, featuring with the high density of inhabitants and other activities with the intense mutual settlement links among the separate centres and other surrounding municipalities. Besides others, the cores of settlement are characterised also by their bordering location with the neighbouring states. The core of settlement Bratislava established relatively excessive agglomeration in terms of area with the strong links. The settlement development axes[11] pass concurrently through the programme area. The territory is a part of the development axes of the first level: the Považie axis (i.e., Bratislava - Trnava - Trenčín - Žilina) and the Záhorie axis (i.e., Bratislava - Malacky - Kúty - the Czech Republic border) in direction of the Žitný ostrov [the Žitný Island] development axis of the second level (i.e., Bratislava - Dunajská Streda). The Small Carpathians development axis of the second level passes the northeast part of the area (i.e., Modra, further in direction to Nové Mesto nad Váhom).

The most significant seat of the Bratislava Region is the capital town of Bratislava with 425 155 inhabitants. The second highest seat is Pezinok with 21 334 inhabitants. Other towns belong among the size category from 10 to 20 thousands (e.g., district towns Senec, Malacky), or have less than 10 thousands of inhabitants (e.g., Modra, Stupava, Svätý Jur). They provide the required servicing and social services for the people from the gradient area and have a perspective of developing further as regional centres. Within the Bratislava agglomeration, i.e., in the all BSR territory, boosting of the sub-urbanisation process occurs. The originally rural settlements in consequence of migration mainly of the Bratislava inhabitants as well as in consequence of the way of life of the original population, are changing their character. Originally agriculture-oriented settlements are transforming into dwelling zones of the inhabitants working in the centre of the region, with the growing intensity of commuting for job, school and services in Bratislava or in the newly establishing centres developing at the entrances to Bratislava.

Summary:

- The Bratislava Region area represents the core of settlement of the highest, national significance
- Existing strong links between the centre (Bratislava) and its background

[10] List of the innovative growth poles and the cohesion growth poles for the NSRR for 2007- 2013 was issued through the Resolution of the Minister 3/2007 of 6 June 2007 (http://www.build.gov.sk/mvrrsr/index.php?id=1&lang=sk&cat=142.

[11] Development axes of the settlement system represent the mutual interconnections of the all cores of settlement of the international and all-national significance, establishing so the basic skeleton of the settlement system. They establish assumptions for settlement links to the central European settlement system (SSDP 2001).

- More than 95 % of inhabitants live in the innovative and cohesion growth poles.

3.2. Characteristic of economic level of the region and human resources

3.2.1. Economic level

The Bratislava Region has been the best performing region from the long-term view in the Slovak Republic, contributing by almost 25 % to the total Slovak GDP. In 2003, GDP per capita in purchasing power parity represented 223 % of the SR average. Concurrently, the Bratislava Region exceeds the EU-25 average (119,7 % in 2003). Over the recent years, there is a trend of increasing the difference in GDP per capita of the Bratislava Region comparing GDP per capita in the rest of SR. We can state concurrently that the growth of GDP per capita in PPP was from 96,6 % (EU-25 = 100 %) in 2000 to 119,7 % in 2003.
The above-average level of GDP relates closely to the restructuring of regional economy, localisation of activities with the higher value added, concentration of private sector entities and central authorities of public sector. Other indicators of regional economy performance are positive as well.
In 2003, gross fixed capital town of the Bratislava Region represented SKK 68 048 mil. in current prices (22,47 % of the SR) and volume of value added was SKK 274 691 mil. in current prices (25,08 % of the SR; SO SR 2003).

Table 2 Characteristic of the SR territory - basic macroeconomic, settlement and territorial indicators

Region	GDP per capita in SKK	Index region/ SR average	GDP per capita in 2003 In PPP in EUR	
	In fixed prices 2004		EU-15=100	EU-25=100
NUTS 2 Bratislava	573 976	228	109,4	119,7
SR in total	251 184	100	47,7	52,2

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the SR 2006

Table 3 Cross fixed capital and gross value added (mil. SKK in current prices)

Region SR	Cross fixed capital					Gross value added				
	Year					Year				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Bratislava Region	59 944	59 801	74 533	68 048	79 393	207 500	226 090	251 467	274 691	307 878
Slovak Republic	242 277	291 027	303 481	302 782	327 087	836 828	921 684	998 743	1 095 183	1 210 674

Source: SO SR 2002-2005

The Bratislava Region is the strongest region of the SR concerning to the level of productivity of work. On the other hand, the level of productivity of work reaches only about 72 % of the EU average what proves a distinct lagging in competitiveness of economy as the consequence of not supporting the technical and technological development, not adequate utilisation of internal reserves within the organisational structures or the organisation of work, etc. Progress is significant in increasing the companies´ ownership share of foreign and mixed forms and applying effective methods of work.
Services have the dominant position in the Bratislava Region economy. In 2004, services contributed with 64.1 % to gross value added.

In 2004, volume of sales of the industrial production reached SKK 603 352 mill. in current prices what represents 41 % of the total Slovak volume. The industrial entities are concentrated

predominantly in the area of Bratislava and in the Záhorie region. The metal processing (predominantly automobile), chemical, electrical engineering and food processing industries prevail in the sectoral structure of industrial base. Industrial activities in the outside-Bratislava districts are based, in particular, on the use of local resources (e.g., building material production, vegetables and fruits processing, predominantly grape wine and wood). After an on-going inhibition of construction activities, their revival comes gradually. In 2004, volume of construction production of the Bratislava Region (SKK 19 336 mill. in current prices) established 38.1 % of the total Slovak production.

Performance of the Bratislava Region economy has been positively effected also by the direct foreign investments. Of the overall volume of direct foreign investments (hereinafter "FDI") aiming at Slovakia, almost 67.1 % was located in the Bratislava Region. In the last years, it is possible to see a change in the sectoral structure of FDI. By the year 2003, the investments aimed predominantly at the banking and insurance sectors, however, over the last years, they have predominantly contributed to developing production sectors (e.g., automobile industry, distribution energy networks and others) and the service sector.
The sub-urbanisation process influences distribution of production activities in the Bratislava Region area. Through the radical transformation of agriculture and industry, development of market-based services occurred. These services are concentrated in the new localities close to the transport entries into the centres of settlement. This process is the most significant in Bratislava where development of reconstruction of the whole areas occurred, either at the entry to the town or by occupying the agricultural land of a good quality or through the gradual reconstruction of transforming production zones into the centres of production and services.

Summary:

- High economic performance of the region exceeding the EU average, comparable with the developed EU regions,
- Lower level of productivity of work as one of the indicators of competitiveness,
- Dominant position of the services sector in the regional economy,
- Target region for foreign direct investments supporting increase of competitiveness of the region.

3.2.2. Human resources

A. Demographic development

The Slovak capital town of Bratislava influences the demographic conditions to the decisive extent, intensity and aiming of natural and migration movement of the Bratislava Region population, whereas its share of this population is 70,5 %. Concerning the natural movement of population, the tendencies in decreasing birth rates have the long-term character comparing to the previous decade what is reflected in the reduction of natural increase and over the last ten years in the natural decrease as well. Concerning the migration movement (comparing to the previous decades), after 1990, the significant slow-downing is apparent in relation to the weakening the migration attractiveness of the capital town of Bratislava. In the age structure, number of children by 14 years is decreasing while number of post-productive population is increasing.
After the transitional period of decreasing the number of inhabitants due to the natural population declination, currently it is possible to observe a moderate year-to-year growth of the number of inhabitants. The intensity of the demographic processes differentiates in terms

of the Bratislava Region, the result thereof is an increase of the population (2,3 per 1 000 inhabitants). The stagnation of the population growth is evident in the Bratislava Region. In the demographic development which is examined according to the urban areas, the population stagnation has been proved in 9 urban areas: Staré Mesto, Nové Mesto, Podunajské Biskupice, Ružinov, Vajnory, Devín, Lamač, Jarovce, Rusovce. The more significant population growth has been demonstrated in the urban areas: Karlova Ves and Devínska Nová Ves which was a consenquence of finishing the new buildings. In 2000-2004, total decline of the population was reported in all the Bratislava Districts, while the highest decline was in the districts Bratislava V (-8 915 inhabit.) and Bratislava IV. (-5 377 inhabit.). A significant natural decline of the population, reflecting the age structure and increased mortality, is in the district Bratislava I (-5,1 per 1 000 inhabitants) what together with a mechanical decline (-6,8 per 1 000 inhabitants) leads to a significant total decline of the population (-11,8 per 1 000 inhabitants). In addition, natural decline of the population is reported in the districts Bratislava III (-3,4 per 1 000 inhabitants) and Bratislava II (-2,3 per 1 000 inhabitants). In the year of 2006 4 141 children were born in the capital town of Bratislava which is about 129 children more than in the year 2005. The highest number of children were born in the urban area of Petržalka and the least number in the urban areas of Čunovo (11) and Jarovce). The decisive share on the population growth number has been the migration movement of the population. From the urban areas the highest migration movement of the population was in the urban area of Ružinov were 783 persons have moved and the highest migration movement decrease was in the urban area of Petržalka from which 1063 persons moved away. Based on the basic migration growth or decrease the total number of the Bratislava population increased from 632 in comparison with the year of 2005. On the territory of the capital town of Bratislava the large urban areas are located where the inhabitants live on multi-floored block of flats. The largest urban area of all the mentioned Bratislava urban areas is Petržalka with population number of 114 153 and the smallest urban area is Čunovo with population number of 933.

The recent data dealing with population number of the Bratislava urban areas in the year of 2006 are stated bellow:

Urban area	Population
Bratislava I.	**41 581**
Bratislava – Staré mesto	41 581
Bratislava II.	**109 648**
Podunajské Biskupice	20 248
Ružinov	70 202
Vrakuňa	19 198
Bratislava III.	**61 823**
Nové Mesto	36 915
Rača	20 444
Vajnory	4 464
Bratislava IV.	**94 417**
Devín	1 034
Devínska Nová Ves	15 784
Dúbravka	34 636
Karlova Ves	33 772
Lamač	6 528
Záhorská Bystrica	2 663
Bratislava V.	**118 622**
Čuňovo	933
Jarovce	1 249

Petržalka	114 153
Rusovce	2 287
Bratislava	426 091

Source: Statistical Office and the capital town of Bratislava

Positive demographic development was reported in the districts of the Bratislava suburbs, with the positive migration balance (Senec 17,3, Malacky 5,3, Pezinok 6.6 per 1 000 inhabitants). The above mentioned trend is positively reflected also in the total population increase in the districts of Bratislava suburb (Senec 18,1, Pezinok 6,3, Malacky 5,9 per 1 000 inhabitants). The urban and rural populations show different demographic behaviour. In the closest period, inter-regional migrations heading towards the region's centre - Bratislava will influence the development and spatial distribution of the population and the balance of labour resources to a lower extent. The de-concentration (suburbanisation) processes will be of a higher significance. This trend will be demonstrated not only in changes in the numbers of population, but also in transformation of the structure (in terms of age, education, social, professional) of the population in the so-called target settlements in the suburb of Bratislava. At the same time, we can expect an increase of demands for ensuring safe and time acceptable accessibility of Bratislava, where intense daily flows of workers and students are heading for.

Age structure of the population

The age structure of the population is relatively favourable (i.e., 13,5 % of the population in pre-productive age, 66,1 % in productive and 20,4 % in post-productive age) with the significant share of the higher age groups in productive age, differentiated at the level of districts. The average age of the Bratislava Region population is 39,1 years.

Index of ageing of the population[12] (151,6%) significantly exceeds the total Slovak average (SR is 111,24 %). In general, the urban population is older in comparison to the rural one what proves the fact that in some districts of Bratislava this index reaches more than a double of the national average. (Index of ageing of the population in the districts of Bratislava I is 262.9 %, in Bratislava III is 221.7 % and 196,2% in Bratislava II.)

On the other hand, index of economic burden (i.e., mutual rate of the economically active and non-active population) is favourable. As far as to the spatial structure, significant differences are apparent to the disadvantage of the Bratislava districts with the high share of the non-productive component of the population. The lowest value of this indicator is in the district Bratislava V (28,1 %). Index of burden of the population outside the Bratislava districts proves the positive demographic development and balanced age structure of the population.

[12] Index of aging of the population is the number of persons in the post-productive age per 100 persons aged from 0 to 14 years

Development prognosis of the population by 2025

The Statistical Office of the SR in cooperation with the Research Demographic Centre with INFOSTAT elaborated in 2002 prognoses of development of the Slovak population with the time horizon by 2025.

New prognoses of development of the Slovak population elaborated in three variants (low, mid, high) using different scenarios of anticipated development of reproduction indicators and migration. Scenarios of anticipated development of the population in the all three variants are obtained through the combination of parameters of individual processes (birth rate, mortality and migration).

By 2025, according to the most likely mid variant, 592 471 citizens should live in the Bratislava Region area, what represents the minimum decrease of the number comparing to 2004. The trend of natural decline (-5,8 per 1000 inhabit.) and total decline (-2,2 per 1 000 inhabit.) of the population will continue further. The development of the Bratislava core of settlements´ population will be effected by accompanying phenomena of the suburbanisation processes in a more intensive way than it is today. Prognosis anticipates a stable, moderate regressive development of the population (predominantly in the districts: Bratislava I, II and III), with the significant decline of share of child component of the population and growth of share of the population in productive and post-productive age. In 2025, the average age of Bratislava Region population would reach 46,5 years due to aging of the population.

Trends of demographic processes will have unfavourable effects on the structure of available resources of labour from the own territory, demands for commuting of labour force will increase not only from surroundings, but also from the more distant regions of the country. Demographic development will require increased demands for ensuring social and health care of the population in the post-productive age.

The issue of concentration of younger generation in the core of settlement induces simultaneously local disparities in the non-market amenity of originally rural settlements.

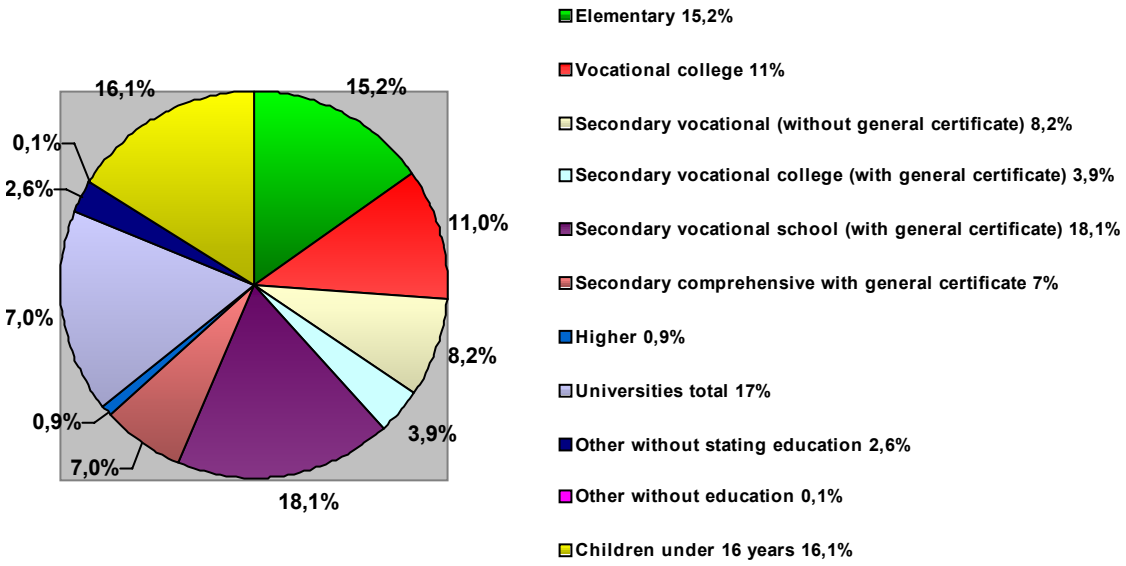
Summary:

- Significantly differentiated development of the population in terms of territory, with declines of the population in the Bratislava districts and increases outside the Bratislava districts,
- Long-term trend of overall ageing of the population; this fact will effect the unfavourable age structure of available labour force in the future.

B. Education and vocational preparation

Educational structure of the population in the Bratislava Region is favourable, when 17 % of the population has university education, 29 % completed secondary education with general certificate and 8,2 % secondary education without a general certificate (Strategy Development of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, 2003). Structure of the population according to the level of reached education is reflection of the concentration of educational and research-science institutions with the all-state competence. It is the inevitable condition for localisations of sophisticated sectors, entry of foreign capital and forming economy based on information and knowledge.

Graph 1 Structure of the population according to the level of the completed education



Source: Strategy Development of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, 2003

Formal education in the Bratislava Region reaches relatively high level. The key task is to adjust more consistently supply of education to the actual and future needs and demands in labour market. An integral part of transformation of education must be also designing the new educational programmes corresponding to the needs of economy based on knowledge and extension of access to education for handicapped groups in labour market. Demands of regional economy must reflect more significantly into the current as well as perspective structure of study fields. The educational system in the Bratislava Region must be able to respond flexibly to the changing demands in labour market, changes in the structure and performance of individual sectors of economy. Study fields covering services and industry (mainly automobile and electrical engineering) should develop, predominantly they must upgrade and advance their quality.

In particular, the secondary schools and universities, educational institutions in competences of central authorities of state administration and educational institutions of juridical and natural persons provide following education in the Bratislava Region territory. Furthermore, education is managed through a diverse scale of providers, methods, organisation, management and funding. As problematic in this field appears to be a lack of the legal and institutional background for effective functioning of a system of advanced studies that could guide and incite to participate in it not only employees, employers but also to the whole population.

There are all the types of schools and education institutions: kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, specialization schools and universities, colleges art schools) in the Bratislava Region area.

Bratislava, as the largest and the most significant centre of universities, concentrates 40,7 % of all the students of universities in the Slovak Republic, providing almost the complete representation of the all study fields (i.e., technical, university, economic, medical/paramedical,

arts). Within the Academic year 2006/2007 181 634 citizens of the Slovak Republic studied in the first and the second level at the public colleges out of which 121 058 students (66,6% from the total number) studied on the daily basis and 60 576 students (33,4 % form the total number) studied on the external basis. At all the colleges and universities (public, state and private ones) 209 517 students studied.
In general, the network of educational infrastructure of the Bratislava Region complies with the current needs though there are already proven decreased requirements for ensuring elementary school network in accordance with the demographic development trends. As a perspective, it is required to transform this type of school in accordance with demands of the region‘s economy into other types of school facilities or extra-school facilities.
The Operational programme Education and the Regional Operational Programme comprise of more detailed information about the state of achieved education of the population and the infrastructure of education.

Summary:

- Concentration and representation of all the types of educational institutions,
- Centre of universities and research,
- Optimistic educational structure of the population with the above-average share of the population with university and complete secondary education,
- Insufficient interconnection of the educational system to actual and future demands of labour market,
- Necessity to rationalise the school network in accordance with the demographic development, needs of knowledge-based economy and regional labour market.

C. Employment and labour market

Employment

In 2005, 313 500 workers were reported in the Bratislava Region economy proving the long-term trend of the year-to-year growth of employment at the level about 0,5 %. The structure of employment reflects the dominant position of tertiary sector in the regional economy of the region, characteristic for the developed regions of the EU. The separate sectors contribute to employment of the Bratislava Region as follows:

- service sector by 76,4 %
- industry sector by 16,3 %

Concerning the service sector, the highest numbers of workers are in the following fields: retail/wholesale (18,8 %), real estate, leasing and commercial activities (17,2%), schools (7,2 %) and healthcare (7,1%).
From the view of the structure of available resources of labour force, the Bratislava Region disposes of comparative advantages vesting in predominantly as follows[13]:

- high rate of the qualification level of labour as the consequence of the formal education,
- concentration and accessibility of the institutions of tertiary education and advanced studies with the regional and supra-regional importance,

[13] Analysis of the Bratislava Region, Phare Project SR 2002/000,61-15 Development of strategic action plans of employment and building up partnership at the regional, sub-regional and local levels of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region

- wide supply of opportunities for vocational education at the secondary schools and universities.

Comparative advantages reflect positively into the overall and sectoral employment of the population, character of labour market and have positive effects on the growth of competitiveness of labour force.

Unemployment

The Bratislava Region has reported long-term the lowest unemployment rate among all the Slovak regions. According to the Labour Force Sample Survey in 2005, the unemployment rate of the Bratislava Region reached 5,2 % (while the unemployment rate reported by the Headquarters of Labour, Social Affairs and Family is significantly lower). For comparison in 2005, the unemployment rate of the whole SR was 16,3 % while the EU-25 reported 8,7 % in the given period. The specific issue of the regional labour market reflecting insufficient interconnections between the educational system and demands of employers is the high share of young unemployed younger than 24 including graduates from schools. The highest number of registered unemployed seeking for job are people younger than 24 (24,9% from the number of the registered jobseekers) is in the District Malacky. Elderly people from the economically active population (50-year old and older) form a numerous group of unemployed in the region, where in this field the highest number of jobseekers are registered in the Districts: Bratislava I (36,3%) and Bratislava V (30,2%).

Commuting for job and aiming of the territorial concentration of labour market

Intense daily commuting for job to Bratislava influences the character of labour market as well. About 140 to 150 thousands of economically active people and students from the surrounding background as well as from the more distant regions of Slovakia commute for job and schools.

Over 15 thousands of economically active citizens are leaving to work outside of Bratislava. During the recent years, commuting for labour abroad significantly increased, predominantly to close Austria (about 8 500 per week, of which 2 000 directly from Bratislava) and to the Czech Republic (about 1 500 persons).
There are significant intra-regional disparities within the region and where the most problematic zones are predominantly the labour markets outside Bratislava with the high share of young unemployed. Nowdays localisation of new entities and job offer outside the Bratislava districts do not contribute too significantly to elimination of the given conditions and does not solve the imbalance of offer and demand in the regional labour markets. Within the last years, the imbalance started to appear predominantly on the side of the labour market offer in a form of a lack of labour force in selected sectors (e.g., information and communication technologies).
In the future, the aiming and intensity of economy development spheres will effect predominantly the further forming and a potential maintaining the relatively stability of labour market besides the demographic development that primarily determines balance of labour resources. The key factor determining balance in labour market in the closest years is interconnection of the education system, with emphasis on the system of whole-life education, and needs of labour market. Balance between offer and demand will depend on the quality of labour force (i.e., professional orientation, qualification structure, skills, etc.) as one of the most decisive factors for ensuring the competitiveness in the region. Flexibility of labour markets of the EU Member States can partially influence the character of labour market as well.

The centres of employment within the BSR are concentrated in the central zones of Bratislava as well as in the transforming production zones or in the newly developed zones

of market-type services at the transport entries to Bratislava. The centres of administrative are starting to form as well.

The Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion comprises of more detailed information about employment and labour market.

Summary:

- High share of the services sector in the employment rate in the region,
- Favourable educational and qualification structure of workers,
- High share of the unemployed young people younger than 24 including graduates on unemployment rate in the region,
- Imbalance in the regional labour market, demonstrating as a lack of labour force in the selected fields (ICT) and concentration of employment in the centres.

D. Social inclusion and equality of opportunities

The long-term unemployed persons belong to the main groups of the Bratislava Region citizens threatened by social exclusion. Within the Bratislava region, they create approximately one fifth of those who are seeking for a job, though significantly exceeds the EU-25 average (13,9 %), however, such figure is under the national Slovak average (51,2%). This phenomenon features the regional disparities. The high share of young and graduates from schools is in the category of long-term unemployed. Another group of inhabitants of long-term unemployed threatened by social exclusion are unemployed older than 50 years who represent in average 30 % of unemployed jobseekers in the districts of Bratislava I to V. The group of post-productive age inhabitants represents in general the threatened group of citizens. According to date of the Statistical Office of the SR (CIHF 2001), in the programming period 2007-2013, about 30 % of inhabitants of the capital will be in retirement age.
There are reported significant horizontal as well as vertical employment segregations between men and women in the Bratislava Region. Women work predominantly in the third sector (approximately 70 %), in the educational system, health care sector, and this share is even higher in social services. The wages in sectors with the predominantly women staffing are lower than the Slovak average. The vertical segregation is visible approximately by almost two-thirds share of men in managerial positions.

As far as to the women's unemployment, there are no serious deviations in unemployment women, whereas the unemployment rate is almost equal with both genders. Threat of loosing job and following social exclusion is with the economically active in their higher age and with the lower level of education.

According to the official sources, the Roma population comprises an exiguous share of the population (755 persons, SO SR 2001) though we would expect that the real number of Roma people living in the Bratislava Region is higher than reported here. They live assimilated predominantly in the District Bratislava V (121) and in the rural settlements of the Malacky District (271, Census 2001). Social exclusion of Roma people relates, in particular to the lower educational level and subsequent unemployment and absence of working habits. In addition, other factors, as for instance the benefit system of social protection, housing situation and others have effects on this situation. Provision of social status in this part of the population, increase of its qualification level and working skills belong among the inevitable conditions for maintaining equality of opportunities.
Another numerous group of the threatened by social exclusion are homeless; their number according to some estimation is that about 3,500 are living in the Bratislava area. Solution of social status of this group of people is relatively complicated requiring increased attention, including introduction of monitoring specific statistic data.

The OPESI gives more detailed information about social inclusion and equality of opportunities.

Summary:

- Prevailing significant horizontal and vertical employment segregation between men and women,
- Main groups threatened by social exclusion: long-term unemployed, unemployed young people younger than 24 and unemployed older than 45 with the low level of education, Roma peoples and homeless.

3.3. Infrastructure and regional accessibility

3.3.1. Regional infrastructure

A. Integrated development of urban areas

The tangible infrastructure of settlements comprises of public accessible areas and concourses, local communications, walkways, elements of public greenery, public lighting, public sanitary facilities, elements of small architecture, etc. The local infrastructure in settlements comprises an integral part of public areas that together with streets form an urban backbone of settlements and influence to the decisive extent their functional social and aesthetic-cultural values. The given components of the tangible infrastructure are predominantly in ownership of the towns and municipalities and their technical conditions and aesthetic levels are important determinants of the quality of life of the population and attractiveness of the territory not only for their inhabitants but also for inhabitants of the surrounding areas, tourists and potential investors, establishing thus the assumptions for their further development.

Under Article 8 Sustainable development of the Regulation on the ERDF, the basic assumption for implementation of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development is existence of their engaged, integrated and sustainable strategy for solving the high concentration of economic, environmental and social problems of urban areas.

Respecting the SR conditions, the aspects of the given strategies are included into the content of territorial planning scheme documentations and economic and social development programmes, what implies for the towns directly from the relevant legislation of the SR for the field of territorial planning scheme and regional development.

B. Infrastructure of housing

under Article 7 of the Regulation on the ERDF, it is possible to implement support housing through the ERDF in the Members States acceded to the EU after 1 May 2004, providing that the operations are programmed within the integrated operations of urban development or the priority axis for areas, facing or threatened by physical deterioration or social exclusion.

According to CIHF 2001, the following housing stock was available in the Bratislava Region:

Table 4 Housing stock of the Bratislava Region

SR, Region, District	Permanently occupied flats in total	Of which		Non-occupied flats
		In family houses	%	
Slovak Republic	1 884 846	820 042	43,5	209 316
Bratislava Region	242 452	51 228	21,1	21 081
Bratislava I	22 073	2 635	11,9	2 694
Bratislava II	48 387	4 538	9,4	3 193
Bratislava III	28 932	4 184	14,5	2 844
Bratislava IV	38 176	3 704	9,7	2 508
Bratislava V	43 453	1 287	3	2 067
Malacky	23 473	13 368	57	3 408
Pezinok	19 915	10 030	50,4	2 314
Senec	18 043	11 482	63,6	2 05

Source: SODB, 2001

In settlements of the Bratislava Region, there are registered 242,5 thous. of flats of which 90,2% permanently occupied. 365 flats fall per 1 000 inhabitants (SO SR 2001). The majority of the population of the Bratislava Region live in apartment houses while in family houses about 21 % of inhabitants live.

Table 5 Characteristics of permanently occupied housing stock of the BSR

District, settlement structure	**Share in % of flats built up in the period**			
	By 1919	**1920-1945**	**1946-1970**	**1971-1991**
Bratislava town	3,7	10,7	31,5	54,1
District Malacky	12,1	13,9	32,0	42,0
District Pezinok	10,2	12,9	33,3	43,6
District Senec	6,9	14,2	36,6	42,3
Bratislava Region	5,2	11,4	32	51,4

Source: Labour Office of Authority of the BSR, 2003

The age of buildings affects significantly the quality of permanently occupied housing stock as well as internal interiors. More than 80 % of residential zones in the Bratislava Region are built up in the period of 1946-1991. Therefore, the majority of housing stock is characterised, in principle, as panel buildings with the unsatisfactory technical and energy conditions, requiring complex regeneration. The main shortcomings vest in the insufficient thermal insulation of buildings with the increase demands of energy, water leaking mainly at flat roofs, technically inadequate or under-dimensioned distributions. Development of new facilities or reconstruction and renovation required not small financial resources that can be ensured through the municipalities' budgets to the sufficient scale. Excessive development in the centres of settlement of the BSR, mainly in Bratislava is still carried out to the bigger extent while thanks to this fact the public concourses, especially public greenery is decreased. This fact also contributes to the worsening of conditions for dwelling, in particular, in the Districts Bratislava I to V. Intensive development of family houses in the outskirt areas of towns as well as in rural settlements over the recent years leads to the gradual advancing of the quality of housing stock in the Bratislava background. The scope of modernisation or new development in the last decade results in changing the character of the originally rural settlements to the residential zones of family houses.

At present, the following problems belong to the main problems of settlements of the Bratislava Region:

1. Decaying conditions of the infrastructure of housing, mainly in the urban areas of Bratislava with the excessive sets from the 2nd part of the 20th century, technical and social deterioration of housing stock predominantly in apartment houses in urban areas with negative social and economic effects
2. Unsatisfactory conditions of public greenery and insufficient establishing and arrangement of public concourses
3. With respect to the high intensity of the process of development, there is still the need of systematic updating of territorial planning scheme documentation and the economic and social development programmes (elaboration of documents of the Plan of the Economic and Social Development supported in the previous programming period).

The given facts together with the gradual decrease of intensity of urban public transport have the negative social and economic effect, resulting into decreasing the quality of settlement environment.

Summary:

- Unsatisfactory technical and energy conditions of the infrastructure of housing
- Unsatisfactory conditions of the public greenery and public concourses
- Permanently decreasing number of areas of public greenery, public concourses and public parking places.

C. Protection of monument stock and development of tourism

In 2006, the Bratislava Region reported the highest rate of visitors (23,5 %). However, tourists remain here for the shortest time period comparing to other Slovak destinations, in average only for 2 nights, what is due to diverse purpose of visit of the regions by tourists.

The development of the Bratislava Region has always been influenced by the presence of 'the centre', the town of Bratislava, that thanks to its ideal location and international links has established one of the most important places in the cultural and economical development of the entire region and its background which besides economic function, meets the significant function as well for recreational and relaxation activities.

As evidence of this fact is that 55 % of the municipalities of the Bratislava Region have the protected cultural and historical monuments. Within the BSR settlements, there are 1 492 monument buildings and 1 051 cultural monuments (Monuments Office of the SR Bratislava, 2004). The most of cultural monuments are in the territory of cultural monument reservations and monument zones. This involves mainly the former coronation town of Hungary - Bratislava (1526-1831), as well as the independent royal towns Modra, Pezinok, Svätý Jur along with the privileged small towns as Devín, Stupava, Malacky, Gajary, Doľany, Častá, Senec, Bernolákovo, Podunajské Biskupice, Rača a Rusovce , which comprise a backbone of the network of tourism activities.

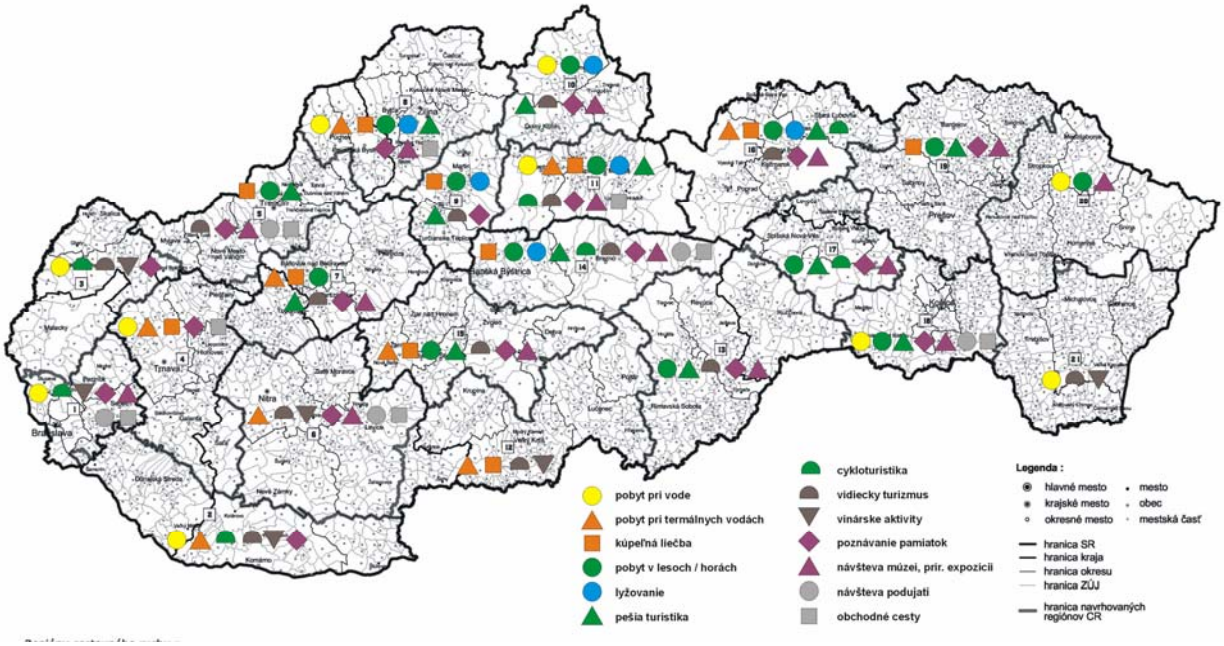
This cultural and historical potential of the Bratislava Region has the big importance for development of cultural and learning tourism.

Historical buildings, items of the high cultural, historical and social value require ongoing reconstruction for the purposes of maintaining or improving their technical conditions

and aesthetic level whereas in links to their cultural and learning function, SMEs develop and carry out in the given settlements catering, sport and relaxation activities.

Tourism is concentrated in the Bratislava Region mainly in the capital town of Bratislava and its surroundings that´s why it is necessary to support the activities strengthening conditions for tourism development also in the other parts of the Bratislava Region. Within the Bratislava Region, except for the capital town of Bratislava, the forms of the country tourism like cycling, monuments tours, vineyard activities or musems visits, prevail.

The most frequent forms of tourism:



Project titled Strategy of Development of Tourism in the BSR for 2007-2013, implemented at present within assistance from the SPD2, has the goal to achieve optimal dynamic development within the region, and in terms of this, improvement of connection of the capital with its background what contributes significantly to sustainable development (hereinafter "SD") of tourism in the region.

World cultural heritage

No site of the UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage List is located in the Bratislava Region. The following governmental projects of the SR have been included into a list of preliminary selection for nomination:

- Archaeological locality of Slavonic Site of Fortified Settlement and torso of Devin Castle (proposal in 1992)
- Memorial of Chatam Sofér in Bratislava (proposal in 2001)
- Limes Romanus, the Roman monuments on the Central Danube (proposal in 2001).

Summary:

- Concentration of protected monuments in the territory of settlements
- Impact of reconstruction of protected monuments on optimal dynamic development of tourism within the region

3.3.2. Environmental infrastructure and protection of the environment

It is possible to state that the Bratislava Region has favourable development from the point of view of the current conditions of the environment. For the recent decade, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of atmosphere, waters and decreases in producing wastes, the numbers of waste dumps decreased, percentage of secondary use of wastes is increased and the system of protected areas is completed. On the other hand, the environment of the Bratislava Region has been significantly loaded by emissions and wastes coming from industries, energy industry and transport.
The complex picture of the actual situation and tendencies in the field of the environment in the territory is given in the Environmental Regionalisation of the SR[14] limiting the 5-categories of the environment.

- Environment of high quality
- Transitional level between the high and mid quality (environment satisfactory)
- Mid level of negative impacts on the environment
- Transitional level between the mid and strongly damaged quality of the environment (environment impaired)
- Environment with intensive pollution

The Bratislava Region, according to given categories, belongs to the strongly polluted areas. The areas of the 5th level with the strongly polluted environment represent the core of particular areas. Moreover, the areas predominantly in the 4th level of quality of the environment, considering geo-morphologic, hydrologic and other relevant criteria, are affiliated to this core.

Table 6 Share of particular levels of the pollution in the Bratislava Region

Area in km^2					Area in %				
1st level	2nd level	3rd level	4th level	5th level	1st level	2nd level	3rd level	4th level	5th level
250,84	533,71	521,81	501,93	236,76	9,73	24,19	25,26	26,41	14,41
Number of concerned citizens					**% of concerned citizens**				
6,371	24,720	114,276	118,842	335,166	2,83	11,22	29,41	24,19	32,35

Source: Slovak Agency of the Environment, 2006

A. Integrated protection, rational use of waters and protection against floods

In the field of drinking water supplies to the population, almost 100 % of the population are directly supplied by drinking water from public water mains in the Bratislava Region (98,7%, SO SR 2005). The Bratislava Region exceeds the total national figures in this field by 13 %. The worse situation is in the field of connection to the public sewerage network where about 85 % of the population are connected. However, in terms of the total national rate, this figure is about 56 %, thus the Bratislava Region exceeds the national average indicator in this field as well (circa by 30 %).

[14] Environmental Regionalisation is a process of spatial division of the country where are classified the regions pursuant to the set criteria and selected sets of environmental characteristics, they are given in levels of quality of the conditions or tendency of changes of the environment based thereon are identified the most polluted areas in term of environment. The resulting synthetic map is established through spatial synthesis of analytical maps of the selected environmental characteristics according to the structure of components of the environment and risk factors.

The Bratislava Region has not resolved the system of anti-flood protection, not only at local streams but also on the international Rivers Danube and Moravia. The SR priorities in the field of anti-flood protection of the territory comprise the Programme of Anti-flood Protection of the Slovak Republic by 2010 adopted through the SR Government Resolution No. 31/2000 and updated through the SR Government Resolution 25/2003. The SR priority is to reduce significantly damages due to floods through the implementation of preventive measures aimed at protection against floods, limiting unfavourable impacts due to human activity on the draining conditions in floods and to return natural capacity of water accumulation through revitalisation of floods.

The Operational Programme Enviroment includes more detailed information on the integrated protection and rational use of waters and protection against floods, while this field is supported within the The Operational Programme Enviroment from the Cohesion Fund also in the Bratislava Region.

B. Protection of atmosphere

The chemical industry, energy industry and vehicle transport have the main shares of polluting the atmosphere. The following companies are the largest atmosphere polluters in the region: Slovnaft, a.s., [crude oil processing] Holcim a.s., [building products] Odvoz a likvidácia odpadu a.s. [waste disposal], Paroplynový cyklus [energy producer], Volkswagen [car maker], etc. In addition, the small and medium-sized resources participate in polluting the atmosphere, though their shares are significantly lower comparing those from the large polluters. They are generating, in particular, emissions from resources ensuring heat supplies for communal-housing sphere. Moreover, secondary dustiness belongs to the important secondary resources of polluting the atmosphere inside the town of Bratislava and its current level depends upon meteorological factors, ground and agricultural works and character of the surface.
By 2022, it is possible to see the long-term declining trend as far as the basic polluting substances (e.g., solid polluting substances, SO2, NOx, CO) also thanks to the adopted legislative and technological measures aimed at protection of the atmosphere. Naturally, the Bratislava District is the most emission-loaded area (together with the Malacky District as far as the emissions of nitrogen oxides).

C. Sewage management

The Bratislava Region territory, predominantly Bratislava as such, is burdened by productions of sewage above the national average. Based on the data of RISO in 2004, of the overall volume 1 598 469 tons of other and dangerous sewage produced in this area, 268 247 tons of sewage were valorised, 1 259 153 tons disposed in form of dumping, 19 791 tons incinerated, 13 246 tons biologically degraded and the rest volumes of sewage were treated by other forms. Another serious issue is absence of incineration facilities for dangerous sewage, including sewage from healthcare facilities and not completely resolved system of separated collection of sewage.

The OPENV provides a more detailed analysis of the waste sewage while the given operational programme is supported from the Cohesion Fund.

D. Protection and regeneration of the natural environment and country

The Bratislava Region belongs to the regions with the considerably altered landscape structure, where the major urbanisation units and vast areas of cultural heathes are located. Despite this,

it features with the significant diversity of fauna and flora, as well as biotopes for the protection thereof protected localities have been declared. There are three protected landscape areas (PLA) with the total area of 50 197 ha (24,5 % of the area of the region) reaching into the Bratislava Region. As of 31 January 2006, there were declared 10 national nature reserves (NNR), 1 national nature monument (NNM), 21 natural reserves (NR), 9 nature monuments (NM) and 19 preserved localities (PL) in the Bratislava Region. Share of protected areas from the total area of the region is 41 % (while the national average is 36 %), including localities declared or nominated to the European system of protected localities NATURA 2000.

The main goal is to establish and preserve natural heritage the significance thereof is not only for the relevant Member State, but predominantly for the EU as a whole. This system of protected sites and localities has to safeguard the protection of the rarest and the most endangered species among free growing plants, wild animals and natural biotopes, localised in the areas of EU Member States and through the protection of these species and biotopes to ensure maintaining of biodiversity in the entire European Union.
The legal ground for establishing NATURA 2000 is the Council Directive 79/409/EC on the conservation of the wild birds and the Council Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora.
NATURA 2000 comprises of the following two types of areas:

- Special Protection Areas, (SPA) - declared based on the Directive on the wild birds; in the national legislative as protected bird sanctuaries,
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) - declared based on the Directive on biotopes; in the national legislation: areas of European significance - prior to declaration, after the declaration, the relevant territory is included into the particular national categories of protected areas.

There are 39 proposed areas of European significance and 5 proposed protected bird sanctuaries in the Bratislava Region. These areas represent the most valuable localities from the point of view of biodiversity in the region and their preservation in favourable conditions or achieving of their favourable conditions, is the main commitment of the SR arising from its membership in the EU from the view of protection of the nature and country. In relation to the SR commitments concerning to the NATURA 2000 programme, it is required to ensure care and promotion of these areas and cooperation with their owners.

Table 7 Overview of the number of proposed bird sanctuaries and proposed areas of European significance in the individual districts of the Bratislava Region (some areas overlap several districts simultaneously)

District	Protected bird sanctuaries		Areas of European significance	
	Area in ha*	Number		Area in ha*
Bratislava I.	0,310	1	0,000	0
Bratislava II.	1 827,465	1	919,301	2
Bratislava III.	861,089	1	49,358	2
Bratislava IV.	1 067,145	3	1 179,110	8
Bratislava V.	4038,249	2	1 096,652	2
Bratislava in total:	**7 794,302**	**4**	**3 244,421**	**14**
Malacky	37 623,249	2	16 958,001	29
Pezinok	16 195,580	1	7 402,199	6
Senec	4 584,697	2	796,526	4
Region in total	**66 197,828**	**5**	**28 401,147**	**39**

* Approximate area as of June 2005,
Source: State Protection of Nature of the Slovak Republic

Summary:

- Positive trend in the field of declining pollution and its individual components,
- Almost half of the territory with approximately 90 % of inhabitants has significantly or strongly damaged environment,
- Industry, energy industry and transport are the largest polluters,
- High percentage of connection to public water and sewerage network,
- 25 % of the Bratislava Region area include Protected Landscape Areas
- There are 39 proposed areas of European significance and 5 proposed protected bird sanctuaries in the Bratislava Region as a part of NATURA 2000

3.3.3. Transport infrastructure and regional accessibility

A. Transport infrastructure

The high location potential of the region together with the developed transport infrastructure ensures accessibility of the Bratislava Region through all types of transport. Within the broader international relationships, the region has very good accessibility through trans-European transport corridors.
The express ways and the 1st and 2nd class roads, railway international and regional lines, water transport route and air transport comprise the transport backbone of the Bratislava Region. Transport facilities completing the system of basic transport service are a part of it as well.

The Bratislava Region is interconnected to the surrounding countries predominantly through motorway and railway routes. The motorway D2 and the international railway lines 110, 130, 132 connect the region with the Czech Republic and Hungary. The motorways D2, D4 and the international railway lines 120, 132, 111 establish connection to Austria and in direction to the east, to Žilina, with Poland and Ukraine. Air transport ensures inclusion of the region into the all-European network (M. R. Štefánik Airport).

Road infrastructure

The road infrastructure comprises of the D1 and D2 motorway sections, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd class roads and local communications, including bridge buildings. The motorways and the 1st and 2nd class roads connect the region with other areas of Slovakia and neighbouring states. The following routes belong among the main routes: motorway D1 and D2, motorway D4 from direction Austria - Bratislava, roads I/61, I/62, I/63, road II/502 and road II/503 (Strategy Development of the Bratislava Self-governing Region 2003).

Table 8 Road network in the Bratislava Region

Class	Length of roads (km) in districts					Number of bridge buildings (pieces)* in districts				
	Bratislava	Malacky	Pezinok	Senec	Total	Bratislava	Malacky	Pezinok	Senec	Total
I.	53,0	35,018	0	42,57	130,588	29	x	x	x	29
II.	31,0	90,955	59,22	28,764	209,939	6	30	21	4	61
III.	20,0	116,485	75,966	140,287	352,738	4	25	19	18	66
Total	104,0	242,458	135,186	211,621	693,265	39	55	40	22	156

* On the 2nds and 3rd class roads in the districts Malacky, Pezinok, Senec

Source Regional Roads of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, 2005, Magistrate of the SR capital town of Bratislava, the 4th section, road economy department

The road routes related to Bratislava have radial character, except the 2nd class road from Šamorín through Pezinok in direction to Malacky comprising the external regional circle. Transit loading of these roads on profiles grows proportionally to their vicinity to the capital, while inside its area, after merging with its internal urban traffic, the values of load of transit sections of the 2nd class roads are often higher than own permeability of roads. It is possible to state based on the results of counting survey in the field of transport for the previous programming period, that the 2nd class road sections inside the Bratislava area are loaded 5 up to 10 times more comparing with the average loading of extra-village sections of the same roads. Accompanying phenomenon of this fact is the increased rate of negative impacts of transport on the surrounding environment.

Another specific sign of transit sections of the 2nd class roads inside the Bratislava area is the high density of crossroads of the 1st and 3rd class roads with the local communications. This specific feature points at the basic problem of these roads - the limited permeability in their node points. In practice, this problem results into congestions, reducing smoothness of traffic operation, increasing production of emissions and noise from transport, higher accident rates, as well as the higher level of tear and wear of the pavement constructions. Seriousness of this common issue is so urgent in the conditions of road transport that exceeds also the existing shortcoming of technical conditions of the concerned communications and related engineering buildings. It is required to add for completeness that the similar situation is also on transit sections of the 3rd class roads in the Bratislava area.

Railway, airline and water transport

The international railway routes 110, 111, 120, 130, 131 and 132 pass through the region territory connecting it to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria and in direction to Žilina with Poland and Ukraine. The route of local importance (Zohor - Záhorská Ves, Zohor -Plavecký Mikuláš - Jablonica) is in the district Malacky. At present, length of railway routes reaches 196 km, of which 79 km comprise the Bratislava railway node. Railways transfer approximately 25 % of transferred passengers from the suburban municipalities and from the gradient territory of Bratislava.

The Bratislava Region connects to the all-European network also via air transport from the international M. R. Štefánik Airport and through water transport via the international waterway, the Danube River. Water transport operates through the international waterway Danube from the North Sea to the Black Sea. The public freight port, and the passenger port for recreation purposes are used in the Bratislava area.

Public passenger transport

Though till recently still favourable, the ratio of utilisation of public transport to individual vehicle transport has been changing rapidly to the disadvantage of public transport in the entire Bratislava Region, based on the benchmark values 75:25 (1987).
In the time of the last decade, public transport is characteristic by the gradual reduction of transfer output. For the period from 2000 to 2004, the output of public transport decreased almost by 9 %. Such development is subject in the SR to the significant extent to the increase of living standards of the population and the insufficient support public transport what results into a growth of individual motorism, reporting in the recent time the absolute growth by 5,9 % and its share reached in 2004 the level of 68,4 %, though still in 2000 the share of individual motorism was at the level of 64,4 %. In addition, this trend is the implication of it that in the last years Slovakia has not succeeded to establish favourable conditions for integration of public transport, which interconnect comprise the railway passenger transport, sub-urban bus transport, and the urban public transport.

The quality and level of services provided in public passenger transport reaches low values in the Bratislava Region territory, mainly in the Bratislava area. This is the consequence of the obsolete vehicle fleet and the lack of investments for renovation and maintenance of communications over the long-term period, and it does not correspond to the requirements and needs of the public in terms of culture of travelling and mainly in terms of safety.

In 2005, bus transport with the share of 57 % of the overall number of transported persons and 60,8 % of run kilometres had the decisive share in the urban public transport in the territory of the SR capital town of Bratislava. Tram transport was the second and trolleybus transport was the third in terms of transfer output as far as to numbers of passengers and distances. The Bratislava urban public transport consists of tram routes totalling 36,747 km, trolleybus routes grossing to 38,990 km and bus routes totalling to 385,5 km.

Since 1994, the Bratislava urban public transport has been subject of business of the joint-stock company Dopravný podnik Bratislava, a.s., [Bratislava Transport Enterprise]. This company was firstly transformed from a state enterprise into a municipal enterprise and following into a joint-stock company. The SR capital town of Bratislava is the single founder and shareholder of this company. The town is concurrently the ordering party of outputs of urban public transport. This company in the public interest performs transport outputs based on the agreement signed annually, specifying a concrete schedule of urban public transport in Bratislava for the respective economic year.

For purchasing the required travel tickets for transit using the Urban Public Transport (UPT) in Bratislava, there are available 11 points of sale of the carrier with the full assortment of travelling documents as well as the network of contractual sellers selling time multi-line, combined and tourist tickets, both in the basis and discounted tariffs.

Accessibility of the Urban Passenger Transport system to passengers is ensured through 1 168 stops with daily operation, of which 153 are tram stops, 112 trolleybus stops, 83 joint bus and trolleybus stops and 820 bus stops. All together, 13 tramlines, 11 trolleybus lines and 62 bus lines ensure coverage of the town and the heaviest directions of transport flows. About 20 % of the total annual transport output (where the annual output is 43 mil. vehicle-kilometres) are carried out during weekends and the rest (80 %) over working days.

Table 9 Urban public transport in the Slovak capital town of Bratislava

Indicator	Year 2005	Year 2004	Difference to 2004	Index 2005/2004
Transferred passengers in total in thousand	249 973	245 497	4 476	101,8
By trams	80 017	78 314	1 703	102,2
By trolleybuses	27 470	26 096	1 374	105,3
By buses	142 486	141 087	1 399	101,0
Run kilometres in total in thousand	42 723	42 908	-185	99,6
By trams	11 407	11 380	27	100,2
By trolleybuses	5 350	5 213	137	102,6
By buses	25 966	26 315	-349	98,7

Source: SO SR, Regional Administration in Bratislava, Bulletin 4/2005, 2006

Developing of the Integrated Transport System of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region has particular importance in the interest of improving transport serviceability, increasing mobility of citizens and more effective utilisation of the existing types of transport (hereinafter "ITS BSR") which by establishing the single tariff system and by creation the transfer terminals harmonises operations of the urban public transport, suburban and regional road and railway transport, improving transportation. Transportation system will consist of the several public transport – regional train, suburban bus, public transport (intermodal transport system). Due to transfer of assignment of the conduct of state administration to the self-governments in the field of public bus transport and public passenger railway transport the Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region is preparing the ITS BSR jointly with the Slovak capital town of Bratislava in accordance with the SR Government resolutions, arranging the systematic solution and financing outputs in the public interest. Financing the executions in the public interest in the Slovak Republic will be managed like in the developed EU states, where the public transport respecting its character of the public service managing the satisfaction with the transport needs of the population is supported by the various public authority offices in the various forms. As for the suburban bus transport, the execution in the public interest has been financed by the self-governing authorities which means that the total regional responsibility for the public interests execution is arranged. The sphere of the regional railway transport is performed by the self-governing region as the transferred execution other public governance while also this field will be also managed as the self-governing competence in future.

The need to establish an ITS BSR arises from the growing demands for commuting of inhabitants from the surrounding municipalities to Bratislava and from development of individual vehicle transport to which the negative effects are connected in the form of the damaged environment and excessive loading of road communications in the form of transport congestions. The utilisation of individual vehicle transport grows proportionally with the growth of living standards of the population. The rapid growth of individual vehicle transport in the Bratislava Regions proves also change in its use comparing to the public transport. While in 1987 the rate 75:25 was in favour of public transport, in 2004 it was 68: 32. The Integrated Transport should make the public transport more attractive for the citizens comparing to the individual transport. In July 2005, the commercial company "Bratislavská integrovaná doprava, s.r.o." [Bratislava Integrated Transport Ltd] was established to prepare an ITS BSK project. This company has the 65-percent interest share of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region and the 35-percent interest share of the Slovak capital town of Bratislava. This company has been preparing all the necessary measures to implement the given project in the set term based on cooperation and consultations with the decisive transporters in the region (Dopravný podnik Bratislava, a. s.,[Bratislava Transport Enterprise], Slovenská autobusová

doprava Bratislava, a.s. [Slovak Bus Transport Bratislava] and Železničná spoločnosť Slovakia, a.s. [Railways Company Slovakia]).

The company Bratislavská integrovaná doprava, s.r.o. (BID) [Bratislava Integrated Transport Ltd] has elaborated the basic Perspective Document on Implementing the Integrated Transport System of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region in which the general rules dealing with preparation of the integrated transport system in the Bratislava Region with title Concept of the Bratislava Integrated Transport. The material includes also schedule of the Integrated Transport System implementation while during the implementation phases the relevant parts will be elaborated in more detail way in the separated documents.This document was approved by the Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region Authority through Resolution 24/2007 as of 25 April 2007 and by the representation of the Slovak capital town of Bratislava through Resolution No. 87/2007 as of 26 April 2007. Services of carriers arising from the implementation of subject of business of the company BID will be enacted through legislation via respective contractual relationships between those who order transit outputs (town Bratislava and the BSR) the carriers and the coordinator (the company BID).

By implementing of the Integrated Transport System, the experience from the integrated transport systems operated in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria is used. Good examples are the positive experience from functioning of the integrated transport system in the South Moravian Region a part thereof is the town Brno, comparable with Bratislava also in terms of the number of population.

Moreover, positive experience comes from the current experimental partial ITS. It was put into operations in 2001 as the First Stage of the Bratislava ITS. After purchasing an ITS voucher which includes a surcharge for ITS, the passengers can use trains operated by Železničná spoločnosť Slovensko, a. s. [Railways Company Slovakia, joint-stock company (RCS)] in any direction and buses operated by SAD Bratislava, a. s. [joint-stock company Slovak Bus Transport Bratislava] in the direction to Záhorie. Passengers can use the given connections within ITS vouchers only within the Bratislava area. According to the Perspective Document on Implementing the Integrated Transport System of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, the number of transferred passengers increased gradually from 882 360 in the year of 2001 to 1 510 490 in the year of 2006. However, the first stage of the ITS BSR is implemented only based on contractual relations between the transport services providers and the Slovak capital town of Bratislava and does not represent a systematic and a whole area covering solution with the corresponding economic benefits for all the involved entities.

Table 10 Overview of some indicators of the Bratislava integrated transport

Year	2001	2002	2003
Revenues from passenger	687 325,00	835 250,00	872 350,00
Payment by town to Slovak Bus Transport	1 927 221,10	2 694 860,00	3 363 989,40
Payment by town to Railway Company	575 394,10	392 003,00	781 469,40
Payment by town in total	2 502 615,20	3 086 863,00	4 145 458,80
Number of transferred passengers of Bratislava	1 872	1 941	7 858
Number of passengers coming outside Bratislava	188 280	303 302	301 347
Number of passengers in total	190 152	305 243	309 205

The OP Transport provides a more detailed analysis of transport infrastructure and its components in the Bratislava Region, specifically in analysis of indicators or transport infrastructure in section 3. 3 while the development of the railway infrastructure, the road

infrastructure, the inter-modal transport infrastructure and control of air transport is supported by the Cohesion Fund.

Summary:

- High location potential and accessibility of the region suitable for using inter-modal transport system
- Inter-modal transport system
- Excessive load of transit section of the 2nd class roads and limited permeability in nodes points in the Bratislava urban territory
- Decrease of share of the public transport outputs at the regional and local levels
- Growth of the negative impacts of passenger transport on the environment
- Incomplete establishment of the Integrated Transport System

3.4. Knowledge-based economy

3.4.1. Competitiveness of the region

One of the characteristics determining competitiveness is the use of economic potential of the region which depends on several factors. Except for demand, there are mainly economic and technical parameters of production facilities allocated in the region, potential production, quality and availability of labour and so on. The level of this potential and the grade of its use are directly reflected in the economic performance of the region. The reason of low economic performance of the region has not to be caused only by the low level of its economic potential. It can happen that the economic potential of the region is significant, but its use is only partial[15].
As it implies from the analysis, the Bratislava Region is the region with the highest economic potential within the SR and is the only one where amount of GDP exceeds the average value of GDP of the European Union. Status and economic importance of the Bratislava Region is expressed by circa 23,6-percent share of establishing GDP in the whole SR, however in recalculating of GDP per capita this represents 206,63 % in comparison to the average of the SR.
Another characteristic feature determining competitiveness is capital availability. Capital availability of the region is determined by volume of fixed assets per capita. This is important indicator expressing the pre-conditions for establishing production and providing services in the region area. The so-called production capability of the region depends also on its further, mainly qualitative characteristics. They are such factors as structure, age, technical and economic parameters and similar ones.

Capital accessibility of the Bratislava Region totals to SKK 3 180,4 thous. what exceeds several times the average of Slovakia and other regions.

Table 11 Capital availability of the regions (of NUTS 3 level) in SKK thous.

Region, SR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Bratislava	1921,4	2175,3	2411,0	2628,6	2914,0	3180,4
Trnava	243,4	271,6	313,2	339,5	390,7	423,4
Trenčín	242,3	258,1	276,8	316,4	340,1	366,3
Nitra	280,9	317,4	345,7	378,0	434,2	475,4

[15] For example: production capacities, thereof production capacity is non-competitive; large number of economically active population that is unemployed and similar

Region, SR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Žilina	263,6	286,9	328,7	359,0	391,6	449,3
Banská Bystrica	462,2	498,0	535,0	598,5	650,7	705,9
Prešov	193,1	220,6	238,0	268,9	290,4	327,2
Košice	312,3	356,3	388,5	446,1	511,7	562,6
SR in total	471,7	522,5	576,1	636,3	706,6	774,9

Note: Capital availability means investment property (in current prices) / population (investment property per capita). For the period of 1998-2003 as actually, for 2005 as estimate. Source Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

The above mentioned development of economic performance is determined to the significant extent also by forming of sectoral structure in establishing GDP development thereof results into gradual and inevitable decrease of competitiveness of the key sectors within the regional industry as a consequence of the growth of relative unit labour costs in comparison to other regions of central and eastern Europe.

The recent track record of the transformation process and development of economy were also reflected into the utilisation rate of accessible production factors[16]. It was given on one hand by the growth of unemployment but also production capacities played a role (mainly those which were established in the period of central planning) because the market for their production "disappeared", or they became non-competitive. Thus, the actually achieved GDP was essentially lower than the potential value of this indicator. The potential GDP is understood as a value that could be reached under the circumstances of the full utilisation of the accessible production capacities.

The Bratislava Region with its suburb background is located in a potentially advantageous locality. The triangle: Vienna - Bratislava - Györ, assessed by the renowned agency EAO Empirical Delssase (seated in Bonn) already in 1993 as the locality with the most advantageous for investments in Europe. However, such region is not an institutionalised economic section. There is no system of flexible specialisation among the towns and the surrounding regions. The potential advantages arising from such connection as given in the OECD study are not utilised sufficiently. Vienna is also assessed as the central European locality with respect to the northwest-southeast and also north-south-west European axes. However, over the recent 10 years, the economic development of Vienna has been lagging moderately behind the other European towns that are not localised at the above mentioned axes and which are mentioned in the Empirica Delssase Study on the last places. With respect of this example there is a big difference among the regions that have such development potential and those ones which really make use of it.

Table 12 Gross Domestic Product of the selected regions of the European Union[17]

Regions (NUTS 2003)	GDP 2003 EUR mil.	GDP per capita in 2003 EUR	GDP 2003 in mil. In PPP	GDP per capita 2003 in PPP	GDP per capita 2003 in PPP EU-25 = 100
EU-25	9 953 329	21 741	9 953 329	21 741	100. 0
Czech Republic	80 254	7 867	150 471	14 750	67. 8
Prague	18 643	16 029	34 954	30 052	138. 2
Hungary	73 538	7 260	130 635	12 896	59. 3
Györ Region	20 121	4 792	35 744	8 513	39. 2
Austria	226 968	27 959	213 348	26 282	120. 9
Vienna	62 875	39 530	59 102	37 158	170. 9

[16] Labour, fixed capital (investment property).

[17] Comparison of the economic level of the BSR with other SR regions, as well as the SR averages, the EU-15 and EU-25 averages is given in NSRF, chapter 3.1.

Slovakia	29 227	5 434	60 728	11 195	52,2
Bratislava Region	7 331	12 116	15 232	25 664	119,7

Source: Eurostat, May 2006

The development scenarios relate mainly to the generally positive and negative localisation factors. It is possible to identify these factors at two levels. The first level is the comparison of Bratislava with the surrounding towns, the neighbouring town Györ and the Slovak towns. Their basic goal is to assess a potential of the towns from the point of view of their economic prosperity and success. The second level is a specific long-term scenario of development of Bratislava as a techno-polis, a centre of science and research and top technologies.

The towns or the urban regions with the highest economic potential in Europe are those which have the following characteristics:

- diversified economic base of services and industrial sectors, mainly in the field of the high value added;
- human resources available for development and commercial use;
- education institutions producing the sufficient number of specialists required in the developed economic sectors;
- cultural and environmental quality of life attractive for mobile and highly-qualified labour force;
- satisfactory physical and telecommunication connection to the dynamically developing economy of society;
- local institutional capacities for establishing political, financial and personnel resources and their successful use.

In total, it implies from comparison that Bratislava has very good location within Slovakia, some advantages comparing to Györ, however on the other hand, a lot of disadvantages comparing to Budapest or Prague. The results show the fact that Vienna is of higher quality in respect to the majority of the assessed factors.

Table 13 Prognosis of GDP development in the selected countries of the European Union

Market prices	**Gross Domestic Product in EUR bn. in current prices (year 2006, 2007-estimate)**				**Index of growth 1995 = 100 %**	**Change in % in prices of year 1995**				**PPP per capita**
Country	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2007**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2007**
EU-25	10,418	10,79	11,233	114	130,7	2,4	1,6	2,1	2,4	25,200
Czech Rep.	87	98	108	114	139,7	4,7	6,0	4,4	4,3	19,300
Hungary	81	88	92	97	161,7	4,6	4,1	3,9	3,9	16,300
Austria	237	246	255	264	129,7	2,4	1,9	1,9	2,2	30,600
Slovakia	33	37	41	44	170,5	5,5	6,0	5,5	6,3	14,700

Source: Eurostatistics 4 / 2006

The Bratislava Region is located in the area with the high development potential. It is the focus of positive development of the Slovak economy. In terms of economy, Vienna is the most powerful neighbour of Bratislava within the 60 km distance. Currently Vienna and Bratislava do not compete in the same market segments. Cooperation between these two cities has its limitation. More intense cooperation with Vienna would be prosperous for both regions. The function interconnection to the town Györ, the closest Hungarian partner of Bratislava, is limited.

A. Competitiveness of enterprises and services

Technological adaptation of enterprises in the SR was not carried out so fast due to lack of sales markets. Only a few of the large Slovak enterprises are a part of the large international networks what slows down the effective interconnection with world markets and with it related

growth of effectiveness. The industrial production passes gradually from material-demanding products to less material-demanding ones, requiring utilisation of modern technologies. In the course of transformation, gradual changes occurred in the sector structure in favour of sectors with the higher share of value added. The Bratislava Region has as the one and only Slovak region the progressive character of sectors´ structure due to the effect of dynamic development mainly of the market-service sector with 70-percent share of the service sector and up to 58-percent share of the overall employment in the region. Industry of the Bratislava Region is characterised as poly-functional significance with the local, regional and supra-regional competence. As far as the sectoral structure, the processing industry prevails here with aiming at chemistry, rubber, machinery, food and poly-graphic production. In terms of territory, distribution of industry is characterised with the high concentration in the territory of Bratislava city.

Table 14 Sectoral structure of establishing gross value added in the regions in % (current prices)

Region	2000				2002			
	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Total	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Total
Bratislava	1,1	28,9	70,0	100,0	1,0	28,0	71,0	100,0
West Slovakia	7,4	42,5	50,0	100,0	7,6	48,3	44,1	100,0
Central Slovakia	4,5	34,7	60,8	100,0	4,5	34,1	61,4	100,0
Eastern Slovakia	3,9	30,0	66,0	100,0	4,1	29,9	66,1	100,0
SR in total	4,5	34,8	60,7	100,0	4,6	36,2	59,3	100,0
Region	**2004**				**2006**			
	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Total	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Total
Bratislava	0,9	27,5	71,6	100,0	0,9	27,0	72,1	100,0
West Slovakia	7,7	48,5	43,8	100,0	7,8	48,6	43,6	100,0
Central Slovakia	4,4	33,7	61,9	100,0	4,1	28,3	67,5	100,0
Eastern Slovakia	3,7	29,6	66,7	100,0	3,5	29,3	67,2	100,0
SR in total	4,5	35,9	59,6	100,0	4,4	34,6	61,1	100,0

Source: www.dexia.sk - Prognostic data supporting elaboration of the BSR ECDP

The Bratislava Region has 41-percent share of revenues for own performances and good, and 16-percent share of employment. Productivity of work in the Bratislava Region comparing to EU-15[18] is 101 %. At the NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 levels, the Bratislava Region reported the highest dynamics in development of value added while it industrial enterprises have the highest share of value added in the SR.

Energy demand factor

The persisting high energy demand[19]factor is the long-term and serious problem of the SR economy, its competitiveness and effects on the environment, it is 4,1times higher than average of the EU-25 and its decrease is relative slow.

Reducing of material and energy demand factors of the SR economy represents one of the basic objectives of the energy policy of the SR. Without the significant reduction of energy demand factor it will be problematic and difficult to maintain the adequate dynamics of economic growth and growth of competitiveness of the Slovak industry. Reduction of energy demand factor in the Slovak economy, focusing mainly on the industry sector, by more effective use of energy contributes to increasing of industry competitiveness and also to fulfilment of the requirements of new environmental and energy legislation.

Development of the entrepreneurial sector

The situation in the SR from the point of view of development in the entrepreneurial sector changed essentially during last 15 years. At present, the rate and structure of SME in the SR are comparable with the developed countries.

The highest number of SME per 1 000 economically active citizens (160,0 in 2003[20]) from the regional point of view is in the Bratislava Region where the highest number of business licence holders (59,2) also have their residency as well.

[18] Source: EUROSTAT.

[19] Energy demands represent the share of the primary energetic sources to the produced GDP

[20] Number of SME per 1 000 economically active inhabitants in the SR regions, source: processed according to data of NADSME (1998-2004): State of small and medium-sized enterprises, National Agency for Development of SME, Bratislava

Entry of foreign capital into the Bratislava Region

Concerning the development of foreign direct investments (hereinafter "FDI"), the trend of the FDI influx concentration into the Bratislava Region could be observed from the long-term point of view. Within the last two years, the influx of investments into research and services became interesting even though it is still lagging significantly in terms of volumes of such investments behind Prague or Budapest. The significant part of FDI is carried out without non-market advantages provided to the investor by the state[21].

B. Structure of enterprises according to size and legal form of ownership

In the Bratislava Region 92,3 % of enterprises (20 640) belong to the so-called small enterprises with the number of their staff up to 19 persons, 3,9 % (874) have from 20 to 49 persons, 3,1 % (695) are enterprises of the size category from 50 to 249 persons and 0,7 % (155) belong among large enterprises with more than 250 staff (as of 31 December 2004, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2005).

Concerning the legal form, commercial companies prevail, in particular, limited liability companies and joint-stock companies, furthermore 59 873 self-employed persons are incorporated as entrepreneurs in the Bratislava Region. They prevail as business licence holders (94,8 %). They are concentrated mainly in the Districts Bratislava V (12 544), Bratislava II (10 939) and Bratislava IV (8 838).

As far as to the forms of ownership, among the ones which are in the private sector (22,2 thous., 99,3 %) 3 668 are foreign and 1 995 are international companies, concentrated mainly in the districts of Bratislava I and Bratislava II.

The more detailed analysis of the Bratislava region´ competitiveness is described in the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth in section 3.1 Competitiveness and Innovation.

3.4.2. Research, development and innovation progress

Slovakia belongs among economies that according to the EC evaluations in the field of innovations are lagging behind, keeping the 22nd place on the European Innovation Scoreboard while in partial indicators as establishing knowledge and innovation and entrepreneurship, the SR keeps the last not-flattering place. Thus, the SR belongs into the group of economies with the low innovation capacity, which does not keep pace with other EU regions. Share of enterprises that introduced successfully the new or significantly innovative product/services in the market was 74 % in EU-25, while Slovakia obtained the third worst results among all the regions[22]. The deeper analysis points out some further factors, e.g. below standard support from the part of the state in introducing innovations, preferential orientation of enterprises to the local and national markets, low rate of own as well as contract-based research, the second lowest cooperation of enterprises with universities and research centres, but also with other enterprises. Innovation activities are driven to the significant extent by (foreign) investments into infrastructure and ICT and not through establishing and using of knowledge[23].

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[21] Investment incentives.

[22] Innobarometer, 2004

[23] EC, Innovation Policy Europe 2004, p.89

Comparisons with the EU-25 according to the European regional innovation index[24] show that the Bratislava region is on the 27th place (0,66 point) nominates itself as one of the three new member regions among the first fifty regions. This rate was reached mainly due to the above standard values of indicators related to human resources in the field of science and research (157 % of the EU average) the whole life education (144 %) and employment in high-tech services (249 %). The Bratislava Region is the centre of education and research in the SR for long-term point of view. 25,74 % of the population over 25 years in the Bratislava Region has the higher and university education what is the double size comparing to the Slovak average; moreover, 42 % of the citizens with completed doctoral study of the Slovakia live in the Bratislava region. Localisation of 11 colleges and universities and the broad scale of opportunities for additional education support the educational level of the region. However, research at the colleges and universities is limited by the lack of resources and its quality is prevailing not very high[25]. At present, 100 science and research organisations (47,7 % of the SR) are localised in the Bratislava Region in which 10 135 employees work (of it, 7 889 research workers what represents 48,9% of the all SR). International comparisons show that there is the lack of top research of the world quality. The region passed through the significant restructuring of science sector during nineties, however more significant specialisation and achieving critical mass of research activities are missing for more essential increase of innovative dynamics of the region. In the recent years, participation of the regional research institutions in the international research networks and projects (e.g., FP6) has been growing, mainly in the field of technical sciences (Slovak Technical University Bratislava) and natural sciences (Comenius University Bratislava). However, participation of enterprises (SME) is traditionally low, only 11,7 % of organisations in FP6 were the small and medium-sized enterprises and contribution for economy is minimal[26].

The Operational Programme Research and Development describes in more details the situation in the field of research and development.

Table 15 Comparison of the basic indicators of science, research and innovations.

	HRST	HTI	HTS	GOVERD	BERD	Patents
BA	54,9%	6,49%	4,76%	0,57%	0,39%	31. 88
SK	33,6%	9,72%	2,53%	0,16%	0,25%	7. 68
EU-15	44,4%	6,87%	3,52%	0,24%	1,24%	160. 65
EU-25	43,1%	6,81%	3,38%	0,24%	1,20%	136. 11

Source: Eurostat, data of 2006 or of the closest available year

Notes: HRST means human resources in science and technology (% of active population); HTI is high tech industry, HTS means high tech services (% of overall employment); GOVERD means governmental expenses for research and development; BERD means enterprises' expenses for research and development (% of expenses of GDP); Patents means the number of patents at EPO per mil. citizens.

On the other hand, the indicators of financing research and technological development indicate that the region allocates 1,12 % of GDP (2003) to research what does not reach the EU-25 average (1,86 %) at all. Despite of the above-average expenses of the governmental sector (0,56% of GDP) that finances the half of research activities of the region, the problematic field is the insufficient level of entrepreneurial sphere (0,39% of GDP) and universities (0,17 % GDP) that is significantly below the level of EU-25 average. The financial provision of innovation activities is one of the main problematic fields of the region**.** Availability of venture capital is critically low, reaching only 6 % of the EU average. Short-term development programmes

[24] European Trend Chart on Innovation, 2006. European Regional Innovation Scoreboard (2006 RIS), http://trendchart.cordis.lu/scoreboards/scoreboard2006/pdf/eis_2006_regional_innovation_scoreboard.pdf

[25] European Trend Chart on Innovation. Annual Innovation Policy Trends and Appraisal Report. Slovakia. 2006, www.trendchart.cordis.lu, p. 8

[26] APVV 2006. Slovak FP6 Info, project bulletin

of research are preferred and solved in enterprises aimed at quick return. Concept and patent researches of a long-term character are projected and financed only exceptionally[27]. Performance of the region, evaluated by the number of patents, reaches only one fifth of the EU-15 (with value of 31,88 patent per million of citizens).

It is possible to say that relatively good ranking of the Bratislava region in the European comparison is mainly thanks to inputs in the field of human resources but the financial provision and quality of outputs are the weak sides of the processes. Thus, these data indicate that there are serious barriers for melting creative capacities of human resources into the innovative outputs.

The public sector support for enterprises is still very low. In addition, the international comparisons based on surveys of innovative SMEs show that only 18 % Slovak enterprises used public support comparing to 31,2% (EU-25 average)[28]. Enterprises implement their innovation development almost exclusively from their own resources and are not subject of systematic support from the public sector. No explicit innovation policy is elaborated at the national level, though some its parts are included into the development plans. Concerning the Bratislava Region, the Innovation Strategy of the Region[29] was processed but its general acceptation and practical implementation in the region is not sufficient. The identified fields of support are development of innovation infrastructure, establishing the clusters in the selected technological sectors (e.g., car industry, ICT, new materials etc.) and establishment of the system of financing innovation activities and capital funds. This innovation strategy will be carried out within the new programming period 2007-2013 through investments directed to the research and technological development focused on innovation support by cross-connection of the science sphere with the introduction of the research-development results into the practice. For support research, development and innovation, the financial contributions will be allocated not only from the OPBR but also from the Operational Programme of Research and Development where all the Slovak regions are eligible (Objectives Convergence and RCE).

The innovation structure is not developed enough in the Bratislava Region comparing to the EU developed regions. The study undertaken by OECD[30] assessed this innovation system as very fragile**.** Only a small number of intermediary organisations (e.g., innovation centres, incubators) act in the region, even though several initiatives are there (e.g., Eurovalley, technological park Vajnory), we can state that the numbers and quality of the incubation centres, counselling centres, enterprises with venture capital, technological centres and parks are insufficient.

With respect to the absence of Regional Research and Innovation Centre[31] (hereinafter "RRIC") in the Bratislava Region, development of such Centre is supported from the OPR&D within the integrated project for developing 7+1 of the RDIC (Regional Development and Innovation Centres) in the whole Slovak territory.

The Bratislava Region can make profit from several international initiatives that can deliver its involvement into the international innovation networks within the EU framework programme. Developing the CENTROPE region is the perspective initiative in this field too where considering the recent support the regional governments, common activities can be expected

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[27] Mrázová, M. 2003. IPR protection of intellectual property rights in BIC Group Holding Output of the 2nd stage of programme

Prognosis of development and use of science and technology by 2015

[28] Arundel, A. 2004. Trend Chart Statistical Papers Series. European Trend Chart on Innovation.

[29] BIC Bratislava, 2004. Regional Innovation Strategy of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region

[30] OECD, 2003, Territorial review on metropolitan region Vienna - Bratislava, www.oecd.org

[31] RVIC is the competence centre of applied research development, brokers centre for transfer of technologies and knowledge, support of partnership of the universities, R & D organisations with the entrepreneurial sector, as well as development of instruments on innovation policy (e.g., innovation centres, technological platforms, information centres)

also in the field of support business and innovations, predominantly in cooperation with the Vienna region. This region is considered as the possible centre of influx of investments in the field of higher technologies.

Summary:

- Accessibility and diversity of research-science workplaces in the region,
- Broad availability of educational capacities in the region (universities and advanced studies),
- Low innovation activity of commercial companies,
- Insufficient volume of finances for science, research and innovation,
- Weak actual support innovations by public sector,
- Insufficient level of expenses for innovation in business sector,
- Insufficient protection of intellectual property (low number of patent applications),
- Low innovative awareness of the enterprises,
- Relatively not strong links between the actors of innovation system, low transfer of knowledge from public research into practice, undeveloped innovation infrastructure.

3.4.3. Informatisation of society

Despite progress reported in the last years, the Slovak Republic belongs further in the field of informatisation of society among the lagging behind EU countries. The Bratislava Region that with respect of the status of Bratislava as the social, economic and administrative centre exceeds naturally by its level of informatisation the other regions of Slovakia, however in comparison to the leading regions and the countries[32] of the European Union reports shortcomings on the side of offer as well as on the side of demand.

One among the significant obstacles of more intense utilisation of information and communication technologies is their accessibility (from the point of view of price and physical availability). In 2004, less than half of households had a personal computer (45,7 %) in the Bratislava Region. The level of households' connections to the Internet network in the same year reached approximately the half level of the EU-25 average (42 %). In 2006, the level of connections reached about 31,7 % of households. This value represents almost the double rate of the household connections in the whole SR (14,4%, Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications of the SR, 2006).

The total national average of connection to the 4-band internet per 100 citizens is five times lower than the EU-15 average (16,5). Another factor limiting the utilisation of internet by citizens for a more frequent communication and dealing their matters with public institutions is the basic ICT skills of the citizens (we are lagging behind the best ranking countries in this indicator). Including the basic ICT skills development into the elementary and secondary school curricula together with supporting the improvement of these skills of workers through the whole life programmes can contribute to the positive change in this field.

[32] As far as to the field of informatisation of society, data are available prevailing for individual countries, not for regions.

Based on the available data from the Slovak Republic it is possible to say that penetration of the internet in enterprises[33] in the Bratislava Region exceeds the average of the European Union (15) reaching significantly above 90 % of it. The issue of using ICT becomes one among the decisive factors for competitiveness of enterprises in the time of globalisation of economy and international competition. There are still distinct reserves in this field, except for several selected segments (e.g., banking sector), predominantly regarding the technological level, quality of processes in enterprises and all the levels and their closer interconnection to ICT. The extremely low share of revenues from e-commerce and e-business of the overall enterprises' revenues is typical for enterprises with more than 10 employees (0,02 %). Equally, share of enterprises (with more than 10 employees) purchasing and selling via the internet is several times lower comparing to the EU-15 average, mainly purchasing enterprises. Taking account also this fact, share of value added from the information and communication technologies out of the value added created in the business in total, does not even reach a two-third level of the EU average.

Based on the results of analysis "Provision of Information and Communication Infrastructure for Development of the Information Society Services" the territories have been identified in the Bratislava Region which are not sufficiently covered by transmission capacity, neither from the view of the current needs nor the future needs. It is apparent mainly at the level that ensures the final sections of connection of end user to the network, i.e. solution of the final mile. The uncovered are the areas with the low density of population and concentration of industry, thus the areas which will not make profit for the commercial connectivity providers or with respect to the long-term of investments return there are non-attractive in terms of economy. In the less attractive territories of the region, all the technical solutions on individual levels of the information and communication infrastructure are the compromise between solution quality and costs for this solution.

It implies from an audit conducted by ISVS[34] that the level of provided e-services of public administration is characteristic by the prevailing share of informative services[35] (69 % of Central Authorities of State Administration) that are ensured predominantly by the internet pages of individual organisations of public administration. Every institution of public administration has its own page providing the public with its basic information on the provided services, working hours and so on. The higher level of electronisation characterised by available communication and transaction functions[36] of the provided services, thus services with the higher value added are missing in the prevailing majority of entire public administration. Only 8 % of the provided e-services has the communication function (interactive) and only 23% the transaction function (complete management of the reguired service). According to given specified levels of providing basic services of e-government for citizens and entrepreneurs, it implies that among the 20 basic services, 5 services are fully digitalised and are provided directly on the internet, 2 of them are in the stage of working out and other 14 ones are not yet sufficiently prepared for direct providing of services on the internet.

With respect to the current conditions of technological amenities and electronisation of public administration at the regional and local levels, it is necessary to state that the situation is not satisfactory. About 12 % of municipalities of the Bratislava Region have only one PC, 30 %

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[33] Enterprises with 10-49 employees

[34] Conducted in the period from 19 August to 2004 to 31 December 2004 and 30 April 2005, source: MTPT SR

[35] Visitors on Internet pages have available structured information, e.g., on provided services, contacts, descriptions of procedures with administrative acts, organisational structure a competences of the organisation of service provider, laws, etc. Information services provided by public administration does not enable to communicate actively between the office and the citizen or entrepreneur and do not enable to implement, nor commence an administrative act/job connected to providing public service.

[36] These functions enable to the user to conduct completely the whole administrative process and communication with public administration in electronic way equally to the hard copy way. Transaction services are considered as target function of e-Government services.

of municipalities have maximally 3 PCs and 23 % of municipalities have more than 5 PCs. From the overall number, more than one half of PCs are older than 4 years with the significant share of today obsolete OS Windows 95 (circa 40 % of public administration offices), 44 % of offices use their local networks (LAN). Related to the Bratislava Region, only approximately 4 % of the local self-government offices have established a self-government information system with the central register of the citizens, 3 % of the offices have their self-government information systems, using web technologies and are technologically prepared for compilation of outputs from the systems on the internet, however almost 68 % of offices need to transform their self-government information systems. As far as connectivity to the internet network on the level of local self-government of the Bratislava Region, the favourable situation is much better. About 85 % of the local self-government offices have connections to the internet and 10 % of offices use other connections than ISDN/Dial-up.
Almost three quarters of the employees of the local administration need to be PC-skilled to conduct their jobs, on the other hand, almost 10 % of the employees cannot actively work with PC and almost 30 % of them cannot work with the internet and the so-called office-packages at all. It is required to ensure training for the needs of advancing the quality of human resources of self-government personnel aimed at PC skills, new procedures in agendas, administration of web pages and other training in the field of PC work. According to a survey, only slightly more than 10 % of municipalities publish basic information on their web pages and only approximately 3 % of municipalities use the information kiosks for this purpose to the limited extent. Development and use of information technologies issues from the local self-governments´ interest itself, too. At present, approximately 70 % of self-governments of the Bratislava Region plan to provide information and services for their needs of tourism through the information centres, 60 % of municipalities would extend use of information centres for other purposes as well.

In addition, the Geo-Portal of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region should become an asset in the field of informatisation of self-government in this region, respecting basic principles of informatisation of public administration in the SR. The main goal is to increase the quality and extension of provided services and increasing effectiveness of the public administration processes. Through the Geo-Portal of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, there are established conditions for better communication of public administration between the regional and local levels and the public in the internet network via integrated and security systems. The given Geo-Portal represents a functional whole, ensuring the meaningful and systematic information activity through the technical and programme tools. Other initiatives of the Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region and the local self-governments link up to this project as well (e.g., Information system of the local self-government of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region). This fact should deliver positive changes in activity of local self-government and predominantly through changes in data exchange among the offices as well as between the offices and their partners. The change involves the time aspect, quality and quantity of provided information.

Despite the fact, that the memory and data-storing institutions represent the significant resource of quality digital contents that can significantly contribute to intensifying the dynamics of the entire knowledge industry development and development of e-government at the national and regional levels, the level of availability and marketing of quality digital contents in the memory and data-storing institutions (i.e., libraries, archives, museums and galleries and other specialised institutions) is very small. Therefore it is required to reach the high rate of interconnection and accessing of data and information (in physical or computerised forms), long-term and safe data storing on diversified data holders and to support application up to the maximum in the fields of research, development, innovation, local and regional development and in the field of strategic planning.

Currently, informatisation of society is the most dynamically developing field of the economy of the BSR. This is proved not only by dramatic growth of penetration of the internet,

digitalisation and spreading of telecommunication and a multi-medial services but also by the growth of concentration of ICT companies of the world and national significance in the BSR.

The Operational Programme Informatisation of Society contains a more detailed analysis in the field of informatisation of society in the Bratislava Region in its analysis of the current situation in the field of informatisation of society.

Summary:

- Insufficient quality and extent of e-services and their contents at the regional and local levels (business to public)
- Insufficient electronisation of services of public administration for SME at the local level (government to public)
- Low number of connections to the internet (predominantly broadband internet) in the rural areas of the BSR
- Insufficient average level of ICT basic skills
- Presence of ICT firms of the international and national significance in the BSR.

3.5. Results of the implementation of the programming period 2004-2006

The OPBR for the programming period 2007-2013 links up in the extended scope to the Single Programming Document NUTS 2 Bratislava Objective 2 (hereinafter "SPD2"), implemented in the shortened programming period 2004-2006. The Managing Authority for the JPD2 as well as for the OPBR is the MCRD SR.

The areas of the Districts Senec, Pezinok, Malacky and the 5 urban districts of the Slovak capital of Bratislava: Záhorská Bystrica, Vajnory, Jarovce, Rusovce, Čunovo belonged among the territories of the Bratislava Region eligible for receipt of assistance from the European Regional Development Fund within the Objective 2 in the shorten programming period 2004-2006. One priority for the JPD2 was set out as follows: Support the economic activity and SD of the target territory. This priority issued from the need to restructure the economic base of the target territory that has passed through rapid structural changes in the secondary, tertiary and quaternary spheres, aiming thus at development of business in the entire target territory, increase of the quality and culture of life of its citizens, maintaining its historic landscape structures, development of rural settlements and use of values and resources of the country to create new jobs. For the purposes of the general priority implementation, five measures including the groups of activities and specific goals were formulated.

All the measures implemented through the centralised way, i.e., the MCRD SR had no IBMA. Cooperation with the BSR in the process of receiving the applications is carried out so that among the attachments to the applications for providing grant, the MA for the OPBR required an enclosure titled "Position of the BSR to the proposed project is not in conflict to the Territorial Planning Scheme of the BSR and is in accordance to the BSR Development Strategy". Thank to this compulsory attachment to every application for grant the Authority of the BSR declared that the project submitted within the given calls for proposals are in accordance with the strategic documents of the BSR. In addition, the representative of the Authority of the BSR was the regular member of the selection commission for SPF2 projects, except for the cases when the selection commission made decisions on the projects of the BSR. In such cases, this

representative was replaced by a representative of the STMA. The representative of the BSR was also the member of the Monitoring Committee for the SPD2 in the process of monitoring, since May 2007 acting as vice-chairperson. Besides this, the BSR and the Regional Development Agencies Malacky and Senec - Pezinok acted as the first contact centres for the SPD2 programme.

Staff of 35 various units employees participated in the implementation of the SPD2 within the MCRD SR which provided the following implementation procedures:

- programming and management of the SPD2
- preparation and announcing calls
- receipt and registration of applications for grant
- appraisal, selection and approval of applications for grant
- financing of projects and playing the roles of paying unit
- control and monitoring at the level of projects, measures and programme
- publicity and information

Based on the executed internal as well as external audits in relation to the MCRD SR, it was stated that the system of implementation procedures in relation to the SPD2 is functioning and effectively established. The persisting negative phenomenon apparent since 2006, is the under-dimensioning and administrative burdening of personnel capacities. With respect to the experience of the MA for the SPD2 it is obvious that the management and implementation of the OPBR requires to simplify implementation procedures and concurrently to increase administrative capacities.

In the course of the implementation of the programme, the MA for the SPD2 announced ongoing calls for submitting projects. In the period from 1 May 2004 till 31 May 2007, the MA for the SPD2 announced seven calls for proposals for all the measures of the SPD2. The first three calls were announced for all the measures of the SPD2, the remaining calls announced by the MA for the SPD2 depending on actual state of the programme[37]. The MA for the SPD2 organised to the particular call the targeted workshops aimed at informing the applicants with the conditions of the given call, the most frequent errors in submitting applications, as well as showing the best examples from practice. Moreover, in the time of the call, the MA for the SPD2 organised the information days for the applicants twice per week.
Financial allocation for SPD2 for the whole programming period 2004-2006 was SKK 1 412 392 284 (EUR 37 168 218) from the ERDF.

Table 16 Evaluation of the number of submitted and financed projects (by 31 May 2007)

MEASURE		NUMBER OF ANNOUNCED CALLS	NUMBER OF SUBMITTED APPLICANTS FOR GRANT	NUMBER OF APPROVED APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT
1.1	Development of SME	5	103	60
1.2	Support the common services for entrepreneurs	4	6	4
1.3	Development of entrepreneurial activities and services in the field of tourism and recreation	5	82	32
1.4	Support the common services in the field of tourism and recreation	4	66	36
1.5	Renovation and development of municipalities and cultural heritage	5	238	95

[37] Based on the results of the sixth call, the MA for the SPD2 announced the eighth call on 18 June 2007 for the Measures 1.1 and 1.3.

TOTAL	495	227

Notes: Number of the announced calls; Table does not contain data of the 8th call announced on 18 June 2007
Number of the submitted applications; data are from the calls no. 1 to 7.
Number of the approved applications; data are from the 1st to 6th calls, at present there is the appraisal process of applications

Source: MCRD SR, 2007

Concluding contracts as of 31 May 2007 (in EUR, number of projects)

Table 17 Evaluation of the up-to-date demand and absorption capacity according to the Measures as of 31 May 2007 (total eligible expenditures)

MEASURE		ALLOCATION 2004-2006 (EUR)*	DEMAND %	CONTRACT COVERAGE %	WITHDRAWAL %
1. 1	Development of SME	29 584 228	135,48	34,85	18,01
1. 2	Support the common services for entrepreneurs	7 836 076	165,51	80,61	19,97
1. 3	Development of entrepreneurial activities and services in the field of tourism and recreation	22 929 329	239,73	66,59	19,44
1. 4	Support the common services in the field of tourism and recreation	14 435 704	236,71	97,55	21,55
1. 5	Renovation and development of municipalities and cultural heritage	35 205 564	227,44	87,50	35,70

Source: MCRD SR, 2007

Notes: * SPD NUTS 2 Bratislava Objective 2 for the period 2004-2006 (version 6.0, May 2007)

- Demand for Measures is expressed as the rate of value of submitted applications for grant to the total allocation for Measure (i.e., in total ERDF, SB and rate of co-financing)
- Absorption capacity according to Measure is expressed as:
  - State of concluding the contracts, calculated as the rate of value of concluded contracts on providing grant to the entire allocation for Measure. Table does not give data for the 6th and 7th calls and non-concluded contracts from the preceding calls.
  - State of withdrawal of financial resources for Measure, expressed as the rate of the allocated financial resources to the total allocation for Measure.

It implies from the above mentioned data that the additional resources from the ERDF and the State Budget of the SR represent in the SR conditions the significant instrument for reduction the impacts of the long-term investment in the concerned under-dimensioning fields of public administration and for SME development in the region. The serious problem in implementing the SPD2 is concluding contracts covering measures for the private sector (1.1 and 1.3) and the status of withdrawal. It is possible to state within the on-going evaluation of the SPD2, that with respect to the application of the rule n+2, the rate of withdrawal of finances in May 2007 was about 27,76 % from all the allocated finances determined for the whole programming period 2004-2006. With respect to this fact, it is possible to consider the tempo of withdrawal as insufficient. This statement is also supported by the fact that within the SPD2 the conditions for compliance with the rule n+2 for the year of 2004 are not fulfilled.

3.5.1. Measure 1.1 Development of SME

The objective of this measure was to establish the stabile and diversified entrepreneurship environment, to create long-term sustainable jobs in the secondary sector, growth of the export performance and competitiveness of the SMEs. The measure was focused on support the private sector through the Scheme of SME SPD2 (State Aid Scheme, SAS) and the Scheme of support small and mid-sized entrepreneurs SPD2 (Scheme of aid *de minimis*).

The experience from the projects implementation shows an increasing interest of SMEs in support from the ERDF. The financial volume of received applications exceeded the options of measure 1.1 however the rate of success of projects of this measure is low. Many submitted projects did not meet the conditions for approval (e.g., non-authorized applicant or place of the project implementation, not delivered compulsory attachments to the projects, not clear ownership structure, incorrect procedures with public procurement, etc.). The MA for the SPD2 asks in the process of the projects appraisal for submitting all missing compulsory attachments to projects. The result of the appraisal process is the low number and financial volume of the approved projects (share of the total amount of the approved projects to the submitted ones is 55,80 %). The submitted and the approved projects show the interest by the SME in assistance

from the EU Structural Funds in the field of investments into expansion of existing enterprises or introduction of the activities focused on essential changes in a product or production processes in existing enterprises, renting the premises in the entrepreneurial incubator and studies and projects documentation linked to the activities of measure 1.1. The very low interest of the applicants was for the first participation of entrepreneurs at fairs and exhibitions, in the first participation in business missions abroad and counselling and consultation services provided by external counsellor and consultants.

3.5.2. Measure 1.2 Support the common services for entrepreneurs

The objective of this measure was to initiate suitable conditions for development of small and medium-sized enterprises through increasing attractiveness in the field of activities using modernisation and optimising the quality of the infrastructure and facilities and their adaptation to the technical development. Measure was focused on supporting the public sector.

The experience from the projects implementation shows the ongoing low interest in support from the ERDF. From the four announced calls for measure, projects were submitted only within three calls for proposals. In the fourth call for proposals, no project had been submitted (percentage rate of amount of the approved projects to the submitted ones is 49,09 %). The problems has been identified in non-solved ownership relationships to plots of land and demanding investments for reconstruction of industrial zones exceeding financial options of the municipalities.

The approved projects are concentrated at support building up and development of entrepreneurial incubators, support the infrastructure development for industrial zone and support of using IT and services. All the projects are implemented in the district Malacky.

3.5.3. Measure 1.3 Development of entrepreneurial activities and services in the field of tourism and recreation

The goal of the Measure was to use more effectively the recreation potential of area for development of tourism and recreation and increasing its competitiveness. The tourism sector, predominantly in the suburb environment of agglomeration settlement of Bratislava should participate more significantly in the growth of GDP as well as in the overall employment of the all region. The effort was to achieve the level of quantity and quality of services in the field of tourism and recreation comparable with the provided tourism services in the supported regions of the EU Member States.

The Measure aimed at support the private sector through the Scheme of support tourism SPD2 (Scheme of state aid) and Scheme of support small and medium-sized entrepreneurs SPD2 (Scheme of aid *de minimis*).

The experience from the implementation of project shows the growing interest of the SMEs in support from the ERDF. The financial volume of submitted applications exceeded the options of Measure 1.3, however the success rate or projects is low. The reasons for not approving submitted projects are the same as Measure 1.1. The result is the low number and financial volume of the approved projects (percentage rate of amount of approved to submitted projects is 36,40 %). The approved projects are mainly in the field of investments into development or reconstruction and modernisation of the existing accommodation facilities and facilities providing additional services for tourism in places of tourism development and studies and project documentation linked to the activities of Measure 1.3. The very small interest of applicants was in the first participation of the entrepreneurs at exhibitions and fairs, the first participation in business missions abroad and counselling and consultation services provided by external counsellors and consultants.

3.5.4. Measure 1.4 Support the common services in the field of tourism and recreation

The objective of this measure was to integrate the tourism development into the perspective of the SD which should be an integral part of the territorial planning and the regional development. On the first hand through valorisation of the different areas´ attractiveness character and making use of their tourism image for the purposes of supporting the other activities, on the second hand to contributing to the support the natural and cultural heritage quality.

The experience from the projects implementation shows the increasing interest of the SME in support from the ERDF. Financial volume of the submitted applications exceeded options of measure 1.4. The reasons of the non-approval of the submitted projects are the same like in the measure 1.1. The reallocation of the financial resources from the Measure 1.3 to the measure 1.4 enabled to withdraw the higher amount for measure 1.4 what reflected positively in concluding contracts of this measure, reaching rate 97,55 % as of 31 May 2007. Within this measure, interest of the municipalities and towns was mainly in support improving the environment, development of technical infrastructure, development of local bike routes, establishment of tourist information offices and support tourism, cultural and sport activities as well as recreation in the region.

3.5.5. Measure 1.5 Renovation and development of the municipalities and cultural heritage

The objective of this measure was to stimulate economic and social growth of rural areas aimed at achieving suitable living conditions and improvement of the environment. Support was focused on the development of the historic and specific character of country, preservation of traditional crafts, folk art products with perspective of overall economic and social development. The measure was directed to the support the economic and social renovation of the self-governing region, municipalities and urban sections and support preservation of their natural and cultural heritage.

The experience from the projects implementation shows the highest interest in the ERDF within the SPD2 whole programme. Financial volume of submitted applications exceeded highly the options of the measure. The approved projects aimed mainly at support the elaboration of economic and social development programmes, territorial planning schemes, projects documentation related to the public areas renovation, reconstruction and development of the new cultural facilities and arrangement of their surroundings, reconstruction and modernisation of buildings of historical, cultural and national significance and arrangement of their surroundings, arrangement of public concourses and facades of buildings at public concourses, support access to IT and extension of services in this field. The low interest was significant in support development and reconstruction of craft yards and employment and support renovation of cultural traditions and habits.

The high interest of towns and municipalities in submitting projects within this measure also proves that the financial assistance was provided until now for establishing or updating 15 territorial planning scheme, 12 economic and social development plans and 40 projects for arrangement of public concourses. In the course of duration of the 7th call for proposals of the SPD2, additional 79 projects were submitted out of which 14 applications were focused for elaboration or updating territorial planning scheme of municipalities or towns, 30 economic and social development plans and 35 projects of arrangement of public concourses. From the entire number 7 towns and 64 municipalities, 7 towns (including 5 urban districts

of Bratislava) and 63 municipalities applied for contribution from the ERDF for all the activities of measure 1.5., including the 7th call for proposal.

3.5.6. Measure Technical assistance

The objective of this measure was support the SPD2 implementation. The measure was focused on support effective management of implementation the Single Programming Document, its promotion and effective monitoring and evaluation of measure and other selected projects. Technical assistance was used for all the expenditures concerning the financing of costs related to the preparation, selection, evaluation, monitoring and control of the programme and projects.

As of 31 May 2007, 14 projects were supported from the measure TA,. Except for the projects for refunding salaries of the personnel participating in management, implementation, monitoring and control of the SF and support procedures in withdrawal of grants also Communication activities of the SPD2 providing information on the implementation about the SPD2, processing of the OPBR and its ex ante evaluation and evaluation of the JPD2 programme for the programming period 2004-2006 are included into the financed activities that is used for the preparation of the new programming period and for the needs of the European Commission.

3.5.7. Evaluation of the achieved effectiveness and efficiency of the implemented projects

In the framework of the particular the SPD2 measures in the programming period 2004-2006 the Managing Authority monitored three levels of indicators, specifically the indicators of output, result and impact. Values of the output indicators at the level of the particular projects are examined based on the monitoring reports submitted quarterly to the Managing Authority by beneficiaries The indicators of result and impact are obtained from the final monitoring reports, the reports on the impact of project and even within 5 years after the termination of the particular project from questionnaires on status of the project after its termination. The current stage of implementation does not enable to fulfil the result and impact indicators. These indicators will be possible to evaluate only after the termination of the projects implementation.

Table 18 Status of fulfilment of the indicators as of 31 May 2007

Level	Indicator type	No acc. PC	Name of indicator	Unit	Basic data (2002)	Prognosis /Target data	Source of data	Achieved values
Higher than SPD	Context	1	Rate of employment of men in % (15-64, 2Q 2003 of LFSS)	%	73,8	N/A	SO SR	75,20
		2	Rate of employment of women in % (15-64, 2Q 2003 of LFSS)	%	63,8	N/A	SO SR	65,20
		3	Average nominal salary in SKK (SO, 1Q 2003)	SKK	17 089	N/A	SO SR	26 509
		4	GDP per capita in the region in EUR (2000)	EUR	8 561	N/A	SO SR	14 342
		5	Rate of unemployment in % (SO select. data of reg. 2Q 2003)	%	6,7	N/A	SO SR	2,13
Priority 1	Impact	6	Newly established jobs	number	0	350	ITMS	69
		7	Average record number of employees	number	100 864	102 861	SO SR	383 723
	Result	8	Change in productivity of work measured by revenues (%)	%	100	115	SO SR	0,05
		9	Increase of number of visitors in accommodation facilities	Number	252 198	277 418	SO SR	53 766
	Output	10	Number of supported entrepreneurial entities / women	Number	0	130 / 45	ITMS	9 / 2

			owners					
		11	Number of supported entities of public sector	Number	0	35	ITMS	17
Measure 1. 1.	Result	12	New/increased revenues of SMEs	mil. SKK	0	375	ITMS	99,85
	Output	13	Number of supported SME projects	Number	0	75	ITMS	9
Measure 1. 2.	Result	14	Number of SMEs, including self-employed persons using common services for entrepreneurs	Number	0	20	ITMS	0
	Output	15	Size of investment prepared areas / developed (renovated) floor area	ha / m^2	0	20 / 7500	ITMS	0 / 0
Measure 1. 3.	Result	16	Increase of capacity of accommodation facilities	%	100	115	SO SR, ITMS	118,99; 100
	Output	17	Number of supported projects in the field of development of tourism and recreation	Number	0	60	ITMS	1
Measure 1. 4.	Result	18	Number of SMEs, including self-employed persons using common services for entrepreneurs in tourism	Number	0	50	ITMS	12
	Output	19	Number of supported projects related to infrastructure of tourism and recreation facilities	Number	0	25	ITMS	4
Measure 1. 5.	Result	20	Number of people living in renovated rural areas	Number	0	100 000	ITMS	40 402
Level	**Indicator type**	**No acc. PC**	**Name of indicator**	**Unit**	**Basic data (2002)**	**Prognosis /Target data**	**Source of data**	**Achieved values**
	output	21	Number of renovated / reconstructed buildings	number	0	70	ITMS	12
Horizontal priority: *Equality of opportunities*	impact	22	Share of women of the number of established or sustainable jobs as consequence of implementation of SPD	%			ITMS	32
	result	23	Increase of percentage share of women entrepreneurs	%			SO SR	2
Horizontal priority: *Sustainable development*	impact	24	Number of established or sustainable jobs as consequence of implementation of SPD	number			ITMS	101
	result	25	Number of enterprises incorporating environmental programmes	Number			ITMS	1
Horizontal priority: *Effect on development of information society*	impact	26	Number of users of PC and Internet as consequence of the project implementation	number			ITMS	5 044
	result	27	Number of supported projects that have effects on development of information society	Number			ITMS	9

Note.: Data are for the terminated projects. Indicators 1 and 2 give data for 1Q 2007; indicators 3, 5 and 7 give data for the Bratislava Region for 1Q 2007; indicator 4 gives data for 2004; indicator 23 gives number of supported projects where owners are women

3.5.8. Positive examples from the shortened programming period

The large part of the projects within the SPD2 could not be supported with respect to the status of their processing. Many plans of SMEs and self-governments were re-elaborated to obtain support from the SF and prepared for appraisal in following calls for proposals.

The shortened programming period 2004-2006 enabled the MCRD SR as the Managing Authority for the SPD2 to establish implementation and control structures which function has been continuosly modified based on the findings and recommendations of internal and external mechanisms of audit and control. The functional and verified system of implementation of the SPD2 creates, after simplification and advancing effectiveness

of certain processes, a basis for setting up the implementation and control procedures for the OPBR in the programming period 2007-2013.

3.5.9. Lessons learned for the programming period 2007-2013

Despite of its additional character, the SF interventions are perceived in the BSR by many self-governments as one and only alternative for implementation of their investment plans. The high demand for supported types of operations on the one hand and the limited character of the resources from the SF on the other hand establish the need to define precisely the strategy of the operational programme. Therefore the strategy of the OPBR for the programming period 2007-2013 should precisely define a territory and thematic concentration of support in such way that the potential beneficiaries are able to judge, based on the clear information, whether their project plan is relevant for the strategy of the OPBR.

In relation to the need of processing of a huge number of applications for grant, it is required to establish an implementation environment, where IT are applied and used to the maximum possible extent. Improvements in this field contribute significantly to the boosting of transparency and mainly objectiveness of processes. This involves mainly the provision of smooth and ongoing processes of receipt and registration of applications for grant, partially also in computerised form.

In the shortened programming period 2004-2006, the appraisal process of projects within the SPD2 was demanding in terms of times and administration what related with the multi-level control mechanisms set due to insufficient experience in the SF interventions field. The stated of OPBR implementation system in the programming period 2007-2013 anticipates objective assessment of documentation of applications in the first phases of assessment through a set of measurable quantifiable yes-or-no criteria for every thematic field of support.

Decisions on approval of projects are adopted in the final stage by collective bodies (selection commissions). Activity of the selection commissions in the programming period 2004-2006 was based on assessment of project objectives which according to the previous appraisal were qualified for the selection process. At the beginning, the selection commissions adopted decisions based on consensus of all their members what resulted into decreasing action-ability of the selection commissions. Later, in decision making process of the selection commission, the more productive voting system was applied in case if some of the members did not agree with the recommendations of the MA for the OPBR or of the selection commission. In the programming period 2007-2013 it is required to set up functional mechanisms of taking decisions while composition of the selection commission represents in terms of the principle of partnership the national, regional and local levels, NGO sector, the level of horizontal priorities, etc.

Based on the experience from the previous programming period, the ITMS appears to be the most simple and the least demanding way in terms of administration to keep documentation, monitoring the programme and the achieved progress information. The modified ITMS based on the experience from the previous programming period represents the significant source of information for the process of monitoring and evaluation of the programme. Based on the experience from the shortened programming period 2004-2006 and recommendations from the conducted audits, the MA for the OPBR adopted a series of technical measures to simplify and shorten the processes of receipt, registration, evaluation and approval of projects, concluding contract on them, control and monitoring. The administrative and time demands for the implementation processes represented in the previous period was reported as the largest shortcoming and their reduction is the biggest challenge for the OPBR.

Coordination of the management and implementation processes required, for the purposes of obtaining the adequate efficiency of the processes, the change in the organisational structure

of the MCRD SR. At present, the set of the system enables more effective exchange of information among beneficiaries, Managing Authority, paying unit, control units and entities in relation to making payments, notification of discrepancies, etc. This system can be applied without any significant difficulties also to the IBMA for the OPBR.

The experience from 2004-2006 proved that ongoing and frequently updated informing of the public through the updated information on the achieved progress in the implementation is the key factor for the transparent implementation of the operational programme. The most common and the most wanted way of acquiring information is to publish it on the internet pages of managing authorities and on the joint information portal for all the operational programmes.

Conferences and workshops organised within the CAP SPD2 became very productive methods for informing the public where the direct contact with the beneficiaries of assistance is realised and useable information are presented to the all participants. It is required for the purposes of making the OPBR implementation more effective, to continue also in organising information days for the applicants with the goal of consultations on the project plans so that we will avoid non-effective submission of large numbers of non-supportable projects what will reduce concurrently the administrative demand of implementation.

The implementation procedures for the OPBR in the programming period 2007-2013 are included in the internal procedure manuals of the involved entities.

3.6. SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• The Bratislava agglomeration - core of settlement of the national and cross-border significance • High level of urbanisation of the region. Strong links among the centre, Bratislava and its suburb background • Dynamic growth of the market and the good accessibility of new markets • High rate of economic activity of the inhabitants • High development potential of towns and municipalities • Concentration of educated labour force • Broad accessibility of educational capacities in the region • Accessibility of the region using all the types of transport • Crossing of inter-modal transport corridors of road and railway transportation • Inter-modal transport system • Accessibility and diversity of the educational capacities in the region • Qualified labour force capable to adapt for coping with new production and environmental technologies • Concentration of ICT firms of the international and national significance in the BSR	• High energetic demand of housing in panel houses • Negative trend of population demography • Concentration of social-pathologic phenomena into the specific zones in Bratislava • Insufficient use of the potential of reservation localities, including the NATURA 2000 localities, for support leisure time activities and tourism • Unsatisfactory state of public greenery and public concourses • Limited transit permeability in the node points, predominantly in the area of Bratislava • Non-completed integrated public transport system in the region • Insufficient interconnection of the educational system to the requirements of labour market • Low innovation activity of enterprises and undeveloped innovation infrastructure • Low actual support innovations by the public sector • Insufficient protection of intellectual property (low number of patent applications) • Insufficient quality and extent of e-services and their contents at the regional and local levels (business to public) • Insufficient electronisation of public administration services for SME at the regional

• Willingness of creative population to use ICT in the activities with the high rate of value added (science, art, high-tech, etc.)	level (government to public) • Low number of connections to the internet (mainly broadband) internet in the rural areas of the BSR

Opportunities	**Threats**
• Growth of the region attractiveness for the inhabitants, visitors and investors through regeneration of public concourses • Reduction of growth of individual automobile transport and its negative impacts through the integrated transport system • Introduction of new technologies reducing the negative effects on the environment • Reinforcing of cross-border links of the Bratislava agglomeration • Interconnection of the science-research workplaces with the commercial subjects • Support research and innovation centres • Reinforcing of creativity and innovation in the field of SME • Influx of outside-regional (foreign) investments in the field of high tech sector • Multiplication effect of informatisation of public administration on functioning of SME • Valorisation of dynamically growing potential of the ICT firms in the BSR	• The strengthening negative phenomena in the urban areas with the high concentration of the population • Growing the threat of the risk groups to become socially excluded • Worsening the environment status due to increasing economic activity with the low rate of value added in the region • Permanent depreciation of greenery and lack of relax zones and the elements increasing attractiveness of settlements • Weakening of intra-regional links of the Bratislava agglomeration due to traffic congestions • Further increase of passenger transport and its negative effect on the quality of life and the environment • Threat of non-sustainability of the high economic growth in the region • Insufficient support innovation by the state • Losing of competitiveness as the consequence of lagging behind in the field of research, development and innovation • Brain -draining of ICT experts abroad

3.7. Main development disparities and factors

Disparities	Development factors
1. Low quality of public areas of settlements	a Support establishing and implementation of plans for complex regeneration of settlements resulting in increasing the region attractiveness (1)
2. Insufficient support for ensuring care of the protection of the reservation areas including NATURA 2000 localities	b. Support the activities focused on the better use of the reservation areas potential
3. Significant increase of road transportation and its negative impact on the environment, quality and availability of the population for job and services	c. Preference of ecologically non-demanding transport (rail transport) at the controlled crossroads (3, 4)
4. Uncompleted integrated passenger public transport system	d. Significant boosting and support completion of the regional system of the integrated public transport in Bratislava (3, 4)
5. Insufficiently developed innovation system	e. Improvement of the innovative infrastructure and services for SME in the region (5, 6)
6. Insufficiently used innovative potential	f. Increasing of innovative dynamics of the region through strengthening mutual links and cooperation among individual players (5, 6)
7. Low level of use of ICT	g. Support informatisation of society as the most important part of knowledge-based economy (7)
8. Insufficient quality and extent of e-services provided by SMEs at the regional and local levels (business to public)	h. Support connecting SME to the broadband internet, including support the activities concentrated on creation of the digital contents (e.g., designing web-pages t, e-business, etc.) (8)

4. STRATEGY OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

4.1. Starting points of the strategy of the operational programme

The Bratislava Region is the most important settlement grouping in Slovakia from the qualitative and quantitative point of view and has all the pre-conditions for successful coping with the challenges of globalisation that brings with itself the increased international competition linked to the high dynamics of changes in markets, quick increase of technological level, informatisation and internationalisation of economic activities in the field of production and services. On the other hand we must keep in mind maintaining the SD of the territory implemented either through improving of attractiveness of the settlements, i.e. mainly their public areas, accessibility to the centre and increased protection of the cultural and historical heritage and natural wealth of the Bratislava Region.

The Bratislava Region, namely the Bratislava - Trnava core of settlement of Slovakia and its centre Bratislava concentrate the decisive scientific, research, financial and educational institutions of Slovakia. The economic and social potential of the Bratislava Region and particularly its relationships with the neighbouring developed settlement agglomerations (the Vienna agglomeration and economically developed regions of the north-west Hungary), together with the location of Bratislava at the crossroad of corridors of European significance appoint to Bratislava the function as a "Gate of Slovakia" into the European Union. Evidence of this fact is also support activities in the Bratislava Region from other instruments of the NSRF.

In accordance with the Lisbon Strategy supported by Cohesion Policy, the Bratislava Region offers to the Slovak regions specific services in the field of increasing competitiveness. Resources allocated for the implementation of Cohesion Policy (i.e., the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund) in the programming period 2007-2013 are in accordance with the Lisbon agenda focused more on the fields with the higher value added, like Research and Development, innovations, human resources that are concentrated significantly in the Bratislava - Trnava agglomeration and extends gradually with the developments of the transport and communication infrastructures from the Bratislava Region area also to the areas of the Trnava, Nitra and Trenčín Regions.

In implementation of the strategy, emphasis is simultaneously put on respecting the principles of SD and support synergies among the economic, social and environmental dimensions. The Bratislava Region passes through dynamic development on the one hand in comparison to other regions in Slovakia as well as on the other hand in comparison with the neighbouring states. Within this development, suburbanisation processes are taken place, in the framework of which migration of the population from centres to the surrounding municipalities is increasing and the commutation of the originally rural population for the job to settlement centres mainly centres of Bratislava becomes more intensive. This fact issues in reconstruction of the original housing stock of rural settlements, as well as in the new constructions activities, together with taking off the quality agricultural and forestry territories in the surroundings of centres of settlement. Concurrently, the increased commutation for the jobs to the settlements centres is causing the traffic jams that are still boosted by the significant growth of the individual automobile transport instead of using the public railway and bus transportation.

This situation is a typical negative accompanying feature of globalisation and urbanisation processes requiring the expeditious reconstruction of the original rural settlements into suburb

green settlements as well as improvement of transport infrastructure of the local and regional importance with support development of the public transport system.

With respect to the high level of economic openness, the Bratislava Region must seek for effective strategies to maintain long-term economic growth and boosting competitiveness in the international context. It must adapt flexibly to the new conditions, using changes in economy and concurrently also anticipate and establish new development trajectories based on endogenous factors. Despite the dominant position in the national economy where it significantly exceeds the other SR regions, we can observe in the European comparison certain lagging of the Bratislava Region. The future development options are limited to certain extent with the ability of the region to establish new, better jobs in competitive enterprises.

The strategy in the field of innovation and informatisation support links up to the specific priorities of the NSRF that support these activities at the national level, focusing on support of activities of the regional and local significance.

In formulating the programme, the priorities of development of the Bratislava Region defined in the document titled "Development Strategy of the BSR" from the year 2003 were taken into consideration. The starting point for the strategy of the Operational Programme Bratislava Region was the experience learned from the implementation of the JPD2 programme.

In the process of determining the strategy of the OPBR for 2007-2013, it is necessary to take into consideration the following starting points:

- Vision and strategy of the NSRF
- Relevant strategic documents
- Starting points for the territorial, thematic and financial concentration
- Results of the current situation analysis

4.1.1. Vision and strategy of the NSRF

The vision and the strategic goal of the National Strategic Reference Framework of the Slovak Republic for programming period 2007-2013 are resulting from the complex analysis of the region in the form of the identified main disparities and development factors. The key starting point of the Slovak economy on the one hand is insufficient use and productivity of the existing factors of the economic growth and on the other hand insufficient level of factors of economic growth based on knowledge. The strategic section of the NSRF is based on assumptions that traditional factors of economic development, also with the effective and efficient use, cannot ensure sustainable growth of Slovak economy, therefore it is required in parallel to increase emphasis on support the knowledge-based economy development as a tool of achieving sustainable growth of the country and its regions.

The vision of the NSRF issues from the fact that changes leading to increasing importance of knowledge in economy and to high and sustainable economic growth can be achieved through the process of total convergence. The vision is defined as follows: Sustainable total convergence of the SR economy to the EU-15 average through SD.

Following to the vision, the strategic objective is defined, taking into consideration the visible lagging of Slovakia and its regions (except for Bratislava) in economic performance and the quality of economic growth in comparison to the European Union average (predominantly in comparing to EU-15):

To increase significantly competitiveness and performance of the regions and the Slovak economy and employment with respecting sustainable development up to 2013.

The strategy based on the principles of concentration and coordination has been stated for fulfilling vision and strategic objective of the National Strategic Reference Framework of the Slovak Republic as the basic document for use of assistance from the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund in the programming period 2007-2013. Concentration is understood as focusing available resources on the priority topics, selected area and in sufficient volume with the aim of effective fulfilling the strategic objective. In implementing the particular interventions, not only coordination is ensured, but there is a big effort to achieve also potential synergic effects.

The interventions supported from the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund are focused on the following three strategic priorities:

1. Infrastructure and Regional Accessibility with the following objective of this strategic priority: To increase amenity of the regions with the infrastructure and to support effectiveness of the public services directly related to their infrastructure.

2. Knowledge-based Economy with the following objective of this strategic priority: Development of the sustainable economic growth resources and increasing competitiveness of industry and services

3. Human Resources, with the following objective of this strategic priority: To increase employment, growth of the labour force quality for the needs of knowledge-based economy and supporting social inclusion of the risk groups

The fourth strategic priority **Technical Assistance** has the horizontal character with the aim of supporting effective, efficient and proper implementation of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund in the Slovak Republic during the whole programming period.

The strategic priorities of the NSRF and their objectives are worked out at the detailed level into specific priorities, including the key structural indicators for every thematic fields in the given priority.

In accordance with the adopted legislation, the NSRF covers Objective Convergence and RCE and at the same time identifies the relevant Operational Programmes. The Bratislava Region is eligible to withdraw resources from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) within the Objective RCE. The Operational Programme Bratislava Region financed from the ERDF is the single programme implemented exclusively within this objective. With respect to the priority axes, for the OPBR the first two strategic priorities of NSRF are relevant: Infrastructure and Regional Accessibility and Knowledge-based Economy.

Measures of the first priority axis of the OPBR correspond to the first strategic priority of the NSRF in the following three specific objectives:

1.1 Regional Infrastructure which objective is to increase accessibility and quality of infrastructure and amenities in the regions.

1.2 Environmental Infrastructure and Protection of the Environment which objective is to improve the conditions of the environment and to advance the quality of the environmental infrastructure of the SR.

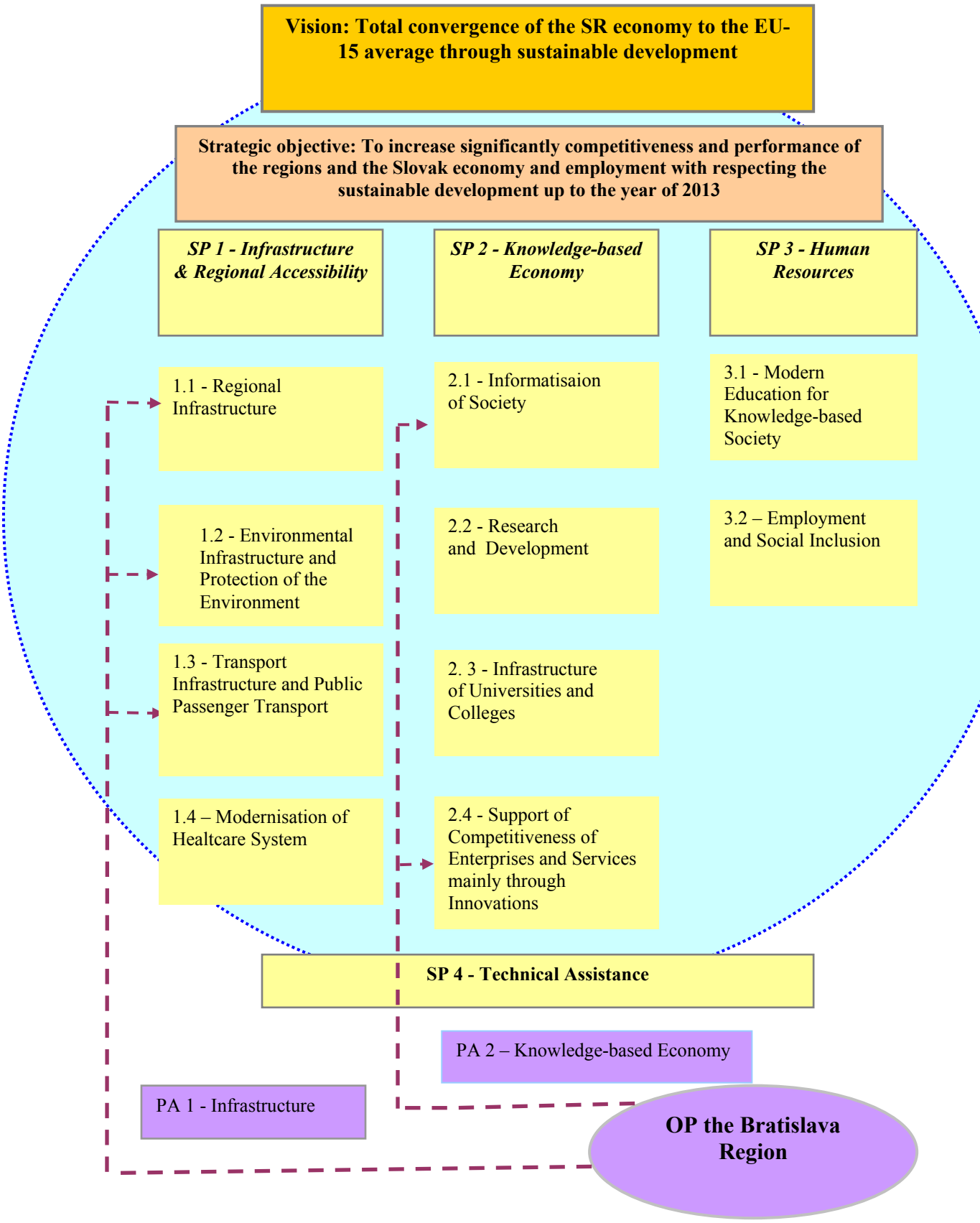
1.3 Transport Infrastructure and Public Passenger Transport which objective is to support the sustainable mobility through development of transport infrastructure and development of passenger transport.

Measures of the second priority axis of the OPBR correspond to the second strategic priority of the NSRF in the following two specific objectives:

2.1 Informatisation of Society which objective is to establish inclusive information society as a tool for development of high-performance knowledge-based economy

2.4 Support Competitiveness of Enterprises and Services mainly through innovations which objective is to ensure sustainable economic growth and employment.

Overview of the NSRF objectives and priorities linked to the OPBR



4.1.2. Relevant strategic documents

A. Community Strategic Guidelines (CSG)

They represent the priority fields for Cohesion Policy of the European Union in the programming period 2007-2013, taking into consideration also other objectives of the Community. Based on them, resources allocated for Cohesion Policy are strategically concentrated, in particular, on the fields of supporting sustainable growth, competitiveness and employment for the purposes of the Lisbon strategy. The Operational Programme Bratislava Region reflects the Guidelines 1: To make Europe and its regions a more attractive place for investments and work, Guidelines 2: Improvement of knowledge and innovation for growth as well as Guidelines 3: Establishing bigger amount of the working places and their higher quality.

Section 7.1 provides more detailed definition of the CSG of the Community.

B. National Lisbon Strategy (NLS) and National Reform Programme (NRP)

Based on the stated objective of the Lisbon Strategy, the Slovak Republic elaborated Competitiveness Strategy of Slovakia till 2010, the so-called National Lisbon Strategy defining the fields that provide the best support for the growth of creative potential of the Slovak economy with the clear visions of targets till 2010. Concurrently, it defined the basic objectives corresponding to this vision and also main policies and steps through which these objectives can be achieved.
The OPBR contributes to fulfilment of the objectives of the National Lisbon Strategy through support innovation and information society predominantly in the growth poles.
The visions, objectives, and main policies of the NLS are reflected into the National Reform Programme where three basic groups of priorities of the EU Economic Policy are defined as follows: macroeconomic priorities, priorities of Employment Policy and microeconomic priorities.
The OPBR through support the entrepreneurial activities is concentrated on innovations and support the broad accessibility to the internet contribute to accomplishing of the Microeconomic Policy objectives.
Chapters 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 describe links to the NLS and the NRP in more details.

C. National Sustainable Development Strategy / Action Plan of Sustainable Development

The Operational Programme Bratislava Region through increasing the quality of life in the region (i.e., reinforcement of the innovative and cohesion growth poles) supports the polycentric all-territorial development of the SR territory through support regional infrastructure in the cohesion growth poles which contributes to reduction of intra-regional disparities. Supporting the knowledge-based economy predominantly in the innovative growth poles (except for informatisation of society) contributes to effectiveness and efficiency of the economic and social processes at the regional as well as national levels.

D. Slovak Territorial Development Perspective 2001 (STDP 2001)

The STDP 2001 represents the relevant document for determination of the strategy of territorial development of Slovakia, defining the structure of the SR settlement and hierarchy of its centres and core areas that are basis for determination of innovative and cohesion growth poles as the priorities for the territorial concentration of the NSRF.

E. Development Strategy of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region

The basic strategic document dealing with the development in the mid-term horizon has been elaborated. Its strategic objective is to ensure multilateral development of the territory in the interest of increasing the quality of life of its citizens and in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. The Operational Programme Bratislava Region respects fully the strategic intention of this document and corresponds in terms of themes to the strategic objective 1 - Economic Growth, 2 - Development of Transport and Technical Infrastructure, and 5 - Protection of the Environment, and partially to the strategic objective 6 - Development of Human Resources and Social Development.

4.1.3. Starting points for the territorial, thematic and financial concentration of interventions into the particular fields of support

For the purposes of the territorial concentration, the NSRF recommends to monitor concentration of activities into the innovative and cohesion growth poles in accordance with the polycentric concept of the settlement development. The innovative and cohesion growth poles are specified within the preparation of the NSRF based on the preliminary selected social, economic, and town planning criteria and statistical evaluations of the municipalities in the whole Slovak territory. Classification of municipalities into the innovative and cohesion growth poles was executed mainly based on the presence of individual facilities of civil and economic infrastructure and making use of such facilities actions on the municipalities of the surrounding area. The proposal of limitation of growth poles in the form of precise list of the municipalities was discussed and commented by the relevant professional units of all self-governing regions (units involved in territorial planning and regional development at the authorities of self-governing regions). The described process ensured accuracy of the final list of the municipalities and their classification into growth poles. Annex 7 provides description of the methodology of determination of growth poles into the relevant categories according to the regions.

The innovative growth poles cover the most significant towns of the SR settlement. All the towns were specified as innovative growth poles which ensure the higher and specific civil amenities and concurrently which are centres of job of the regional, supra-regional up to national significance. Based on the recent development and current development trends, the current regional towns and the towns with function of district centres were included among these centres, the town functioning as the former district centres and some other most important towns based on considerations of regional specifics after individual professional consultations with the territorially relevant self-governing regions. Around the most significant towns, specified as the innovative growth poles, due to their effects on the surroundings, have been established agglomeration links with the municipalities and towns in their background. The STDP 2001 these areas are titled as cores of settlement, or loci of settlement. For the purposes of the NSRF in accordance with the STDP 2001 the involved territories of innovative growth poles are specified which are immediately and strongly effected by the central towns (innovative growth poles) and where suburbanisation tendencies are appearing followed by the phenomena of the so-called concentrated de-concentration. It means that new economic and social activities are allocated into such territories and together with the central towns establish one functioning complex. Within such areas other innovative growth poles are located or can be located that are mutually interconnected through the intense agglomeration relationships, cohesion growth poles and other municipalities are not specified from this point of view.

Significance of the municipalities within the specified territories of the innovative growth poles is also an important element for decision making on concentration of the interventions into their territories.

The cohesion growth poles consists of the municipalities which have the best pre-conditions to meet the criteria of ensuring the basic servicing functions so for the inhabitants living in the respective municipality as for the inhabitants in their background.

The cohesion growth poles were described based on the criteria following these indicators:

- presence of the facilities of basic amenity (amenity of the school facilities and their scope, presence of the social infrastructure facilities)
- status of the municipality with respecting their public functions (registration office, existing joint building offices)
- size of the municipality given by the number of inhabitants in 2004
- historic development of the municipality and its position in the system of settlement (meaning in relation to the preceding centric system of settlement applied in the SR territory)
- location of the municipality in the territory and accessibility of the proposed cohesion growth pole from other close municipalities.

In case of the extraordinary effective interventions with respect to achieving the objectives defined in the NSRF and its relevant priorities that cannot be implemented in the priority-preferred territories, it makes sense to allocate the interventions into the areas outside the growth poles as well. The given approach can be applied mainly in the case of support the activities types of the horizontal character or in the case of support civil infrastructure facilities seating outside the growth poles but being significant from the view of function, type of services in the structure and capacities of the given region, in the case of support the selected projects in the field of the environment and tourism support.
The Bratislava Region thanks to its geographic location, level of basic public infrastructure and provided services and thank to the fact that the capital town is its part, has the specific position within the SR. Its specific position demonstrates so in its economic performance as well as in its competitiveness. In the Bratislava Region, 95 % of inhabitants live in the innovative and cohesion growth poles and therefore the strategy of interventions into these growth poles delivers effect to the majority of inhabitants of the BSR.

Interventions related to the priority axes of the OPBR in accordance with the territorial and thematic concentration of the individual strategic priorities of the NSRF are directed in the following way:

Priority axis *Infrastructure*: priority direction into the innovative and cohesion growth poles depending on the particular types of infrastructure

Priority axis *Knowledge-based Economy*: priority concentration into the innovative growth poles (except for an informatisation support) where there are establishing conditions for arising and development of the most important resources of growth based on the utilisation of knowledge and effectiveness of the decisive economic and social processes influencing development in other territory of the SR.
Based on the preceding analysis and with respect to the strategic objectives defined in the NSRF, the issues for thematic concentration of the interventions within the particular fields of support the OPBR are as follows:

- interventions into preparation and implementation of the integrated strategies of the Bratislava urban areas development including the technical renovation of the residential building stock.
- interventions into arrangements of public concourses including playing grounds and the elements of the public greenery and reconstruction of the public lighting systems
- interventions into conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development
- interventions into support the integrated passenger public transport by establishing the single tariff system and by creation the transfer terminals
- interventions into support the urban public transport (preparation and execution of the activities focused on increasing the quality of the integrated public passenger public transport and decreasing its negative impact on environment, support the rail transport on the controlled crossroads
- intervention into the information arrangement of the integrated public transport system
- interventions into transfer of technologies, creation and introduction of the innovations in SME
- support introduction and utilisation of progressive technologies within SME with the goal to reduce energy and material demands or to use energy from the renewable sources, support the innovative technologies for preventing from atmosphere pollution or reducting the emissions into the atmosphere and etc..
- intervention into the intellectual property protection
- interventions into electronisation of the self-governing authorities and e-services development on the local and regional level including support establishing and development of the integrated servicing places, into the support accessibility of the broadband internet and support introduction and effective utilisation of access to the ICT within SME.

In re-allocating financial resources, it was necessary to take into consideration the investment needs in the urban and rural areas with respect to their respective roles in the field of regional development with the goal to support balanced development of the territory.

Despite it that the Bratislava Region is the most developed region in Slovakia in terms of economy, it is possible to identify several fields into that the interventions within the SF and the CF could be allocated.. With respect to the limited amount of financial resources it is required to set 'the priorities among the priorities'. The issue for the thematic concentration was assessment of investment demand of projects and limitation of amount of eligible expenditures for projects in accordance with the relevant schemes of state aid and scheme *de minimis*. The field of infrastructure requires the ongoing strong support also in the period when the region is prosperous and therefore for the priority axis 1 is determined 53 % of the total amount allocated to the programme. In context of Slovakia the Bratislava Region belongs among the most developed, however in comparison with other European regions lags mainly in the field of knowledge-based economy support that is important for maintaining economic growth also in the future. Based on this reason, for the priority axis 2 it was set 43 % of the total amount allocated on the programme that is determined mainly for SME support. In accordance with Article 46 of the General Regulation, for the priority axis 3 Technical Assistance is allocated 4 % of the total amount allocated on the programme.

With respect to the thematic, territorial and financial concentration, there are many fields and activities within the BSR which require support but is not possible to include it into the OPBR.

In accordance with the NSRF, several operational programmes are involved in the issues of development of the Bratislava region, either in the form of support from the part of the ESF, the Cohesion Funds or through application of the principle pro rata. The more detailed description of the synergies and complementarities with other operational programmes is included into the Chapter 7.2.2

4.1.4. Results of analysis of the current situation

The results of the social-economic analysis of the Bratislava Region shows a broad spectrum of fields requiring a target support from the part of the state and the Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region within next years. On the one hand, there is a lot of serious issues required to be resolved and on the other hand, there are comparative advantages of the region that can disappear without the further support.

SWOT analysis and specification of disparities and development factors were during elaboration of the operational programme focused on such priorities and activities that are subject of direct support of this OP.

A. The key issues and threats of the Bratislava Region are following:

- Insufficient use of the territory potential and the negative consequences of the population concentration in the urbanized areas can result in decreasing the quality of the citizens´ lives,
- Insufficient use of regional and urban public transport in combination with non-solving of the road network quality in the region results into increasing share of transport on impairing aspects of the environment, and reduction of the quality of accessibility of the population for job and services,
- Insufficient use of the innovative potential and unfinished support of the innovative infrastructure and implementation of the innovation and technological transfers will lead to loss of the competitive advantages of the Bratislava Region,
- Decline of competitiveness of the region due to insufficient support and use of the potential in the fields of research, development and innovations as the key factors for further economic growth of the region,
- Insufficient use of information and communication technologies in the public administration and enterprises will result into the lower effectiveness of creation, exchange and use of knowledge.

B. Development factors and opportunities of the Bratislava Region can be summarised as follows:

- Support designing and implementation of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development will lead to increasing the town of Bratislava attractiveness,
- Integration of individual types of transport between Bratislava and its suburb background will improves accessibility for job and services,

- Introduction of ecological and rational systems of regional and urban public transport as alternative to passenger transport,
- Improvement of the status of environment will lead to the support tourism development and leisure time activities,
- Effective use and introduction of innovation and technological transfers into the commercial sphere will support increase of the companies competitiveness,
- Increase of informatisation of society through improvement of access to the broadband internet and development of information services of the regional and local significance will lead to an increase of competitiveness of SME and attractiveness of the municipalities.

4.2. Global objective of the operational programme

The global objective of the Operational Programme Bratislava Region issues from the social-economic analysis of the region, SWOT analysis and identified disparities and development factors.

Global objective of the OPBR is reinforcement of competitiveness of the region through development of knowledge-based economy and developing the region attractive for life.

Such formulated global objective links up to the complex strategy of the further development of the Bratislava Region as well as to the set the implementation system of interventions from the Structural Funds in the region through several operational programmes.

Global objective of the OPBR responds to the need of increasing the support the innovative business and information society as the key factors for ensuring long-term economic growth and competitiveness of the region. Concurrently, it focuses on increase of the qualitative parameters of the territory significantly affecting the region attractiveness for its citizens.

The specific objectives of the OPBR are fulfilled through the implementation of the two thematic priority axes of the OPBK which are created based on the structure defined under the Article 5,7 and 8 of the Regulation on ERDF:

Priority axis 1 Infrastructure

Priority axis 2 Knowledge-based Economy

and one horizontal priority axis Technical Assistance aimed at support the qualitative implementation of the whole programme.

Within the priority axes such measures will be supported with respect to the limited volume of the financial resources that are capable of ensuring as much as possible value added and effects of the implemented interventions with respect to the limited volume of financial resources.

The detailed list of the supported fields is included into the following table.

Table 19 Fields of support from the OPBR

Priority axes of the OPBR	Detailed description of the field of support
1. Infrastructure	- preparation and implementation of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development in the town of Bratislava - separate demand-oriented projects of the settlements regeneration - conservation and renovation of natural heritage and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development - preparation and execution of the activities focused on increasing the quality of the integrated passenger public transport and reduction of its impact on environment, support rail transport on the controlled crossroads - establishing the single tariff system of UPT and development of the transfer terminals within support the Bratislava Integrated Transport - arranging the information system of the integrated public transport and its marketing support
2. Knowledge-based Economy	- support creation and introduction of innovations and technological transfers within SME - support introduction and utilisation of progressive technologies in SME to prevent from atmosphere pollution or emission reduction in atmosphere and etc.. - protection of intellectual property - electronisation of self-governing authorities and development of the electronic services on the local and regional level including support establishing and development of the integrated servicing places. - support accessibility of broadband internet - introduction and effective utilisation of access to ICT within SME

It is possible to observe and assess current progress in achieving the global objective of the operational programme through the system of quantifiable indicators at the level of the operational programme. These indicators link up to the indicators system of the National Strategic Reference Framework of the Slovak Republic.

Structure of the OPBR priorities

Operational Programme Bratislava Region (2007-2013)

PA 1 INFRASTRUCTURE	**PA 2 KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY**
Regeneration of settlements	**Innovations & technological transfers**
Regional and urban public transport	**Informatisation of society**

PA 3 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Table 20 Indicators at the level of the global objective

Name of indicator	Type	Unit	Initial value				Target value	Source
			EU-25		SR		SR 2015	
			Year	Value	Year	Value		
Number of newly established jobs	Context/ core	Number of men	2006	N/A	2006	0	100	MVRR
		Number of women				0	100	
Aggregated index of innovation (EIS), regional innovative performance	Context	Order	2005	25	2005	22	18	EUROSTAT
Penetration of broadband internet (connections per 100 inhabitants)	Context	Percentage of the SR overall population	2005	48	2005	23	49	EUROSTAT
GDP per capita in PPP in relation to EU-25	Context	PPP	2005	100	2005	57,1	72,39	EUROSTAT
Gross fixed capital	Context	SKK billion	2005	N/A	2005	394 618	430 371	SO SR

Total overview of the OPBR indicators is given in Annex 10.

4.3. Strategy for achieving the global objective

The strategy determined for achieving the global objective issues from recognition of the complex needs of the Bratislava Region and their importance for ensuring sustainable growth of the region and the quality of life of its citizens. Several players actively enter into solution of the relatively broad spectrum of existing development needs (the state, regional and local self-governments, private sector, NGOs, etc.) with diverse competences, interests and financial resources. Therefore, the strategy puts emphasis on the coordinated approach in implementing interventions in the region where the assumption for this is mutual cooperation and providing information for the key players of regional development. Main goal is increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the use of resources through eliminating duplicity activities. Specific attention is devoted to the coordination of interventions co-financed from the Structural Funds aiming at the Bratislava Region through other operational programmes (OP Research and Development, OP Education, and OP Employment and Social Inclusion) in the course of their implementation.

The strategy of the Operational Programme Bratislava Region in close relation to the coordinated approach will enforce integrated approach as well. Intention of that approach is not only to coordinate the interventions but also to interconnect them logically with an aim of achieving synergic effects and the higher effectiveness than the interventions alone. With respect to the limited financial resources for the Bratislava Region within the Objective RCE in the programming period 2007-2013, it is important to reinforce mutual links between the interventions financed from the ERDF and the ESF. Another anticipated benefit of the integrated approach is that equal importance is paid to the social and environmental aspects of growth with emphasis on the qualitative and quantitative goals of economic growth of the region in accordance with the principles of SD.

The strategy of the OPBR is simultaneously based on the principle of thematic, territorial and financial concentrations as the pre-conditions for option to withdraw the assistance from the Structural Funds within the Objective RCE.

The main fields of interventions consists of developing a modern region, attractive for living and business and reinforcement of competitiveness of the region which will be based on the establishment, distribution and economic valorisation of new knowledge.

Developing of the modern region attractive for living and business aims at removing of the negative phenomena delivered by economic development in the region. The main measures will support regeneration of settlements through integrated strategies of the urban areas development

in the capital town of Bratislava and through the separate demand-oriented projects of the settlements regeneration within the whole BSR, conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development and establishing the integrated regional and urban public transport system with an aim of improving effectiveness and functioning and interconnection of diverse types of transport. The amount of allocated financial resources for the operational programme enables only partial changes, anticipating that the significant participation of further resources is necessary.

The big attention is paid to increasing innovative performance of SMEs in the field of reinforcing competitiveness of the region. Despite of the strong public science and research base in the Bratislava Region there are barriers in economic valorisation of new knowledge. Thus, main attention is paid to commercial valorisation of new knowledge, established in the region and developing systematic interconnections among players of regional innovation system.

The important part is to support activities aimed at developing information society in the region through developing information infrastructure, informatisation of public administration and through increasing use of ICT in the sphere of SME.

4.3.1. Thematic concentration of contributions

The public resources (State Budget and the local authorities budget), the private resources and the resources from the European Regional Development Fund will be within the Operational Programme Bratislava Region concentrated on four basic measures within the two priority axes:

Priority axis: 1 Infrastructure
Measure: 1.1 Regeneration of settlements
Measure: 1.2 Regional and urban public transport

Priority axis: 2 Knowledge-based Economy

Measure: 2.1 Innovation and technological transfers
Measure 2.2 Informatisation of society

Infrastructure

The first priority axis "Infrastructure" aims at support developing the modern and attractive region for citizens, visitors and investors.

Through application of the principle of thematic, territorial and financial concentrations, the strategy of directing the interventions into the infrastructure through the OPBR is defined as follows:

- intervention into preparation and implementation of integrated strategies of the Bratislava urban areas development including technical renovation of residential buildings stock,
- intervention into the separate demand-oriented projects of the settlements regeneration in the BSR (intervention into the renovation of public concourses including playgrounds and elements of public greenery and reconstruction of public lighting systems,

- interventions into conservation and renovation of the natural heritage, including protection of the NATURA 2000 localities and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development,
- support establishing the single tariff system of the Bratislava Integrated Transport,
- intervention into development of the transfer terminals in the pre-selected and transportation nodes,
- interventions into the support urban public transport (preparation and execution of the activities focused on increasing the quality of the integrated passenger public public transport and reduction of its impact on environment, support rail transport on the controlled crossroads,
- intervention into development of the single information system of integrated public transport and its marketing support.

Knowledge-based Economy

The second priority axis *Knowledge-based Economy* supports within the OPBR innovations and Informatisation of society as the key thematic circles for ensuring long-term competitiveness of the region. Interventions aim at increasing of the innovation capacity of SME as well as their abilities to use ICT. These activities should contribute to establishing the new products, services and processes capable of competing in increasing international competition. Ability of individuals and organisations to acquire, process, valorise and spread knowledge effectively is the key factor in transition to knowledge-based society..

Through application of the principle of thematic, territorial and financial concentrations, the strategy of aiming interventions into knowledge-based economy is defined as follows:

1. interventions into support creation and introduction of innovations and technological transfers within SMEs

- preparation of the projects of technology and knowledge transfer into the companies - proposals of the development projects, studies of the technical feasibility, identification of the available products, technologies and methods, analysis of the functional and market applicability of the product or process, implementation of the introduction of the innovations based on the studies of the technical feasibility and prepared analytical projects.

- interventions into acquiring the instrumental and testing equipment for purposes of developing and testing the new products, prototypes production, their testing, semi-operation and verification series of the new product,

- interventions into innovations of the products offer within SME through purchase of the new progressive technologies focused on utilization of the new ideas, patents, utility designs, etc.,

- support cooperation of companies and the public research organisations by using the databanks and technical libraries and using the laboratories,

- interventions into support renting the premises in technological parks and innovation centres,

- interventions into the purchase of patents, licences or re-financing the relevant expenses related to acquiring the new results of research and development

- support in providing the advisory services in the sphere of innovative entreprise

2. interventions into the support introduction and utilisation of progressive technologies within SME:

- preparation of the projects for transfer of technologies and knowledge into the companies with an aim to reduce the energy and material demand,

- support the pilot projects and programmes for implementation of the new technologies generating energy from the renewable resources, mainly small water power plants, equipment for using biomass, bio-gas, equipment for production bio-fuels, thermal pumps, equipment for using solar energy, equipment for using geothermal energy and equipment for using wind energy

3. support introduction of the innovative technologies within SME for preventing from the pollution arising or reduction of emission into the atmosphere, projects for introduction of the progressive technologies within SME enabling reduction of emissions, projects of introduction of the innovative technological processes limiting utilisation of the organic dissolvents in the companies

4. support the competitivness of the business subjects by introduction the methods of management, by support pre-certification, certification as well as re-certification processes related to the introduction of quality management systems; support acquisition of foreign certificate of quality, support in acquiring domestic and international accreditations

5. support electronisation of the self.-governing authority and introduction of the extended electronic services on the local and regional levels and its connection into the central portal and in this way reducing an administrative burden including support establishing and development the integrated servicing places enabling providing the public services on one spot.

6. support accessibility to broadband internet

7. support SME connections to the broadband internet including support the activities focused on designing digital contents (designing and maintaining the web-pages, e-business, establishing the information and reservation systems and etc.) and support establishing the intra companies networks.

The resources allocated within the third priority axis “Technical Assistance” will be used effectively for fulfilment the given objectives in the course of the programme implementation.

4.3.2. Territorial concentration of contributions

The level of settlements development in the Bratislava Region is determined, besides its geographical location, mainly by the level of the basic public infrastructure and provided

services. In evaluating of the current SR conditions, it is required to keep in mind the fact that NUTS 3 Level Bratislava Region has due to its function of capital town and geographic location other character than other regions of NUTS 3 level. Its extraordinary status thus reflects in its economic performance as well as its competitiveness. The polycentric system of the settlement supports also the territorial concentration of contributions when approximately 50 % of the total territory is the innovative or cohesion growth pole where more than 95 % of the population of the Bratislava Region live.

The strategy of the NSRF related to the implementation of thematic priorities determines as priority to direct the interventions into the innovative and cohesion growth poles so that the synergy of the thematic and territorial factors could achieve the biggest effects, contributing as fast as possible to fulfilment the strategic objective of the NSRF. Therefore, the contributions are concentrated to establish conditions for investments, better valorisation of disposable resources and ensuring the interconnections of lagging territories to the more developed centres and finally to increase the quality of life at the local level.

The contributions within the first priority axis "Infrastructure" are allocated in the territory of the capital town of Bratislava in the form of financing the integrated strategies of the Bratislava urban areas development and the activities in the field of transport. The eligible territory of the measure 1.1. of the Priority axis 1 represented by the separate demand-oriented projects of the settlements regeneration focused on reconstruction of the public lighting systems, renovation of public areas including the playgrounds and the elements of the public greenery will be the innovative and cohesion poles in the BSR (including the cores of settlements). The interventions focused on conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development (including the NATURA 2000 localities) are determined for whole area of the BSR.

Concerning the contributions to the priority axis 2 "Knowledge-based Economy", the interventions into the field of innovations and technological transfers are mainly concentrated into the innovative growth poles and their cores of settlement. Concentration applies to the activities aimed at development of services of the type government to business and business to public to such extent that support the provision of the broadband internet penetration will be implemented only in the areas non-attractive for the commercial operators according to a feasibility study. The principle of territorial concentration does not apply to other activities related to the measure of informatisation of society.

In a case of the measures where the principle of territorial concentration applies for, there will be possible in the specific and justified cases to implement contributions also in the areas outside the growth poles. In the course of the programming period, on-going evaluations on the level of the NSRF will also include the on-going evaluation focused on the assessment of the effectiveness of the stated territorial concentration and on judging the effect of the executed interventions and the general development of the Slovak economy on the list of the cohesion and innovation poles of growth. Respecting the fact that it is necessary to keep some time framework for demonstrating the impacts of the interventions, it is possible to carry out such an evaluation no sooner than in the year of 2010. The results of the evaluation will be presented to the National Monitoring Committee which based on it will be able to make a decision for modifying the selected approach to the territorial concentration.

4.3.3. Financial concentration of contributions

In re-allocating the resources, it was required to consider investment needs in the urban and rural areas taking into account their respective tasks in the field of regional development with an aim of supporting balanced development of the territory.

With respect to the limited options of support from the OPBR and the need of the region, 53 % of the amount allocated to the programme is determined to the priority axis 1 “Infrastructure”. The contributions from the ERDF are determined for the priority axis 1 “Infrastructure” based on the paragraphs 2 a), b), d), e) and f) of Article 5 and paragraphs 2 of Article 7 of the Regulation on the ERDF and Article 8.

The priority axis 2 “Knowledge-based Economy” contributes to the successful implementation of the National Reform Programme, taking into consideration the Bratislava Region needs through investments into innovations, knowledge-based economy, new information and communication technologies, entrepreneurial initiatives and SME support. 43 % of total amount allocated to the programme. Interventions within this priority axis aim primarily as SMEs support according to the scheme of state aid and the scheme *de minimis*, it is possible to anticipate a huge number of smaller projects. The financial contributions determined to the priority axis 2 “Knowledge-based Economy” issued from paragraphs 1 a), b) and c) and paragraph 3 b) of the above mentioned Regulation.
In accordance with Article 46 of the General Regulation 4 % of the total amount allocated for the programme were determined to the priority axis 3 “Technical Assistance”.

5. PRIORITY AXES

5.1. Priority axis 1 Infrastructure

5.1.1. Objective and focus of the priority axis

The starting points for defining the OPBR priority axis 1 "Infrastructure" objective are the results of analyses and the key disparities and main development factors identified from them.

The objective of the priority axis is to increase attractiveness of the Bratislava Region through improvements of the quality and level of settlements and the quality of the public transport with respecting the sustainable development.

The physical environment quality is the important factor for development of competitiveness in the region. The relevant way of increasing attractiveness of the Bratislava Region must lead through the programmes of regeneration of settlements via complex renovation of settlements, their residential blocks, restructuring of surrounding areas and increasing the quality of public transport for the purposes of advancing attractiveness of public transport and reduction of its burden on the environment. Through support implementation of the proposed activities there are opening the options of SME entry into market where they must comply with the given conditions what will contribute to the sound competitive environment.

Within the above mentioned fields, emphasis will be put on the environmental aspects vested in reducing energy demands and increasing economic effectiveness of supported activities. Energy savings in renovating of existing buildings will be applied based on the Regulation of the European Parliaments and of the Council 2002/91/EC as of 16 December 2002 on the energy performance of buildings (Official Journal of the European Communities L 001 4 January 2003) reflected into the Act 555/2005 Coll. on the energy performance of buildings and amendments and supplementing some acts which entered in effect on 1 January 2006.

Fulfilment of the objective of the OPBR priority axis 1 is implemented through the following groups of activities:

- preparation and implementation of the integrated strategies of the Bratislava urban areas development in the selected areas of the capital town of Bratislava under Article 8 of the Regulation on ERDF, renovation of the physical environment, reconstruction of the residential buildings, renovation of the school and education institutions, playing grounds, renovation of the social institutions and community centres with respect to the changes of the demographic structure
- renovation and development of the physical environment in the framework of the separate demand-oriented projects of the settlements regeneration executed in the settlements identified as the cohesion and growth poles including their core of settlements.
- conservation and renovation of the natural heritage including the NATURA 2000 localities and settlements and support cycle tracks with an aim to create the conditions for using natural localities for the relevant forms of tourism
- development of the integrated public transport system through establishing the single tariff system and construction of the transfer terminals in the selected transportation nodes as well as support information provision of the whole process,

- preparation and implementation of the activities focused on increasing attractiveness and quality of the urban public transport in Bratislava and reduction its negative impact on environment, support rail transport on the controlled crossroads.

The Programme Manual of the OPBR will contain detailed description of these activities.

Table 21 Indicators at the level of the priority axis 1

INDICATOR	TYPE	UNIT	INDICATOR DEFINITION	ORIGINAL VALUE		TARGET VALUE
				SR		SR 2015
				Year	Value	
% of citizens living in completely renewed zones	Result	%	Percentage share of citizens living in the area covered by the integrated strategies of the urban areas development in Bratislava Region	2006	0	25
number of projects ensuring settlements sustainability	Output/ core	number	Number of integrated strategies of the urban areas development within areas threatened or affected by deterioration and social exclusion	2006	0	3
number of settlements regenerated	Output/ core	number	Number of regenerated settlements in which the investment separate demand oriented projects were executed focused on the improvement of the physical environment	2006	0	50
number of projects with contribution to increasing tourism development	Output / core	number	Number of projects which contributed to the conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks aiming in increasing tourism development in the Bratislava region	2006	0	6
Average decrease on energy efficiency of buildings supported within integrated strategies of urban areas development	output	%	average proportional decrease on energy demand for buildings heating within integrated strategies of urban areas development	2006	0	15
Increasing number of passengers served by improved urban public transport	Result/ core	number	difference between number of persons served with urban and regional public transport within Bratislava region after improving its services and number of persons served with urban and regional public transport before improvement	2006	65 458 210	66 767 374
number of projects aiming at the clean urban transport to become environmentally friendly in areas where special climate protection is required	Result / core	number	number of projects which support rail (tram and trolleybus) public transport preference on the controlled crossroads	2006	0	3

			(area requiring special climate protection)			

The following two measures are determined for implementation of the priority axis:

- Measure 1.1 Regeneration of Settlements
- Measure 1.2 Regional and Urban Public Transport

5.1.2. Main fields of interventions within the priority axis 1

A. Measure 1.1 Regeneration of Settlements

The objective of the measure is to increase the quality of life in the Bratislava Region settlements.

The capital town of Bratislava is the development centre of territory and its progress has an effect on the whole region and Slovakia and at the same time it is the largest engine of development and application of innovation, science and research. Through the integrated strategies of the urban areas development, the high concentration of economic, environmental and social issues of the town will be solved. The field of the support through these strategies will be concentrated on the selected areas of the capital town of Bratislava.

Concerning this measure, the interventions will be concentrated on the settlements in other innovation and cohesion poles of growth including their cores of settlements in a form of the separate demand-oriented projects of the settlement regeneration focused on the reconstruction and development of the physical environment, renovation of the public areas including playgrounds and the elements of the public greenery and reconstruction of the public lighting systems which will assist to reach higher quality of life in the settlements of the BSR. Reinforcement of the development potential, preservation and renovation of the settlements will lead to increasing it´s attractiveness for citizens, businessmen, investors and visitors. Through the revitalisation of the settlements, the development potential will be grow.

The targeted support conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development will significantly help to improve the environmental values of the Bratislava Region territory. For SD of the projects´ results it is necessary to involve the local inhabitants into the process of the problems identification and its following execution.

These interventions into physical renovation will be supported by the other connecting social development activities of the economic and social development of settlements which is not included into OPBR.

Brief description of the activities:

Preparation and implementation of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development in the selected areas the capital town of Bratislava under Article 8 of the General Regulation.

Particular attention is paid within the OPBR to the integrated strategies of the urban areas development in the urban areas threatened or affected by deterioration and social exclusion. The above mentioned strategies are exclusively implemented based on the elaborated strategy (or plan) of urban areas development. In the SR conditions, the aspects of the given strategy are the content of town planning scheme documents and town planning scheme groundwork

documentation which must be elaborated according to the respective legislation. Under Article 8 of the Regulation on the ERDF, the integrated strategies of the urban areas development are primary focused on maintaining the sustainable urban development also through the activities like e.g. inforcing the economic growth, renovation of the physical environment, renewed development of the deserted industry localities and the protection and development of natural and cultural heritage, support enterprising, local employment and settlements development as well as providing the services for the inhabitants with respecting the changes in the demographic structure. Within the given types of projects, it is possible as one of the operations to implement also investments into housing based on the conditions under Article 7 of the Regulation on ERDF.

Within the OPBR, the integrated strategies of the urban areas development will be focused on maintaining the sustainable urban development through the support renovation of the physical environment, conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development, renovation of schools and education institutions, playgrounds, renovation of the social and community institutions with respecting the demographic changes. In the framework of the mentioned types of the projects as one of the operations will be possible to carry out the investment into housing in buildings which are owned by the public administration or by the non-profit institutions and are used for housing of the households with the low income or people with specific needs.

The eligible urban areas are the urban areas with number of inhabitants more than 5 000. Based on this criterion 11 urban areas in the capital town of Bratislava can be supported. Respecting the limited financial allocation for the OPBR it will be possible to realise maximum 3 strategies of this type.

Under Article 47 of the Implementation Regulation with respect to diversity of situations prevailing in the various Members States, it is required to establish a list of criteria to identify eligible areas which are affected or threatened by deterioration and social exclusion. It concerns a set of social, demographic, economic and physical criteria which values are gathered by every involved Member State on the state level. The indicative values for every criterion are set in the partnership between the Member Sate and the EC. Later on, the Managing Authority ensures that the indicative values of given criteria are a part of selection criteria discussed and approved by the Monitoring Committee for the OPBR. However, in principle, it is applicable that the value of criteria is considered to be a negative indicator which reports physical deterioration and social exclusion when it is under the level of the regional average.

The criteria for selection of the eligible urban areas for the integrated strategies of the urban areas development execution and also for implementation of investments into housing are described in the Implementation Regulation as follows:

a) high level of poverty and exclusion
b) high level of long-term unemployment
c) uncertain demographic development
d) low level of education, the significant shortcomings in qualification and high level of non-completed education
e) high level of crime actions and delinquency
f) extraordinarily deprived environment

g) low level of economic activity

h) high number of immigrants, ethnic or minority groups, or refugees

i) relatively low level of standards of housing

j) low level of energy efficiency of buildings

The eligible urban area must comply at least with three of the given criteria while two of them must fall under the criteria given in letters a) to h). The above given criteria can be reported in the Slovak conditions in several detailed statistical indicators recorded at the level of the state or territorial self-governments. Application of the given criteria to the Slovak conditions requires the differentiated approach to the urban areas localised in Bratislava because the level of the indicators values depend on the individual localities. The individual areas can be significantly differentiated while the level of physical deterioration and social exclusion can be similar but having different reasons. Acquisition of some indicators values at the level of an urban area is often limited by the fact that the indicators are followed only at the level of the town or the district. With respect to the given facts, the OPBR Managing Authority stipulated a set of social, demographic, economic and physical criteria applicable to the conditions of the SR.

Indicative values for each criterion will be set out through partnership between the member state and the EC and are approved by the Monitoring Committee for the OPBR in the framework of the approving the selection criteria.
The criteria given from a) to j) in the Implementation Regulation are for the purposes of the OPBR applicable through the set of indicators that transformed them into the legislation conditions of the SR and the existing available statistical indicators while their content is not lost. Thus the strategy of the OPBR including the criteria given in letters a), b), c), e), f), g), h), i) j) based on the Regulation on ERDF, will be applied through the following indicators:

a) the households share receiving benefits in material distress

b) share of the long-term unemployed inhabitants or characteristic of the unemployment structure

c) increase/decrease of inhabitants or age structure of the population

e) information whether the urban area is in the district with the high level of crime actions and delinquency

f) share of parking areas and share of green areas of the total area of the urban area, share of non-used areas/buildings with the potential utilisation for business or in the civil infrastructure per number of inhabitants

g) share of entrepreneurial entities per number of inhabitants per area of the given urban area

h) presence of groups with social exclusion

i) low level of the housing standards comparing to other parts within the given town

j) low level of energy efficiency of apartment houses

In case of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development, the principle of pre-selection applies individually for assessing the eligible integrated strategies of the urban areas development. The pre-selection is taken place based on the principle of partnership, in participation of the MA for the OPBR, the Authority of the BSR, entities associating local self-governments, etc.

Set of the selection criteria can be, based on the internal and external initiative, subject of ongoing evaluation of the programme. The changes in statistical reporting of the indicators values in the conditions of the SR, changes in legislation, etc. can be the reasons for modification of the selection criteria.

The MCRD SR in the conditions of the SR is the authority responsible for the housing policy at the national level. In this relation, it has available experience in the field of the housing stock renovation.

Through a broad spectrum of the activities which can be implemented through the OPBR within its priority axes and with respect to the options implied from respective Regulation of the EC, the MA for the OPBR defined the following mechanism of implementation of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development (hereinafter "integrated strategies"):

a) the holder and coordinator of the integrated strategies in the capital town of Bratislava

b) the integrated strategies are elaborated and submitted in the prescribed manner and they consist of the several partial projects

c) the call for proposal for submitting the integrated strategies is preceded by the information activities of the MA for the OPBR concerning to mechanisms of preparation, elaboration, submission, assessment, management, implementation and monitoring of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development

d) a place for implementation of the integrated strategies is the eligible urban area

e) projects of the integrated strategies will be focused on the following thematic fields while they will have to include each of the following fields:

   - regeneration of settlements

     operations: renovation of the public concourses including playgrounds and the elements of the public greenery, reconstruction of the public lighting systems, building and renovation of the cycling tracks, building and reconstruction of the educational tracks and building and reconstruction of the tourism tracks

   - renovation of housing

     operations in accordance with the Article 47 paragraph 2 of the Implementation regulation

   - renovation of schools and education institutions, school playgrounds and organisations of providing the social services and community centres

     operations: reconstruction of the basic construction parts of the buildings - roof, facade, windows and doors within the facade, building and reconstruction of the playgrounds

f) each of the above mentioned thematic fields within the integrated strategies has set the minimum scope of operations as follows:

   - regeneration of settlements (realisation of minimally three operations of the settlements regeneration for the improvement of the physical environment),
   - renovation of housing (renovation of at least two buildings),
   - renovation of schools and education institutions, playgrounds and institutions providing the social services and community centres (realisation of minimally two operations),

g) partial projects of the integrated strategies are individually implemented and financed within the respective priority axis 1.

h) partial projects of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development are monitored individually but as the integrated strategies as well

i) the coordinator of the integrated strategies is the capital town of Bratislava but the beneficiaries within partial projects can be also other entities (the urban areas, owners, administrators in terms of national legislation, or other eligible entities in relation with renovation of buildings etc.)

j) financing of the operations focused on the building and reconstruction of the cycling routes is realised through code of the priority theme 24 – Cycle tracks, operations focused on building and reconstruction of the educational tracks and tourists tracks is realised through the code of the priority theme 56 . Protection and development of the natural heritage and operations

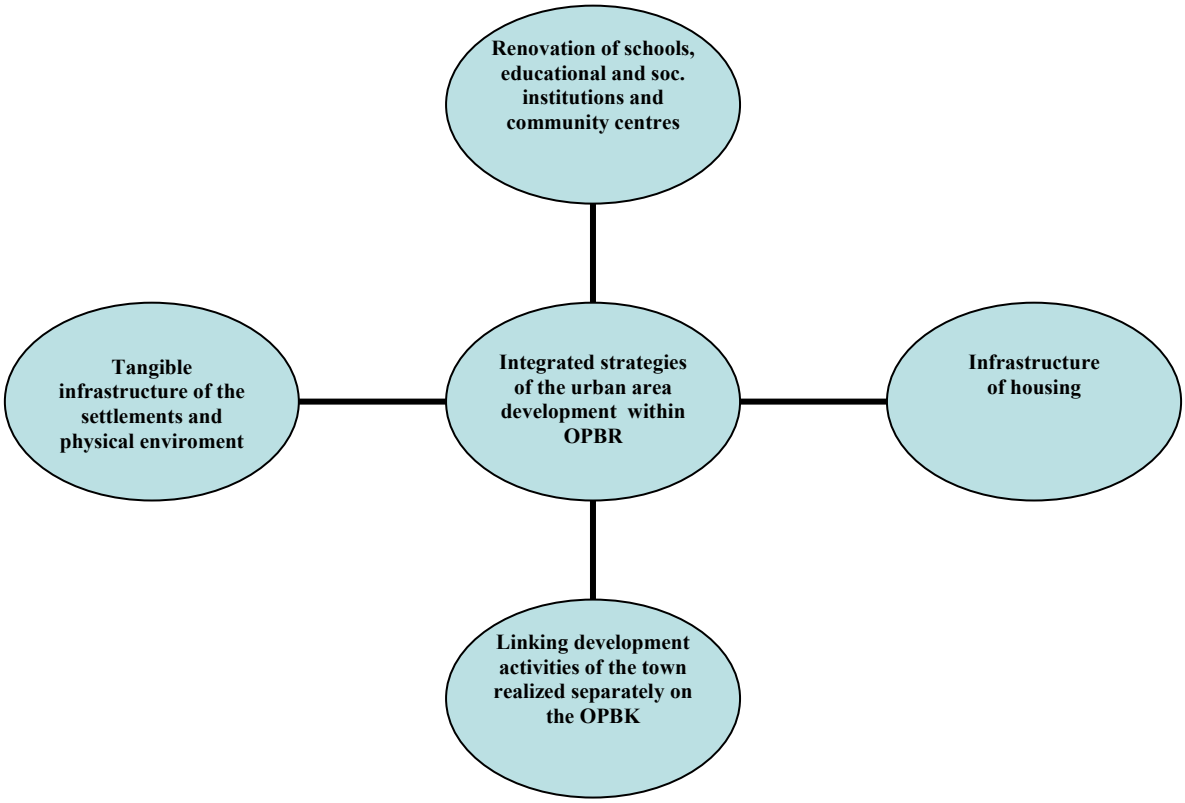
k) financing the operations focused on reconstruction of the residential buildings is implemented through the code of the priority theme - 78 Infrastructure of housing (see Chapter 8)

l) financing of other operations of settlements regeneration within the integrated strategies is implemented through the priority theme 61 Integrated projects of regeneration of the urban and rural areas (a part of allocation for this priority theme in the Financial Plan of the OPBR is determined also for individual demand-oriented projects of the settlements regeneration, see Chapter 8)

The OPBR programme manual will describe details in relation to the implementation of the integrated strategies of the urban areas development.

The spectrum of the integrated strategies can be complemented with the operations from other operational programmes co-financed by the SF, e.g., with the solution of the issue of employment and social exclusion. The successful implementation of the integrated project of the urban area development establishes the potential of further reinforcement of social and economic development of the supported urban area. Establishment the more attractive environment can be reinforced with other additional activities of the town (e.g., cooperation of the town with the local entrepreneurs, development of services related to maintenance of public concourses, increasing safety through the localisation of the municipality police workplace, etc.).

Integrated development of the urban areas through the OPBR



Source: MCRD SR, 2007

Separate demand-oriented projects

The projects are focused on renovation and development of the physical environment of the settlements or parts of the settlements, identified as the cohesion and innovation poles of growth including their cores of settlements and the following operations are eligible:

- reconstruction of public concourses including playgrounds and the elements of the public greenery
- reconstruction of public lighting systems

The task holder and execution body of the projects are the respective settlements of the Bratislava Region.

The assumption for implementation of the investment projects is the property and legal settlement of real estates which are the place of the projects implementation what is the task for the local self-governments.

Within reconstruction of the public concourses the following activities will be supported: renovation and development of significant territorial areas of the settlements with respect of ensuring barrier-less access to the public buildings and founding of public greenery and landscaping of the public greenery for the purposes of advancing culture and making the public areas more attractive, supporting the green lines Along the frequented communications and etc.

Reconstruction of the public lighting systems will be implemented for the purposes of reducing their energy demands and reinforcement of the measures increasing safety of the population.

Preservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with support tourism development

The interventions within this group of the activities aim at preservation and reinforcement of the national potential of the region, protection and development of the natural heritage including the NATURA 2000 localities in areas where this support contributes to the sustainable economic development. The interventions have the direct impact on support of tourism development.

Within the OPBR the following activities are supported:

- construction and renovation of the tourists tracks
- construction and reconstruction of the educational tracks
- construction and renovation of the cycling tracks including the cycling routes in the settlements

The activities aimed at utilisation of the protected areas potential will be implemented in the territories of protected landscape areas, state natural reservations and NATURA 2000 localities.

B. Measure 1.2 Regional and Urban Public Transport

The regional network of road communication is, due to the growing development of automobile transport loaded in the disproportional way what result into the issues of low permeability and frequent traffic collisions.
Integration of the public transport into the common operational environment and use of individual advantages so that the principle of suitable, economical and safe movement of passengers will be taken into account, is one of the alternatives of solutions of the transport system. Integration is understood as harmonisation of the urban public transport operation, the suburban transport, the regional transport, optimising and coordinating of the public transport using unified schedules, single transfer tariffs. Later on, development of multi-mode terminals and integration of the individual transport and the public transport as well.

The objective of the measure is to increase number of transported persons by the improved public transport.

In the interest of improvement of transport serviceability of the Bratislava Region territory, increase of the population mobility and the more effective use of the existing types of transport, to development of Integrated Transport System of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (hereinafter "ITS BSR") has the specific importance. The basic motive of existence of the ITS BSR is advancing attractiveness of public transportation in competition with the individual automobile transportation.

Support the public transport group of activities of the will be managed through reinforcement of transit capacity of the urban public transport without an increase of consumption of fossil fuels, development of non-railway systems of UPT, investor and project preparation for extension of railway UPT, increase of attractiveness and reliability mainly of the railway UPT via introduction of its preference before the individual transport and development the on line information system on UPT operations in real time for the passengers.

Development of the ITS BSR is extraordinary important, excessive and long-term task that should be solved in stages. Support the integrated transport is implemented in links to the experiment of Bratislava Integrated Transport carried out in the previous period as well as the experience from other regions (the South-Moravian Region and the town Brno).

The basic Perspective Document on Implementing the Integrated Transport System of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (Concept of the Bratislava Integrated Transport) is significant from the view of transfer of passengers in the Bratislava Region, elaborated by the company Bratislavská integrovaná doprava, s.r.o. This document was approved by the Authority of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region Authority through Resolution No. 24/2007 as of 25 April 2007, and by the representation of the SR capital town of Bratislava through Resolution No. 87/2007 as of 26 April 2007. The beginning of the 1st stage of the ITS BSR is scheduled on 1 January 2008.

Since 1994, the urban public transport in Bratislava has been a business subject of the joint-stock company Dopravný podnik Bratislava, a.s. [Bratislava Transport Enterprise], firstly transformed from a state enterprise into a municipal enterprise and then into a joint-stock company.

Brief description of the activities

In accordance with the approved Conceptual and Time Schedule of the project preparation for the for introducing the ITS BSR introduction, it is already possible now to set out two main fields of interest which will, fulfill through their content the efforts of the BSR and the SR capital town of Bratislava to support increasing traffic smoothness based on the complex strategy of developing the ITS BSR:

Establishing the single tariff system - electronic designators and detectors for single-use tickets and prepayment chip cards inside the vehicles and at the platforms, selling automats, terminals for selling prepayment time tickets, information boards, construction arrangements of platforms and parking places necessary for installation of relevant electronic equipment.

Establishing the transfer terminals at the pre-selected traffic nodes with the possibilities of effective use of separate types of public transport (e.g., regional train, suburb bus, urban public transport lines). Developing holding parking places within transfer terminals. Pre-selecting of the relevant terminals depends on the processing of transport serviceability plan
The territorial concentration of development of transfer terminals lies in meaningful support the selected line routes in accordance with the development plans given in the Territorial Planning Scheme of the BSR or in the Territorial Planning Scheme of the SR capital town of Bratislava. It involves on the one hand, modernisation of terminals' amenities and facilities on the selected railway routes of the Bratislava Region and on the other hand, interconnection of the railways routes to the linking tram routes.

Support the UPT: Preparation and implementation of the activities aimed at increasing of the quality of the integrated passenger public transport and reduction of its negative impacts on the environment, including inevitable development and reconstruction of the tram and trolleybus routes in relation to the provision of functioning of the integrated transport system, completion of facilities for preference or rail transport at the controlled crossroads, procurement and installation of control software with the attributes of preference of rail transport. This activity will apply to the territory of the town Bratislava.

Information provision: The single information system, marketing support the whole system (information campaign, websites, information centres, customer centres, establishing the own single dispatcher unit, etc.).
With respect to the character of the measures, the eligible area for the measures of the regional and urban public transport is the whole territory of the BSR, except for support the UPT that is implemented only in the town Bratislava territory.

5.1.3. Justification of the priority axis

The priority axis 1 of the OPBR aims at the interventions into the tangible infrastructure of the towns and municipalities, protection and increasing the quality of the natural wealth and development and integration of the regional and urban public transport into the operational environment. The purpose of intervention is mainly support competitiveness and innovative capacity of the region through the groups of activities defined in the measures of regeneration of settlements and regional and urban public transport. The high structural and technical level of the public concourses, their supplementary elements, the residential environment with the high aesthetic value, the quality environment, the suitable system of public transport, this aspects are the inevitable pre-conditions for attractiveness of the territory for diverse economic activities and at the same time they prevent from arising areas with physical deterioration and social exclusion.

The capital town of Bratislava is the largest development centre of the territory which progress has an effect on the all surrounding areas and concurrently the largest engine of development and application of innovation, science and research. However, the town reports an increased occurrence of social pathologic phenomena that are connected immediately to the territorial, social, economic and environmental disadvantaging of the inhabitants. The broad spectrum of the activities establishes assumptions for implementation of the project plans of complex development. As difference to the programming period 2004-2006, the eligible territories are the urban areas of Bratislava with number of population more than 5 000. The objective shortcoming of the urban areas is the technical and social deterioration of housing stock, mainly in the urban areas affected with the negative social and economic influences, what contributes to the gradual degradation of the given areas. Therefore within the integrated strategies , emphasis is put on the integrated approach, renovation of housing stock and renovation of the physical environment, conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with an aim of increasing tourism development, renovation of school and education institutions, schools playgrounds, institutions providing the social services and community centres. The urban environment of high quality contributes to the priority of Lisbon Strategy which objective is to make Europe a more attractive place for labour force, housing and investments.

The objective of the interventions focused on the support the renovation of the physical environment is to increase the attractiveness of the settlements which face the raising number of the new citizens moving to the surrounded areas of the capital town of Bratislava. Originally rural settlements are as consequence transforming to the housing zones which provide the servicing and social service for their inhabitants, their tangible infrastructure is not sufficient and obsolete. In the framework of the prognosis of the demographic development the positive trends of population growth are expected outside the Bratislava districts. Newcomers are often isolated from the original inhabitants of the settlements because they live in modern parts of the settlements, their integration into the lives of these old settlements is very limited with respect to the technical status of these old settlements. Renovation of the physical environment including the elements of the small architecture will lead first of all into the original parts of the settlements centres of the Bratislava Region so that they could provide background to their inhabitants and they could become an integrated part of the growing settlements of the Bratislava Region.

Conservation and renovation of the natural heritage and support cycle tracks with of increasing tourism development creates space for utilisation of leisure-time activities and tourists activities while the interventions into the protected areas, including the NATURA 2000 localities will lead to protection of the environment and increasing the awareness on the protected areas and its necessity for improving. The traditionally used form of the educational tracks is no used in a sufficient way. The network of the cycling routes is necessary to maintain

continuously because the cycling tourism is an important part of the leisure time activities of the citizens and tourists.

The ongoing growing pressure of the town and municipalities of the Bratislava Region on a systematic solution of the transport results into efforts aimed at completion of the transport networks as well as advancing effectiveness of the public transport (i.e., the suburb and urban public transport). In accordance with transfer of competences to the self-governments, the municipalities are directly co-responsible for the provision of transfer of citizens to their jobs, schools, obligations and entertainment.

The basic tool for decreasing of the automobile transport is to use the existing reserves of the separate types of public transport through their integration. Based on the positive experience with the project of integration of public transport in the Czech Republic, implemented with support from the Structural Funds over the period 2004-2006, the OPBR aims at advancing of the quality of mutual linkage of the separate types of public transport in the field of ticket policy, single information system and territorial concentration of the activities connected to establishing the transfer terminals.

Introduction of the integrated transport system in the conditions of the Bratislava Region will bring, according to the experience with the similarly functioning systems in the towns in the neighbouring countries, the following benefits:

- *For passengers:* The single travel document useable in all the travel means of the current transporters (Dopravný podnik Bratislava, Slovenská autobusová doprava Bratislava and Železničná spoločnosť Slovensko, or other private carriers) with the attractive single tariff and transfer conditions,
- *For transporters:* The more economical valorisation of the own capacities in the more broad integrated area with the precisely stipulated contractual conditions with guarantees of covering economically provable losses while providing performances in the public interest,
- *For ordering parties of transport:* More economical spending of public finances while ensuring transport in the territory of the region and the town.

5.2. Priority axis 2 Knowledge-based Economy

5.2.1. Objective and focus of the priority axis

Based on the results of analyses it can be stated that the Bratislava Region uses its innovative potential and ICT to the insufficient extent.

The objective of the priority axis 2 is to support competitiveness of the region through support innovations and access to ICT mainly in the field of SME.

This priority axis focuses on the selected fields of the regional economic system that have potential to contribute significantly to reinforcing competitiveness of the Bratislava Region. The targeted and coordinated interventions into the fields of innovations and informatisation represent an effective response to globalisation of economy and increasing of competition in the domestic and foreign markets. Communication and active cooperation between the relevant regional players and mobilisation of further available resources are the conditions for achieving effect of supported activities.

The global objective of the priority axis is effective support transition of the region towards knowledge-based economy through effective utilisation of the innovative ICT with emphasis on their utilisation within SMEs. The activities will be performed in accordance with the relevant strategies and policies (Development Strategy of the BSR, ECDPs of the BSR, town and municipalities, Territorial Planning Scheme, Regional Innovative Strategy, Information System of Public Administration, etc.), respecting specific needs of the Bratislava Region so that it enables to achieve critical mass and leveraging effects. Based on the ex ante recommendations the higher financial amount has been allocated on the priority axis 2 which will enable to support more activities in the sphere of innovation and ICT. The anticipated effect of the interventions is an increased innovative capacity of enterprises, effective electronisation of the public self-government, improvement of offer of on-line services, effective use of ICT in SME localised in the region, and through this reinforcement of ability to create and valorise knowledge in the form of new top products, services, processes and competences.

Fulfilment of the objective of the priority axis 2 is managed by the following groups of the activities:

- support creation and introduction of innovation and technological transfers within SME
- support introduction and use of progressive technologies within SME with the goal to reduce energy and material demands and technologies or utilisation of the renewable sources
- support introduction the innovative technologies within SME for preventing from atmosphere pollution or reduction the atmosphere pollution and etc.
- protection of intellectual property

- electronisation of self-governing authority and development of the electronic services on the local and regional levels including the establishing and development of the integrated servicing places enabling providing the public services on one spot.
- support the broadband internet availability of for public administration at the local level and for SME
- introduction and effective use of access to ICT in SME.

The operations aimed at innovation and technological transfers are supported preferentially in the innovative growth poles, including cores of settlement. There are establishing conditions in the innovation growth poles for arising and development of the most important resources of growth, based on the utilisation of knowledge, growth of effectiveness and efficiency of the decisive economic and social processes effecting development in other territory of the region and the SR. In cases where the significant economic and social impact is provable, support is also provided to the areas outside the innovative growth poles.
The principle of the territorial concentration does not apply to the operations in the field of informatisation of society due to implementation of intervention within the whole territory. The interventions in the field of the broadband internet availability of are supported in the territory of the BSR based on the results of feasibility study. The feasibility study is financed by the OPIS.
The programme manual of the OPBR gives a detailed description of these activities.

Table 22 Indicators at the level of the priority axis 2

INDICATOR	TYPE	UNIT	INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	ORIGINAL VALUE		TARGET VALUE
				SR		SR 2015
				Year	Value	
Number of supported projects focused on innovation implementation a technology transfers in SME	Output / core	number	number of projects supported within measure 2.1	2006	0	50
from the above: number of supported start-ups SME	Output / core	number	Number of projects supported start-ups in SME (first 2 years after start) focused on innovation implementation and technology transfers (measure 2.1)	2006	0	10
Number of jobs created in SME	Result	Number of men / number of women	Number of jobs created by intervention in small and medium entreprises	2006	0	100/100
Number of projects focused on collaboration of SME and public research organisations	Output / core	number	Number of projects focused on collaboration of SME and public research organisations within measure 2.1	2006	0	20
Number of submitted patent applications at EPO*	Result	Number	Number of application submitted to EPO as a result of supported projects.	2006	0	22
Number of innovative products introduced in the market	Result	Number	Number of innovative products introduced in the market and result of implementation of the projects in the BR	2006	0	40
Number of supported projects focused on increasing of society informatization	Output / core	Number	number of projects increasing informatization of the	2006	0	75

			Bratislava region population within measure 2.2			
Number of newly connected SME to broadband internet	Result	Number	number of new connections of SME to broadband internet implemented through OPBR interventions	2006	0	50
Increase of population with access to the IOM (Internet Servicing Place) on the total No. of population	Result	Number	increase of inhabitants accessing nearest functional ISP in 15 minutes (without walking to the bus/tram/trolley stop and waiting) by using public transport means	2006	0	200 000
Time savings in dealing selected live situation due to electronisation of service	Result	Hour	difference between total time of process duration of delivering service by the provider also by beneficiary before and after implementing electronical service average per inhabitant during the whole programming period of Bratislava region	2006	0	10
Number of introduced electronic services accessible online	output	Number	Services which are fully accessible online, e.g., such, which can be completely dealt with in electronic form	2006	0	24

*EPO means the European Patent Office

The following two Measures are determined for implementation of the priority axis:

Measure 2.1 Innovation and Technological Transfer

Measure 2.2 Informatisation of Society.

5.2.2. Main fields of the interventions within the priority axis 2

A. Measure 2. 1 Innovations and Technological Transfers

The objective of the measure is to increase significantly all the types of innovations in entrepreneurial sphere, support the introduction of progressive technologies and through it to ensure long-term competitiveness of SMEs and high growth of their productivity.

The Bratislava Region has the best assumptions to become an innovative leader of the Slovakia economy. However, analysis showed the several problematic fields which are the barriers of innovative development. One among the reasons of the low innovation activity in the SR regions is the undeveloped support structure for innovation in the growth poles. The reasons of this status was privatisation of state enterprises and research institutions that meanwhile finished their operations. The further reasons are the following: loss of markets, non-existing of general and non-applied regional innovation strategy, lack of the financial resources on its updating and aiming of development based on rather low price of labour, cheap material, energy inputs and incentives for foreign investors. Another reason of the lower interest of enterprises in introducing innovation into practice is the lack of information and necessary services as well as the lack of suitable infrastructure.

It implies from the lessons from evaluations of the activities performed in 2004-2006 that for the growth of Slovak economy and growth of employment as well as introduction of innovations,

sustainable growth and increase of competitive ability of industry and services, it is required to support the activities focused mainly on the following activities:

- transfer of innovative technologies,
- increase of innovative activity in enterprises and the higher application of R & D into the innovation process,
- reinforcement of cooperation of enterprises with the R & D institutions and universities, Regional research and innovation centre of the BSR will be supported from the Operational Programme Research and Development
- improvement of the infrastructure for business,
- activities linked to developing of quality management systems, protection of intellectual property and certification of products

Innovations arise and are the results of the activities in the management, trade and technologies. According to this, innovations can have character of non-technical innovations (e.g., organisational and marketing innovations), product innovations and technological innovations. Innovations are supporting the use of intellectual property in practice not only through the introduction of the more effective technologies and methods of management, enabling to respond to the change and opportunities in market but they also support by establishing and maintaining qualified jobs.

The interventions aim predominantly at development of the material and logistic infrastructure for the innovative entrepreneurial activities focused on support R & D in SME so that their innovation activity will increase. Support is focused on the activities linked to protection of the industrial property, normalisation, accreditation and also on the quality. Innovations in the companies will head for the projects of transfer of new technologies, innovation of the processes and products. The support provided will enable to improve financial stability of enterprises which execute the innovations of products, technologies and services. Energy demands of the industry comparing to the EU will be partially solved through innovation of technologies as well. For improvement of innovative performance of the SR, the ME SR elaborated the new Innovation Strategy adopted by the SR Government. This Strategy was based on the individual Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) elaborated by the self-governing regions. In parallel, the ME SR prepared the legislation change on innovations that will be adopted by the National Council of the Slovak Republic. For the purpose of reinforcing cooperation of enterprises with R & D institutions and universities, equally as in Objective Convergence, regional research and innovation centres (hereinafter "RRIC") will be established in the Bratislava region that represent the interest of the association of the legal entities of the public sector: self-governing regions, towns, municipalities, public universities at the level of the region. The main role of the RRIC is to determine such strategy of increasing of innovation performance of the region that should fulfil, in complementarity with other strategies of the region, the goals of the Innovation Strategy at the level of RRISand concurrently of the Slovak Republic. Development and coordination of implementation of Innovation Strategy is in competence of the MEd SR within the OPRD.
Despite it that the overall total energy consumption is gradually declining, energy consumption in the SR industry is the highest comparing to the EU states what results from the existence of energy-demanding production of the local industry. Support the OPBR aims at the increasing of energy efficiency in the production and effective utilisation of energy. It has enable to introduce such technologies that are less demanding for energy consumption and they can produce energy also from alternative, mainly renewable resources.

SME support is focused mainly on establishing and development of enterprises based on the new technologies. The essential view for the selection of projects will be their compliance with the principles of SD and reduction of energy demands. The projects have to be focused on introduction of a new (from the EU point of view) technology or products and services that are outcome of the own research and development, or other R & D institutions.

Reinforcement of innovation activities of entrepreneurs is performed through protection and commercionalisation of the intellectual property. The objective of this measure in this field should prefer those who want to protect their research results by a patent application. The processes innovations will be supported through acquiring quality certificates and international accreditations.
The measure "Innovation and Technological Transfers" complies with the specific priority of NSRF No. 2.4 "Support Competitiveness of Enterprises and Services" mainly through innovations. Result of support should be modernisation and advancing of effectiveness of the production and services which will contribute to the increase of competitiveness of economy, reducing intra-regional disparities, creation of new innovative (high-tech) SME and establishing the new jobs. The objective of the specific priority 2.4 is to ensure sustainable economic growth and employment.

The Operational Programme Bratislava Region in the field of innovations links up to the interventions that will be supported in the region within the Operational Programme Research and Development. While the OPRD aim predominantly at increasing of the quality of the public research sector and developing the RRIC, the OPBR aims at reinforcement of the strategic direction of the region. The measure aims at support the private sector SMEs.

Brief description of the activities

Support establishing and introduction of innovations and technological transfers within SME: Preparation of the projects of technology transfer and knowledge transfer to enterprises - proposals of the development projects, studies of technical feasibility, identification of the available products, technologies and procedures; analysis of functional and market applicability of the product or process; implementation of introduction of innovations based on the feasibility studies and prepared analytic projects; support the innovation counselling services which means counselling in the sphere of management, technical assistance services in the spheres of the technology transfer, consultations in case of acquiring and protection of the intellectual property and trading with them in case of licensing agreements on counselling on norms using, support marketing plans; procurement of apparatus and testing equipment for the purposes of the new products; production of prototypes, their trial, semi-operation and verification series with products, innovation product offer of SME via purchasing the new progressive technologies aimed at use the new ideas, patents, etc., support cooperation of enterprises and public research organisations, using the databanks and laboratories, support renting the premises in technological parks, innovation centres, support the purchase of the patent, licence or re-financing of the relevant expenses for acquiring the new results of the research and development.

Support introduction and use of progressive technologies within SME: preparation of the projects for the technologies transfer and knowledge transfer to enterprises with the goal of reducing energy and material demands, support pilot projects and programmes of implementation of the new technologies for the use of energy from renewable resources, evaluation of impacts, constructing equipment generating energy from renewable resources, predominantly small water power plants, equipment for energy use of biomass, biogas, equipments for production of bio-fuels, thermal pumps not working with the so-called hard

freons, equipment for use of solar energy, equipments for use of geothermal energy, equipments for use wind energy.

Support introduction of innovative technologies within SME: to prevent from arising of the atmosphere pollution or reduction of emissions into the atmosphere from the existing pollution resources, support introduction of the progressive technologies enabling to reduce emissions in SME, introduction of the innovative technological processes restricting use of the organic solvents (e.g. water-soluble paints, varnishes and glues).

Protection of intellectual property: increase of competitiveness of entrepreneurial entities through introduction of the methods of quality management (ISO 9000, ISO 1400, introduction of Eco-Management and Audit Schemes), support pre-certification, certification as well as re-certification processes related to introduction of quality management systems; support acquisition of foreign quality certificate; support in acquiring of the domestic and international accreditations.

The following activities will be supported within the investment activities:

- the activities aimed at innovation of machines, apparatuses and equipment, testing facilities, production procedures and technologies with the goal to increase competitiveness and value added including inevitable hardware and software;
- the activities aimed at modernisation of machines, apparatuses and equipment, production procedures and technologies with the goal to reduce and remove negative effects of the industry and services on environment, including necessary hardware and software;
- and other similar eligible activities supporting the objectives of the measure

Anticipated forms of state aid:

- Scheme of support for small and medium-sized innovative enterprises (scheme of state aid) - direct support in the form of grant;
- Scheme of support the small and medium entrepreneurs of the OPBR (scheme of aid *de minimis*).

B. Measure 2. 2 Informatisation of Society

The objective of the measure is to support the knowledge-based economy development through interventions into the products in the field of information and communication technologies.

With respect to the insufficient use of ICT in the Bratislava Region, it is required to focus support on the side of demand (citizens, SMEs) as well as to the side of offer (regional and local self-governments). Readiness and capacity of the region from the view of the current and predominantly future requirements of knowledge-based economy are not sufficient. Therefore, emphasis is put on the selection of suitable instruments enabling increasing the level of informatisation in the Bratislava Region so that its deliverables could be demonstrated on the quality of life of citizens and increasing competitiveness of the entrepreneurial sector.

The inevitable assumption for increasing competitiveness of the enterprises is to establish pre-conditions for their development from the side of the regional and local self-governments. The regional and local self-governments can advance in the field of informatisation the effectiveness of utilisation of the existing and future development factors through increasing

the quality of contents and extent of electronic applications and services. Therefore support aims at electronisation of self-government and development of services provided by the regional and local self-governments with aiming at the end user (citizens, entrepreneurs, clients). The goal is to make the contacts of the citizens and business spheres representatives with the public administration easier and to arrange transit to the digital administration.

Electronisation of the public administration at the central level will implement through the measure 1.1 of the OPIS. Actions benefiting the region of Bratislava are not eligible for support from OPIS as it covers only the convergence objective. Within OPIS, a pro rata principle has been applied to actions which have a national benefit so that the impact on areas outside of Bratislava region can be funded. This pro rata has been set at 88.6%, with the remaining 11.4% covering that part of the actions which benefit the Bratislava region. This 11.4% of the cost of national actions must therefore be funded from other national sources.

Based on the pro rata principle value of 88,6 % has been stated while the rest of 11,4 % is related to the activities which bring profit to the Bratislava Region These 11,4 % of the expenses on the national activities must be financed from other national sources. Expenditures for electronisation of the self-government at the regional and local levels are financed through the OPBR, achieving so complementarity among the operational programmes. The goal of support the self-government from the OPBR is strengthen the use of the single information room, advancing effectiveness of the self-government administration activities and accessing the basic e-services to the citizens and entrepreneurs. Without support the regional and local self-governments it is not possible to ensure for SMEs in the Objective RCE the access to same online services as supported in Objective Convergence.

In accordance with the aim to increase the effectiveness of the self-government administration functioning and providing the quality services for the users, the integrated services places will be developed in the centres of gradient areas where electronic services will be provided by the self-government administration at the single place. Another form of the preventing from "electronic" exclusion is development of a network of publicly accessible workplaces with the internet connection with emphasis on the easy-accessible central localities with the suitable territorial equipment. The concerned investments are accompanied with the increasing of information of target groups about the options of the internet access.

Support accessibility of the broadband internet accessible to all the citizens is one of the most important assumptions for effective use of the new electronic services. Therefore, support is oriented for development of the regional and local broadband networks in the areas not sufficiently covered by transmission capacity and concurrently non-attractive for commercial operators. Thus, implementation of this measure issues from the feasibility studies of which result will be reflected into the specific packages of projects offered from the resources of this priority axis for the towns, municipalities, network operators and providers of broadband connection services.

It will be specific approach for increasing of connections to the broadband internet. First of all it will be necessary to take into consideration the geographic, social and economic conditions (mainly in the rural areas and towns without the serviceable coverage) and according to the character of the environment to select an optimal technological and economical solution. Investments into the access networks from the resources allocated from the OPBR should be solved predominantly at the level of self-government, accelerating their development in this way. The main outputs of such development will be the prepared solutions for the relevant places. However, it is required to resolve also other questions of superstructure of the optical networks, their operation and the broadband services. A study will be elaborated within the measure 3.1 of the OPIS “Development and support sustainable use of the infrastructure of broadband access”, covering all the Slovak territory.

The preparation of implementation as well as monitoring the projects implementation will be executed in the close cooperation with the Telecommunication Authority of the SR which help in ensuring that the projects will not break the economic competition and comply with the principles of e-government.

Improvement and expanding of access to ICT will be supported directly in SME as well. Despite it that the BSK belongs among the regions with the highest level of informatisation in the SR, it reports in the field of SME under average values of the indicators of information society. The aim of the OPBR is to establish such environment in SMEs so that they become enterprises that can guarantee a dynamic response to the requirements of market, its opportunities and external threats.

Support SMEs aims at establishing and improvement of accessibility to ICT, advancing the quality of services and applications (e-business, establishing networks, etc.) and their effective use. Particular attention will aim at the combination of the SMEs support to access to the broadband internet with support activities focused on designing digital contents. Support will be provided through the scheme of aid *de minimis*.

The OPBR through this measure links up to the 2nd strategic priority of the NSRF titled Knowledge-based Economy and within it to the specific priority 2.1 informatisation of Society. The objective of the specific priority is establishing inclusive information society as a mean for development of highly performing knowledge-based economy.

The activities of the measure are in accordance with the Strategic Guidance on Community Cohesion - Support information society for everybody. The measure with respect to the Guidance contribute to supporting offer and demand of ICT products, public and private services, as well as support availability of ICT infrastructure in the areas not attractive for commercial providers.
The measure aims at support the local and regional self-governments and the private sector.

Brief description of the activities

Electronisation of the self-government and development of e-services at the local and regional levels
The framework activity result from the concept of informatisation of the self-government administration which will be detailed elaborated on the basis of a feasibility study and will precede implementation of activity from the supported projects in the programming period 2004-2006 (i.e., Information System of the Public Administration Geoportal of the BSR, Extension of Graphical Part of the Database Register for the Needs of the BSR Geo-portal). The activity will be implemented mainly through the individual projects prepared based on the above mentioned study and reflected into the national concept of informatisation of the self-government administration and to it related concepts of informatisation of individual compulsory entities of the self-government administration at the central, regional and local levels.

Framework activities:

- establishing and SD of the quality back office of self-government through the investments into the shared HW % SW supporting conduct of the key processes at the regional and local levels of self-government with the concept of ISPA integrated architecture that will enable to build up systematically the network of integrated servicing places so that the density of coverage in the region and availability

of services will reduce significantly the need to travel for dealing with services of the self-government administration

- introduction of the effective self-government e-services in the way of being in accordance with the concept of e-services provided by the state administration and so that they are performed together with electronisation of the self-government administration at the central level. These e-services imply from the new options of electronisation of the public administration and the generally recognised principles of e-government, covering mainly the following sections of the conduct of administration: electronic applications for secondary school, electronic applications for social services, electronic applications and decisions, housing, stay, transport, culture, registration office, business, plots of land, self-government, social services, building, education, animals, the environment.
- establishing and development of integrated servicing places where the full or partial e-services will be provided on one spot.

Support the broadband internet accessibility

The aim of the OPBR is to ensure access to the broadband internet for all the citizens. While the strategy of the commercial providers is to cover settlements with the highest density of the population or with the highest concentration of economic activities, the strategy of the OPBR is to proceed in the opposite way. Therefore, the centres of interest are the least developed areas of the BSR which are not interesting for the commercial operators today.

The interventions will aim at the framework activities focused on development of the regional and local broadband networks in the areas non-attractive for commercial operators, especially:

- development of metallic and wireless accessible broadband networks
- development of metropolitan optical networks
- development of optical access broadband FTTx networks

Introduction and effective use of access to ICT in SMEs

The operations will be focused on the effective use of the potential of ICT, i.e., support access to the broadband internet, development of local area networks (LAN) within the SMEs, procurement of the inevitable hardware and software for creation of the local intra-company networks, establishing, designing and maintenance of electronic services and applications (e.g., e-business), design and maintenance of websites, development of electronic information and booking systems, etc..

Anticipated forms of state aid:
Scheme of support the small and medium entrepreneurs of the OPBR (scheme of aid *de minimis*).

5.2.3. Justification of the priority axis

Priority axis Knowledge-based Economy will be executed through two particular thematic measures which are closely related and which support the integrated approach to the solutions of the recent issues of the Bratislava Region development. The measures are the key from the

point of view of the Strategy of Competitiveness of the SR till 2010 and support the fulfilment of the Lisbon criteria.

The Bratislava Region with a respect to its location potential, level of economic growth and international links has ambition to be included among the developed regions of Europe. To achieve prosperity and to ensure the high living standards of the region's population depends on the significant extent upon the ability of the region and its enterprises to respond flexibly to the fast changing economic environment due to globalisation. Therefore, for its further growth its adaptability to the new conditions and sufficiently quickly adaptation to the structural changes is decisive. These processes are based on the effective and efficient acquisition, processing, utilisation and spreading the new scientific knowledge and innovations at the side of the private as well as the public sectors. In the process of developing the regional economy based on knowledge, the quality or the regional innovation system and the level of informatisation of society in the Bratislava Region play the significant roles.

In 2006, based on the evaluation of the regional innovative performance through the aggregate regional innovation index, the BSK belonged to the 27th place among the European regions. This ranking can be considered as success that is however based mainly on the above-average values of the human resources in science and research indicators (157 % of the EU average), whole-life education (144 %) and employment in high-tech services. The reinforcement of the regional innovation system is the necessary condition for increasing the overall innovation ability of the region. The innovation system with respect to its fragility without the targeted support is not able to support long-term effective competitiveness of the region and enterprises in the growing international competition. Complex development of the innovation infrastructure, support innovative and technologically oriented enterprises able to produce new and competitive products and services belong among the priority fields, under conditions that they have access to the financial resources and venture capital.

The effective and efficient utilisation of ICT by society is an important part of the functioning economy based on knowledge. ICT enable fast communication among the relevant partners of the regional development and mutual exchange of information. Introduction and utilisation of the new ICT, e-services and spreading of the digital contents contribute to the increase of competitiveness and productivity of the region and the enterprises making their business there. With respect to the identified needs, it is required to devote the targeted support to the selected fields which are critical for the further development of informatisation of society in the Bratislava Region. In this way, continuity of the pilot project ensures in the field of informatisation of the regional and local self-government, supported within the Single Programming Document Bratislava NUTS 2 Region Objective 2.

E-services of the local and regional self-government for citizens and entrepreneurs are supported within the OPBR. Benefit for the citizens will be saving of time and financial costs through the better availability of the self-government administration services at the integrated servicing places or through online services. The specific e-services at the local or regional level aimed at entrepreneurs (government to business) should bring profit mainly to SME.

5.3. Priority axis 3 Technical Assistance

5.3.1. Objectives and focus of the priority axis

The objective of this priority axis is to provide the OPBR implementation in accordance with the requirements for management, implementation, control, monitoring, evaluation of the operational programme and for the administrative structures responsible for the implementation of the operational programme.

Technical Assistance as the separate priority axis of the Operational Programme Bratislava Region aims at ensuring the supportive mechanism for conducting individual tasks of the MA for the OPBR and the IBMA for the OPBR defined in the General Regulation.
It focused on the support the effective management of the operational programme, its promotion and support the evaluation of the priority axes and projects. It is used for the activities related to the management, monitoring, control, analysis and providing information, including promotion, evaluation and exchange experience.

5.3.2. Priority theme within the priority axis 3

The following priority themes[38] apply to the field of Technical Assistance:

85 - Preparation and implementation, monitoring, control and audit
86 - Evaluation and studies; information and publicity

The MA for the OPBR or the IBMA for the OPRB can use resources of the technical assistance (TA) for co-financing of the activities supporting effective implementation of the OPBR in terms of the stating the fields of activities, mainly for the following fields:

Priority theme 85 - Preparation and implementation, monitoring, control and audit

in the personnel field:

- the activities related to the process of the personnel training involved in the implementation of the interventions from the SF and the CF within the OPBR (seminars, training, courses, fellowship stays, working journeys, etc.)
- salary provision for the personnel, including benefits for all the eligible personnel involved in the implementation of assistance from the ERDF within the OPBR, including levies of the employer and employees

in the field of technical facilities:

- the activities aimed at adequate material and technical provision of the eligible entities in relation to support the implementation of assistance from the ERDF within the OPBR

[38] According to the Enclosure No. 2 European Community Regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006

in the field of operation expenditures:

- the activities directly related to the operational provision of the implementation of the interventions from the ERDF within the OPBR (operational expenditures, expenditures for maintenance, etc.)

in the field of the preparation and implementation:

- the activities aimed at the field of designing and updating the strategic and methodical documents
- the activities related to the process of implementation of the OPBR, including the fields of the financial and the projects/programmes management

in the field of control and audit:

- the activities related to the introduction and coordination of the effective systems of the OPBR control and audit
- the activities related to the conduct of control and audit of the OPBR and projects implementation 1

in the field of monitoring:

- the activities related to monitoring of implementation of the projects and the OPBR
- the activities related to monitoring of implementation of the horizontal priorities
- the activities related to the preparation and provision of the conduct of competencies of the monitoring committee, the working, coordination groups and committees in competence of the MA for the OPBR (these expenditures may include also expenditures for experts and other members in these committees, including third country participants, if the chair-person of such committee considers their presence to be inevitable for the effective implementation of assistance)

Priority theme 86 - Evaluation and studies; providing information and publicity

in the field of informing and publicity:

- the activities related to the provision of information, spreading awareness of the programme and the provision of publicity of the OPBR at the adequate level[39] for the beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and the public
- the activities related to establishing the network of contact places and information channels
- the activities related to the preparation and implementation of the Communication Plan
- the activities linked to the reinforcement of absorption ability, i.e., the provision of methodical and professional counselling, support of activities for help to applicants, the provision of training and seminars for exchange of experience and spreading examples of the lessons learned, support partnership and mutual cooperation in preparing and implementing projects, implementation of activities for monitoring of absorption capacity, etc.

[39] In term of Article 69 of the General Regulation and Section 1 of the Commission Regulation 1828/2006

in the field of evaluation and studies:

- the activities related to the provision of the specific evaluations of the OPBR implementation executed by the external experts or the internal or the external units functionally independent on the Audit Authority[40]
- the activities related to *ex ante* evaluation through which there are identified and assessed the differences and gaps and the potential of development, goals that should be achieved, anticipated results, the extent to which the Community priorities were taken into consideration, compliance of the strategy proposed for the regions, experience from the previous programming period, quality of the programming procedures, implementation, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, potential value added for the Community
- the evaluation activities linked to monitoring the OPBR over the programming period and the preparation of groundwork documents for the European Commission which execute by the subsequent evaluation
- the activities focused on the elaboration of the expert's opinions, methodologies, studies, assessment of effect on the environment, regional analysis and other analyses related to the preparation and implementation of the OPBR

5.3.3. Justification of the priority axis

Technical Assistance is the particular priority axis of the OPBR which purpose is to support implementation of other priority axes and the activities mentioned in the operational programme. The effective implementation of the operational programme depends on the abilities of the authorities involved into the implementation to carry out their functions in accordance with the obligations implied from the EC Regulations.

To meet the tasks of the MA for the RO OPBR is inevitable to ensure the material, technical, administrative and spatial conditions but concurrently also the methodological and analytical services related to the management, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and control of the programme. In relation to the transfer of conduct of the MA competencies in the field of implementation of the OPBR to the IBMA at the level NUTS 3, it is required to ensure the supportive financial resources related to the establishment and operation of another entity involved into the implementation of the programme. Concurrently, it is necessary to ensure sufficient publicity about the options that provide the EU Structural Funds and their positive effect on the development of Slovakia. Despite the significant advancement of effectiveness of the implementation and control mechanisms, the implementation of the OPBR requires increase the administrative capacities.

The MA for the OPBR is responsible for coordination of the projects elaboration and proportionality of the resources distribution for the separate fields of the activities, taking into consideration the goals and specifics of the operational programme and number of eligible entities involved in its implementation, demand of the processes for administrative capacities, etc. In the interest of the effective use of resources of TA of the OPBR and in accordance with the relevant guidance of the Central Coordination Authority (hereinafter "the CCA"), the MA for the OPBR elaborates and approves separated projects of TA for the priority theme 85 "Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control", and the priority theme 86 "Evaluation and studies; Information and communication". The low number of projects of TA of the OPBR relates to the effective and operational use of resources of TA. The whole spectrum of activities of the respective priority theme is included into one more excessive project

[40] In accordance with the requirements for evaluation pursuant to Chapter IV of the General Regulation

approved for all the operational programme implementation period. Every TA project for the OPBR is approved together by the MA and the IBMA, establishing the conditions for ensuring of all the procedures of all the involved entities.

Table 23 Indicators at the level of priority axis 3

Indicator	Type	Unit	Indicator definition	Reference value		Target values	Source
				SR		SR 2015	
				Year	Value		
Number of TA projects	Output	number	Number of projects of technical assistance (project submitted for preparation , execution, monitoring and control and project on evaluation and studies, information and communication)	2006	0	2	MCRD SR
Number of the employees who participate in the programme administration	Output	Number	Number of employees who participate at the programme administration	2006	22	48	MCRD SR

6. HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES

The following four horizontal priorities are respected in a case of every intervention within the OPBR in accordance with the National Strategic Reference Framework of the SR:

- Marginalised Roma Communities
- Equality of Opportunities
- Sustainable Development
- Information Society

Impact of the programme implementation on the goals of horizontal priorities is assessed on the level of the projects during the evaluation process, during the implementation and after their terminations as well as at the level of the programme that is assessed as a whole.

6.1. Character and scope of the horizontal priorities

Every of all four horizontal priorities differ in its character, requiring the specific approach in the process of implementation. The purpose of every horizontal priority is to ensure achievement of its defined objective concerning the several priorities of the NSRF and thus it cannot be ensured through only one operational programme but requires coordinated approach crossing several specific priorities or projects.
The horizontal priorities are applied according to their character to the relevant operational programmes in terms of the following table.

Table 24 Application of the horizontal priorities

Horizontal priority	Objective of the horizontal priority	Application of the horizontal priority
Marginalised Roma Communities (MRC)	Increasing of employment and educational level of the members of MRC and improve their living conditions	Complex approach (integration of the projects from several operational programmes)
Equality of Opportunities	Ensuring equality of opportunities for everybody and prevent from all the forms of discrimination	Principle applied in every project
Sustainable Development	Ensuring environmental, economic and social sustainability and social sustainability of the economic growth	Principle at the level of the strategic objective of the NSRF
Information Society	Development of inclusive information society	Integrated approach (interoperability of the information systems of the self-government administration and introduction of e-services in the operational programmes)

Source: MCRD SR, 2007

Indicators for the horizontal priorities

The indicators for the horizontal priorities will be discussed and arranged in cooperation with all the Managing Authorities and sponsors of the horizontal priorities through the WG of the CCA for monitoring and evaluation and later on approved by the coordination session of the CCA at the level of general directors in links to the arrangement of indicators in separate OPs according to comments of the EC. Subsequently, this system will be approved at the session of the National Monitoring Committee for the NSRF. The final list of the horizontal indicators which contribute to the execution of the OPBR will be provided and discussed with EC no later than during the second session of the Monitoring Committee for OPBR.

An indicative list of the indicators for the horizontal priorities is Annex No. 13 to the NSRF titled Indicators of the Horizontal Priorities of the NSRF.

6.1.1. Marginalised Roma Communities

The disadvantaged position of marginalised Roma communities (hereinafter "MRC") is not apparent in the Bratislava Region to such extent as in other areas of the Slovak Republic. Regardless of the fact that Roma minority population in the Bratislava Region has the low share but with the higher rate of concentration in Bratislava and the Záhorie region municipalities as well as with the high level of the social inclusion, this issue does not require any particular attention in the Bratislava Region within this OP. It is predominantly important to ensure increasing of the educational level, improving living standards and the social position of the Roma community what is included into the OP Education and the OP Employment and Social Inclusion. The OPBR in its priority axes does not specify any activity special for Roma community, nevertheless its framework activities including the support competitiveness by establishing new jobs in the diverse fields, contributing to development of Information Society can influence the Roma minority but do not solve directly the issue of social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities.

The OPBR as a whole provides the same opportunity for the professional realisation to everybody. In case of indirect form of fulfilling the horizontal priorities by creating the new jobs, the anti discriminating principle must be followed not only concerning the Roma community but also towards every marginalised groups.

In the NSRF two approaches are defined concerning the solution of the MRC issues as follows:

1. Complex approach where the emphasis is put on the mutual cross-connection of the activities and on the active participation of the local community within the project execution, will manage the system solution of the MRC problems and will enable long-term strategic planning and management of the community development. This approach will not be applied within the OPBR because it will be applied in the areas with significant MRC concentration.

2. Individually demand-oriented approach which supplements the complex approach and can be used within all the operational programmes. The evaluation criteria for the horizontal priorities for the projects will be defined in the framework of this individual approach. These criteria will be applied in a case if there will be MRC in the areas of the executed project and the execution of the project will have the positive impact on the quality of MRC lives. The introduction of these criteria will bring the percentual/points evaluation of the project. First of all the interventions within the Priority axis 1 are focused on the improvement of the quality of lives of all the inhabitants of the Bratislava Region therefore they represent indirect impact also for the MRC communities representatives.

6.1.2. Equality of opportunities

Equality of opportunities as one among the horizontal priorities within the EU solves the issue of fighting against any forms of discrimination based on gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, handicap, age or sexual orientation in the course of the SF and CF interventions and first of all in the stage of applying for them. The general principle objective of equality

of opportunities is to ensure equal treatment for every individual regardless to her/his nationality, gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, handicap, age or sexual orientation.
Based on the equality of opportunities concept it is required for the efficient equality enforcing that the institutional provision and application for equality of opportunities in the Slovak society covers all levels of self-government administration and self-government. The activities in the projects implementing will be ensured in accordance with the SR legislation in the field of compliance with the rules of equality of opportunities.

Equality of opportunities for women is considered in evaluating projects besides other, too. At present, the unequal position of women in the labour market is characterised by lower salaries, low participation of women in the field of business, their low number of managerial positions and ongoing feminisation of certain sectors. All the framework activities of the OPBR are context-neutral to the horizontal priority *Equality of Opportunities* establishing the equal conditions for genders and minorities.

Through development of the infrastructure the principles of equal treatment are not concerned. Results of the OPBR projects implementation are determined for the broad public and have the non-discrimination character.

The OPBR has a positive attitude to the horizontal priorities by supporting of the private sector where not only the assumptions for equality of opportunities to do business are established but also it creates the suitable conditions for development of entrepreneurial ideas through which it simultaneously supports the assumptions for application of that group which can be affected by market disparities - like, mainly the graduates the schools who often cannot find quickly jobs in practice. In applying for the equality of opportunities principle, the special attention is paid to the projects supporting establishing new jobs.

6.1.3. Sustainable development

Sustainable development is one of the basic objectives of the EU conducting all its policies and activities.

SD means targeted, long-term (ongoing), complex and synergic process effecting the conditions and all aspects of life (cultural, social, economic, environmental and institutional) at all the levels (local, regional and national) leading to such functional model of certain community (local, regional and international community) that brings satisfaction from the quality point of view manner to the biological, material, spiritual and social needs and interests of people while eliminating or significantly restricting the interventions damaging or spoiling the conditions of life, not burdening the country over the respectable rate, using meaningfully its resources and protecting cultural and natural heritage.

The SR Government considers SD as one of the basic pillars of the knowledge-based society and therefore it supports its balance so that beside economic growth also social and environmental impacts are taken into consideration.

The NSRF for 2007-2013 comprises SD as one of the key principles in the strategic objective, defining the respect of SD as one of the key conditions for increasing the competitiveness and performance of the SR regions and economy in the period of 2007-2013. Thus, fulfilment of the long-term vision of the NSRF, i.e., the process of convergence of the SR economy to the EU-15 average must take place according to the conditions of SD.

The objective of the horizontal priority *Sustainable Development* is to ensure that the resulting effects from all the interventions financed within the NSRF, support in the synergic manner SD

in all its components, i.e., in the environmental, economic and social components in accordance with the objectives and indicators of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Vice-Prime Minister of the Government for knowledge-based Society, European Affairs, Human Rights and Minorities has the coordination role at the political level in implementing the horizontal priority *Sustainable Development*. The Vice-Prime Minister meets this role in relation to SD through the Government Council for SD as the chairperson of this Council. The SRGO is a coordinator of this horizontal priority at the working level.

The SR GO ensures that this horizontal priority is managed and implemented in relation to all the operational programmes, their priority axes, monitoring and evaluating fulfilment of the objectives of the horizontal priority at the level of the NSRF as well. For this purpose, the Working Group for the horizontal priority SD is established with the SR GO, where all the relevant MAs, the CCA, the MF SR as well as representatives of the social and economic partners (representatives of the regional and local self-governments, academic community, research institutions, entrepreneurial and trade union associations, interest association and civil society) have their representation.

The Government Council for SD is the counselling and coordinating body of the SR Government for application of the SD principles. It brings its opinions, besides others, on the submitted documents by the Working Group for the horizontal priority SD. Experts from universities, scientific institutions, representatives of the self-governing authorities, trade unions and employer association and representatives of the self-government administration authorities are the cooperating and advisory bodies of the Council in assessing the solutions of some SD issues.

The key instruments, through which the interventions are managed with purpose to fulfil the horizontal priority SD, are the integration instruments arising from the concept, legal and institutional framework of SD:

- strategic and programme documents, concepts in the field of SD
- principles, priorities, objectives and indicators of SD

Implementation of the horizontal priority SD based on the use of integration instruments will be executed in the following stages of the programme cycle:

a) Implementation:

- In the stage of the operational programmes implementation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority SD is performed by defining the single text for all the MA or the IBMA within the beneficiary manual where the beneficiary for grant defines clearly, whether it/he/she through its/his/her project intends to support SD and in what way.
- In the stage of implementation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority SD is ensured further through setting up evaluation criteria in accordance with the objectives of the horizontal priority SD. The individual MA or the IBMA submits to the SR Government a draft of the evaluation criteria for the separate horizontal priorities. In setting up evaluation criteria, the above mentioned integration instruments are the starting points.

b) Monitoring and evaluation:

- In the stage of monitoring and evaluation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority SD performs through the monitoring of fulfilment of the SD indicators at the levels of the priority axis and the operational programmes. The SR Government in cooperation with the representatives of a separate Managing Authorities determines and selects a set or group of indicators out of the indicators that are defined in the given

operational programme or in the National Indicators System and which are monitored from the view of SD by the Monitoring Committee.

- The renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy 2006 issues from the EU Sustainable Development Strategy being elaborated at the national level into the SR Action Plan of Sustainable Development for 2005-2010, comprising of the following long-term priorities - integrated objectives which are detailed formulated into 28 strategic objectives. The SRGO, in cooperation of the MA, defines which among the given 28 strategic objectives are relevant for its operational programme focus. Based on the given definitions, the SRGO evaluates contribution of the operational programmes to fulfilment of the strategic objectives of the SR Action Plan of Sustainable Development. Results of such evaluation are a part of annual reports of the operational programmes as well as an annual report of the NSRF. Evaluation reports on SD are submitted for approval to the members of the Working Group for SD and the Government Council for SD, serving further as groundwork documents for on-going evaluation of the SR Action Plan of Sustainable Development for 2005-2010.
- The SRGO prepares a monitoring report on the horizontal priority SD, giving the regional projection of the implemented activities as well which will be a part of an annual report on the NSRF.
- The SRGO envisages, based on reports, in cooperation with the relevant partners to issue an analysis or study providing the view on fulfilment of the principles of SD from the national point of view as well as from the view of the individual regions.
- All outputs of the SRGO after agreement with the individual MAs, serve as the inputs for sessions of the individual monitoring committees.
- Sponsors of the horizontal priority SD will attend the sessions of the monitoring committees of the individual operational programmes.

6.1.4. Information Society

At present, while developing knowledge-based society the gradual change occurs in the world in its traditional perception in terms of the knowledge triangle (education, research, innovations) into the tetragon where informatisation is added as the fourth dimension. Introduction of the information and communication technologies (ICT) and enhancing effectiveness of the processes through their use, contributes to the significant extent to much higher effectiveness and efficiency of the elements of knowledge-based society implementation. Thus, knowledge-based society and information society do not establish two diverse factors supporting sustainable economic growth and increase competitiveness of the SR. The objective of the activities coordination in these fields is to ensure that they also contribute to fulfilment of the National Lisbon Strategy objectives.

The following main goals in the field of the information society development in Slovakia are defined in terms of strategic documents for the field of informatisation of society as follows:

- information literacy
- effective electronisation of the self-government administration
- broad availability of the internet

Implementation of this horizontal priority will reinforce synergic interconnection of the concerned operational programmes, ensuring that the activities supported based on the particular projects, take into consideration information society in all its aspects.

The Vice-Prime Minister of the Government for Knowledge-based Society, European affairs, Human Rights and Minorities is responsible at the political level for coordination of the implementation of the horizontal priority Information Society. The SRGO is the coordinator of this horizontal priority at the working level. The MF SR is responsible for the concept and material levels for the horizontal management and implementation of all the projects of informatisation of society while it is the central authority of the self-government administration in the field of informatisation under Act 275/2006 Coll. on the information systems of the self-government administration and amendment and supplementing some acts.

The SR GO is arranging that the horizontal priority is effectively managed and implemented in relation to all the operational programmes, their priority axes, monitoring and evaluating fulfilment of the objectives of the horizontal priority at the level of the NSRF as well.

For this purpose, the Working Group for the horizontal priority Information Society is established with the SR GO where all the relevant MAs, the CCA, the MF SR as well as representatives of the social and economic partners (representatives of the regional and local self-government, academic community, research institutions, entrepreneurial and trade union associations, interest association and civil society) have their representation. In addition, Government Office of the Plenipotentiary for Informatisation of Society is established, comprising a part of the Working Group for the Information Society having within this WG an advisory function in terms of its statute.

The key instruments, through which the interventions are managed with purposes to fulfil the horizontal priority *Information Society*, are the integration instruments implied from the concept, legal and regulation framework of informatisation of society:

- strategic documents, action plans in the field of informatisation of society
- National Concept of Informatisation of Public Administration and based on it the concepts of the information systems development of the public administration of the compulsory entities that are the public administration institutions
- national projects implemented within the OPIS
- data standards, technological standards and security standards
- methodical instructions, guidance, manuals for beneficiaries, possible calls for submitting the projects

It concerns the instruments implied from the applicable legal framework and the strategic framework for that the MF SR is responsible in terms of Competence Act on ISPA as the central authority of the public administration in the field of informatisation.

Implementation of the horizontal priority *Information Society* will be executed based on the use of the integration instrument in the following stages of the programme cycle:

a) Implementation:

- In the stage of the operational programmes implementation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority Information Society will be performed through defining of the single text for all the MA or the IBMA within the beneficiary manual where the beneficiary of grant defines clearly, whether it/he/she through its/his/her project intends to support development of information society and in what way.
- In the stage of implementation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority Information Society is ensured further through setting up of evaluation criteria in accordance with the objectives of the horizontal priority Information Society. The individual MA or the IBMA submits to the SRGO a draft of the evaluation criteria for the separate

horizontal priorities. The SRGO in cooperation with the MF SR provides assessment of the evaluation criteria in terms of the above mentioned integrated instruments.

b) Monitoring and evaluation

- In the stage of monitoring and evaluation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority Information Society will be executed through the monitoring of the Information Society indicators fulfilment at the levels of the priority axis and the operational programmes. The SRGO and the MF SR in cooperation with the representatives of the separate Managing Authorities will determine and select a set or group of indicators from the indicators that are defined in the given operational programme or in the National Indicators System and which are monitored from the point of the Information Society view by the Monitoring Committee.
- The SRGO will prepare a monitoring report on the horizontal priority Information Society, giving the regional projection of the implemented activities as well which will be a part of an annual report on the NSRF at the same time.
- The SRGO plans, based on reports, in cooperation with the relevant partners to issue an analysis or study providing the view on fulfilment of the Information Society principles from the national point of view as well as from the view of the individual regions.
- All the outputs of the SRGO after agreement with the individual MAs, serve as the inputs for the sessions of the individual monitoring committees.
- Sponsors of the horizontal priority Information Society will participate in the sessions of the monitoring committees of individual operational programmes.

6.2. Coordination of the horizontal priorities

The coordinators of the horizontal priorities are determined by the SR Government Resolution 1005/2006 as of 6 December 2006 as follows: the SRGO for the MRC, SD and information society, and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter "MLSAF SR") for the horizontal priority equality of opportunities.

The coordination of the horizontal priorities implementation is already described in a framework way already at the level of NSRF. The detailed description of every horizontal priority implementation system is given in the system of coordination the horizontal priority implementation, individually elaborated for every of the horizontal priorities and approved by the CCA and the managing authorities for the operational programmes. The given description comprises an annex to the System of Management of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for 2007-2013.

Monitoring of every horizontal priority is arranged by the system of indicators that is a part of National Indicators System for Priority Axes of the Operational Programmes. Implementation of horizontal priorities is separately monitored through the annual reports of the operational programmes in accordance with character of the horizontal priorities as well as in the annual reports on the NSRF, comprising of monitoring reports prepared by the coordinator of the respective horizontal priority also with stating the regional projection of the implemented activities.

In the course of the programming period, the on-going evaluations are conducted aimed at success and effectiveness of the selected way of every horizontal priority implementation and evaluation of the outputs and results of the projects implemented within the horizontal priorities

and evaluation of fulfilment of the horizontal priorities. After termination of the programming period, evaluation of the projects implemented impacts within the horizontal priorities is conducted. All the conducted evaluations are the subject to discussions during the meetings of the National Monitoring Committee and the relevant Working Groups involved into implementation of the given horizontal priority, published at the communication channels of the CCA and through it available to the broad public.

Marginalised Roma Communities

The NSRF would like to create through the horizontal priority MRC to establish a room for the effective impact of the SF assistance on the solution of the MRC problems. At the political level, the Vice-Prime Minister for Knowledge-based Economy, European Affairs, Human Rights and Minorities is responsible for the MRC horizontal priority. The coordinator of the MRC horizontal priority is the Office of the Plenipotentiary of the SR Government for Roma Communities (hereinafter "the OPSRGRC") for conduct of the activities related to the administrative and methodological provision of the MRC horizontal priority, establishing the MRC Horizontal Priority Coordination Department[41].

The ambition is to use the SF for extension, supplementing and better combination of the programmes already existing at the national level. Based on the SR governmental strategy for integration of economically and socially excluded Roma communities, it is possible to use the programming period 2007-2013 to achieve synergic and sustainable effect. The base is the governmental policy founded on the balancing measures as well as the resort concepts for education (pre-school preparation, teacher assistants, support Roma language, integrated education), regional development and housing (e.g., development of the rental flats and infrastructure), support health (health assistants), community development and employment (community social workers, community centres, social enterprises) and others. The positive fact is also the developed institutional network, either through the public institutions (e.g., regional offices of the OPSRGRC, departments at the regional self-governing regions, regional offices of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, etc.) or via the non-governmental sector and civil sector. This network represents the qualified human potential. In 2006, for complexity of solution and better coordination especially at the level of regions, the OPSRGRC ordered the elaboration of Regional Concepts for Development of Roma Communities with High Concentration of Marginalised Roma Groups (i.e., the Košice, Prešov and Banská Bystrica Regions). In addition, the broad partnerships participated in this task, these documents were accepted and consulted at the level of self-governing regions as well.

The proposed instruments for ensuring impact and coordination following:

- complex approach in solving the issues of the MRC that is applied to the ROP, the OP Employment and Social Inclusion, the OP Education, the OP Environment, the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth and the OP Healthcare;
- individual projects (demand-oriented projects) that can be applied in all the operational programmes.

The tasks of the OPSRGRC and cooperation with the Managing Authorities, scope and precise conditions of the described instruments implementation for the provision of the MRC horizontal priority within the relevant operational programmes, are the subject of agreement on cooperation concluded between the OPSRGRC and every MA or the IBMA under MA.

[41] In accordance to the material „Analysis of the administrative capacity for the programming period 2007-2013" approved by the SR Government Resolution No. 365 from May, 2nd, 2007

The complex approach is solved as follows:

- submitting the local strategies of the complex approach from the side of the municipality or micro-region (in links to the content of the regional concepts of the MRC social-economic inclusion of which the formulation had been initiated by the OPSRGRC in 2006 in cases of the Prešov, Košice and Banská Bystrica Regions and requires involvement of a broad partnership in the given locality)
- evaluation and approval of the local strategies of the complex approach
- preparation of the projects within the approved local strategies of the complex approach
- approval and implementation of the projects within the operational programmes
- ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the local strategy goals fulfilment through individual projects
- evaluation of the complex projects benefits to fulfilment of the goal of the horizontal priority

The competences of the OPSRGRC in relation to the implementation of the complex approach were settled by the appointment of the Vice-Prime Minister of the SR Government for knowledge-based economy, European Affairs, Human Rights Minorities and who is regularly informed by the OPSRGRC on coordination of the horizontal priority MRC, are as follows:

- the OPSRGRC concludes the agreements with the individual MA and the IBMA on mutual cooperation and coordination in fulfilling the MRC horizontal priority that are signed by the Chief of the SRGO as the statutory representative of the SRGO;
- to cooperate with the Managing Authorities in preparing calls for submitting the projects within complex approach;
- to publish calls for submitting local strategies of complex approach;
- to establish a selection commission for the complex approach and coordinate its activity with an aim of approving the local strategies of complex approach;
- cooperate with the municipalities/micro-regions which based on the successful local strategy of complex approach obtain or acquire counselling and advisory services
- to cooperate with the MA and IBMA under the Managing Authorities in selecting, evaluation and monitoring of the projects submitted within complex approach which the clear identification is directly marked in the application for grant
- to coordinate activities of the Monitoring Group for complex approach of which the task is to monitor implementation of a complex project directly at place and solve the possible identified problems in implementation in direct communication and cooperation with the Managing Authority of the respective operational programmes
- to cooperate in monitoring and evaluation of an impact of the SF at the MRC in the period 2007-2013 together with the Working Group for the MRC

- to ensure special monitoring and evaluation aimed at total performance of the approved local strategies of the complex approach

The competences of the MA and IBMA in relation to the implementation of complex approach are as follows:

- to be members of the sectoral Commission for appraisal and selection of the projects of complex approach;
- to earmark the indicative allocation of the resources determined for the implementation of the complex projects within the OP
- to announce calls for submitting the projects within the complex approach while the system of ongoing call is applied, i.e., it is possible to submit the projects any time during the implementation of the OP thank to which the conditions for smooth implementation of all the complex project components are ensured in accordance with time schedule of implementation of the approved complex approach local strategy
- to appraise and select the individual projects submitted within complex approach;
- to arrange monitoring and control of the successful projects submitted within the complex approach;
- to cooperate with the OPSRGRC in the content and technical provision for arranging calls for the submitting projects within complex approach
- to provide in regular intervals the OPSRGRC with the required information and the data necessary for conduct of monitoring and evaluations of the SF on the MRC impacts

Implementation of the individual projects having impacts on the MRC is conducted as follows:

- the applicant clearly defines in the specific section of application for grant that the project is aimed at the MRC
- the actual anticipated impact of the projects on the horizontal priority MRC which are highlighted by applicants in such way, are appraised by the OPSRGRC in the process of the projects appraisal aimed at the MRC
- the projects which are assessed by the OPSRGRC as the projects with significant impact on the MRC are advantageously scored (except for the operational programmes, where the horizontal priority MRC is solved through an individual measure or a group of the activities)
- the OPSRGRC conducts monitoring of the projects aimed at the MRC on a sample defined by the MA or IBMA.

Information and publicity as the significant part of establishing atmosphere for cooperation and successful solution of the MRC position is ensured by the OPSRGRC through the following activities:

- informing the CCA and the Vice-Prime Minister for Knowledge-based Economy, European affairs, Human Rights and Minorities in regular intervals in cooperation with the managing authorities and Intermediary Bodies under the managing authorities about fulfilment of the horizontal priority MRC

- ensuring implementation of the Communication Plan of the horizontal priority MRC with an aim to increase information on the MRC as well as the public about the options of providing support and results of the horizontal priority MRC implementation.

In the interest of engaging beneficiaries and other players and ensuring the broad platform for communication of the horizontal priority MRC implementation in the NSRF and in interest of monitoring and evaluations of the implemented projects effects on the MRC furthermore, in close cooperation with the MRC Horizontal Priority Coordination Department at the OPSRGRC, the Working Group for the CSF for development of Roma communities is functioning (under denomination Working Group for Roma communities development) which was created in the programming period 2004-2006 and its activities demonstrated to be good example of the SF implementation.

Equality of opportunities

The Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR hereinafter "the MLSAF SR"), meets the coordination role in implementing the NSRF horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities. The horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities is followed in the all operational programmes within the NSRF.

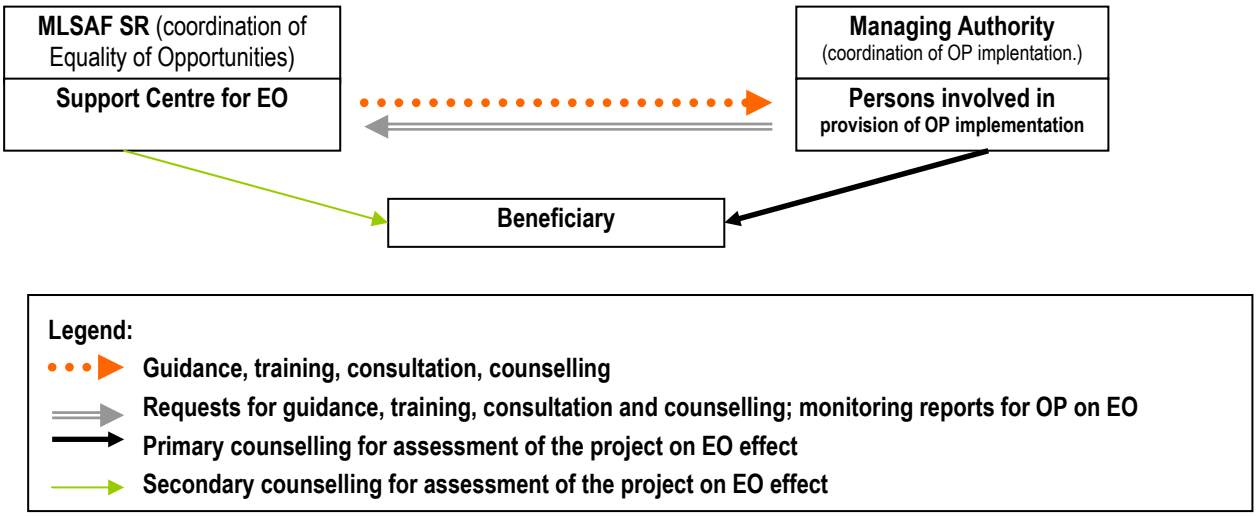
Assessment of the project effect on fulfilment of the horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities is compulsory for all the applicants asking for grants from the SF and the CF and its fulfilment is monitored in the applications for the projects where applicants assess whether their projects have an effect on equality of opportunities. While a project has the effect on equality of opportunities, this effect is appraised as positive or negative and the relationship to equality of opportunities is included among the evaluation criteria. If a project has no effect on equality of opportunities, the relationship to equality of opportunities is not included among evaluation criteria.

The evaluation criteria for assessment of the projects effects on equality of opportunities are elaborated by the MLSAF SR (providing guidance in this field for all the Managing Authorities and ensuring training of their personnel. Part of the project indicators of every such project are also indicators monitoring effect on equality of opportunities.

The MLSAF SR establishes the Support Centre, providing help to beneficiaries in assessment of the project's effect on equality of opportunities. There are established focal points (i.e., contact persons) the role of which is to cooperate with the Support Centre of the MLSAF SR, providing counselling to beneficiaries in assessing the relationship of the given project to the horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities as well as in appraisal of the project in the process of the projects selection and implementing and monitoring them.

The MLSAF coordinates these activities during the project implementing and monitoring. The MLSAF SR provides the adequate information with the objective to increase positive effects of supported activities on equality of opportunities from the resources of the OP Technical Assistance and the OP Employment and Social Inclusion in cooperation with the CCA.

Scheme of coordination of the horizontal priority Equality of Opportunities (EO) implementation



Source: MLSAF SR, 2007

Sustainable development

The Vice-Prime Minister for Knowledge-based Economy, European Affairs, Human Rights and Minorities at the political level meets the coordination role in implementing the horizontal priority Sustainable Development). He meets this role in relation to SD through the Government Council for Sustainable Development as its chairperson. The coordinator of the horizontal priority at the working level is the SRGO. The SRGO provides that the horizontal priority is effectively managed and implemented in relation to all the operational programmes, their priority axes, and monitors and evaluates fulfilment of the horizontal priority at the NSRF level.

For this purpose, the SRGO establishes the Working Group for the horizontal priority SD where all the relevant Managing Authorities have their representation, together with the CCA as well as the representatives of the social-economic partners (representatives of the regional and local self-governments, academic community, research institutions, entrepreneurial and trade unions, interest association and civil society).

The Government Council for Sustainable Development is the advisory and coordination authority of the SR Government for application of the principles of SD. Besides others, it gives opinions also on the submitted documents by the Working Group for the horizontal priority SD. The cooperating and counselling bodies to the Government Council for Sustainable Development are the experts coming from universities, science institutions, representatives of the self-governing authorities, trade unions and employer associations and representatives of the public administration authorities in assessing solution of some problems of SD

The key instrument through which the interventions are managed in the way so that they meet the horizontal priority SD, are the integration instruments implied from the concept, legal and institutional framework of SD:

- the strategic and programme document, concepts in the field of SD
- the principles, priorities, objectives and indicators of SD

One of the fields significantly contributing to SD is the energy sector and the field of energy efficiency supported not only within the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth but also

within the activities of the ROP and the OP Environment (e.g., in the field of using the renewable energy resources), OP Healthcare, OP Research and Development, OP Bratislava Region and Programme Development of Rural Areas of the SR financed by the EAFRD. Coordination of the support in the field of the energy sector and energy efficiency is ensured horizontally by the Ministry of Economy of the SR that under Competence Act 42 is responsible for the energy policy ensuring and meeting tasks implied for the SR from the EU regulations, directives and strategic documents and concurrently to notify the EC on meeting these commitments.

The Ministry of Economy of the SR in cooperation with the MA of the given operational programmes will arrange participation of the competent representatives in the appraisal commission for selection of the projects in the measures where use of the renewable energy resources occurs or where energy efficiency is ensured. The task of the representative, besides appraisal of the projects, is in addition to approve the indicators in the submitted project so that it will be possible to monitor contributions of the project for ensuring energy efficiency.

Moreover, the Ministry of Economy of the SR through the IBMA for the OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth (the Slovak Energy Agency, SIEA) will ensure collection of data for the field of energy sector from the MA so that their total value for the respective operational programmes will be monitored centrally and evaluated at the Ministry of Economy of the SR.

Information society

The Vice-Prime Minister for Knowledge-based Economy, European Affairs, Human Rights and Minorities is responsible for the horizontal priority Information Society at the political level. The coordinator of this horizontal priority at the working level is the SRGO. The MF SR is responsible for the concept and material levels for the horizontal management and implementation of all the projects within Informatisation of Society, as the central authority of the public administration in the field of informatisation under the Act no. 275/2006 Coll. on the information systems of the public administration and on amendment and supplementing so some acts.

The SRGO ensures that this horizontal priority is effectively managed and implemented in relation to the all operational programmes, their priority axes, monitoring and evaluating fulfilment of the horizontal priority at the NSRF as well. For this purpose within the SRGO the Working Group for the horizontal priority Information Society has been established where the all relevant MA, the CCA, the MF SR as well as the representatives of social-economic partners (representatives of regional and local self-government, academic community, research institutions, entrepreneurial and trade unions, interest associations and civil society) are represented. Moreover, the Office of Plenipotentiary of the SR Government for Information Society is being established that is a part of the Working Group for Information Society and meets an advisory function in this WG in terms of its statute.

The key instruments, through which the interventions are managed with purpose to fulfil the horizontal priority Information Society, are the integration instruments implied from the concept, legal and regulation framework of informatisation of society for which the MF SR, as the public administration central authority in the field of informatisation is responsible for, in terms of Competence Act and the Act on Informatisation of Society and Public Administration:

- the strategic documents, action plans in the field of informatisation of society
- the national Concept of Informatisation of the Public Administration based

[42] Act 575/2001 Coll. on the organisation of central public administration

on which the concepts of development of information systems of the public administration of the compulsory entities representing the public administration institutions are formed

- the national projects implemented within the OPIS
- the data standards, technological standards and safety standards
- the methodological instructions, guidance, guides for applicants, possible calls for submitting the projects

In the stage of implementation based on the use of integration instruments, implementation of the horizontal priority Information Society is conducted as follows:

- in the stage of the operational programmes implementation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority Information Society is performed through the defining a single text consulted with the MF SR for all the MA or IBMA within the manual for beneficiaries, which the content includes the fact that the beneficiary for grant in its project clearly defines whether it/he/she wants through his/her project to support development of information society and in what way
- in the stage of implementation, fulfilment of the horizontal priority Information Society is arranged further by setting up the evaluation criteria of the projects in accordance with the objectives of the horizontal priority Information Society. The individual MA or IBMA submit proposals of the evaluation criteria for the horizontal priority Informatisation of Society to the SRGO.
- the SRGO in cooperation with the MF SR will assess a proposal of the evaluation criteria of the projects in terms of the above mentioned integration instruments.

7. COMPLIANCE OF THE STRATEGY WITH THE POLICIES, DOCUMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

7.1. Compliance with the EU strategic documents and policies

7.1.1. Community Strategic Guidelines

Compliance of strategy with the policies, documents and objectives

Community Strategic Guidelines

The Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion define the basic framework for the national strategic reference frameworks of the individual Member States with the goal to enforce harmonic, balance and sustainable development of the Community (Article 25 of the General Regulation). In accordance with the renewed Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment, three strategic priorities are set out at the level of the NSRF while the OPBR directly contributes to the implementation of the strategic priority 1 Infrastructure and Regional Accessibility and 2 Knowledge-based Economy.

The groups of activities of the priority axes of the OPBR Infrastructure and Knowledge-based Economy are fully in accordance with Community Strategic Guideline with an aim of enforcing harmonic, balanced and sustainable development of the Community.

In accordance with the renewed Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment, three guidelines are set out:

1. Improvement of the Members States, regions and towns attractiveness through improving availability, ensuring the adequate quality and level of the services and preserving their environmental potential
2. Support the innovations, business and growth of economy based on knowledge through research and innovation capacities, including new information and communication technologies and
3. Establishing higher employment numbers and the jobs of better quality through acquiring higher number of people for employment or business activity, advancing adaptability of workers and enterprises and increasing investments into human resources.

			C S G		
			To make Europe and its regions a more attractive place for investment and jobs	**Improvement of knowledge and innovation for growth**	**Higher employment number and more jobs of better quality**
O P B R	**1. Infrastructure**	**1.1 Regeneration of the settlements**	**X**		
		1.3 Regional and urban public transport	**X**		
	2. Knowledge-based economy	**2.1 Innovation and technological transfers**	**X**	**X**	**X**
		2.2 Informatisation of society		**X**	**X**

7.1.2. Coherence of the OPBR with the Community Strategic Guidelines

Guidelines	Priority Axis 1		Priority Axis 2		Comments
	1. 1	1. 2	2. 1	2. 2	
1. To make Europe and its regions more attractive place for investment and jobs					
1.1. Extending and improving transport infrastructure		XX			Regional and urban public transport
1.2. Reinforcement of synergies between protection of the environment and growth					
1.3. Solution of an intense use of the traditional energy resources by Europe			X		Innovation and technological transfers
2. Improvement of knowledge and innovation for growth					
2.1. Increasing investments into research and technical development and its better focus			XX		Innovation and technological transfers
2.2. Making innovations easier and supporting business			XX		Innovation and technological transfers
2.3. Support information of society for everyone				XX	Informatisation of Society
2.4. Improving access to the financial resources					
3. Higher number and more jobs of better quality					
3.1. Acquiring more people for employment and maintain them in it and modernise systems of the social protection					
3.2. Improvement of the workers and enterprises adaptability and flexibility of the labour market			X	X	Innovation and technological transfers. Informatisation of Society
3.3. Increasing investment into human resources through improving education and qualifications					
3.4. Administrative capacities					
3.5. Protection of the labour force health					
Urban areas	XX				Regeneration of the settlements

Notes**:**
xxx means strong links
xx means visible links
x means limited links/not direct

7.1.3. Lisbon and Göteborg Strategies

A. Lisbon Strategy

Formulation of the European Union Lisbon Strategy was motivated by the adverse economic developments of the EU at the end of the last decade comparing to other significant economic regions of the world. Lisbon Strategy has been stated the objective for European Union by 2010 to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy. One of the main points to achieve the Lisbon Strategy strategic objective is to transition the countries to knowledge-based economy and society through support information society, research and development, equally through acceleration of the process of the structural reforms for competitiveness, innovativeness and completion of a single market.

The strong business environment motivating people to make business is one of the key instruments for ensuring long-term competitiveness of the country. The quality physical infrastructure and services of the network industries belong among the main priorities in the field of business environment as well.

The basic Lisbon Strategy objective are also reflected in the objectives and the aim of the OPBR focused on regeneration of settlements, modernisation and development of regional public transport in the region territory, innovations and technological transfers (science, research and innovations), informatisation of society (information society, business environment) as well as support investments into the environment and protection of nature.

B. Göteborg Strategy

Draft of the SD strategy titled: "Sustainable Europe for a Better World" (submitted to the European Council in July 2001 in Göteborg; Sustainable Development Strategy - Council Document 10117/06, was renewed at the European Council session within 15 - 16 June 2006) aims at the priority issues like climate changes, negative impacts on health of the population, use of natural resources, dynamics of population development and pollution of the environment.

SD means that employment, economic reforms, social policies and the policies of the environment must be designed in a way that ensures their mutual interconnected enforcement.

The OPBR in accordance with the principles of SD within the measure Regeneration of Settlements contributes to certain extent of the limination of the negative impacts of the urbanised areas on health of the population elimination. Though modernisation and development of the ecologic regional public transport in the region territory, we can expect reducing share of individual motorism, elimination of volumes of emissions, thus the overall reduction of impacts on health of the population, climate changes and pollution of the environment. The SME support in introducing innovations and technological transfers reflects the need to reduce pollution of the environment and to support the natural resources utilisation.

7.1.4. EC legislation in the field of Cohesion Policy

The OPBR strategy is proposed in accordance with the EC legislation in the field of Cohesion Policy. It is based on Article 5 of the Regulation on the ERDF where the ERDF focuses its assistance, within the Objective RCE in context of Sustainable Development Strategies, with current support of employment, in particular, on the following three priorities:

1. Innovation and Knowledge-Based Economy; the OPBR fulfils the priorities a, b
2. Environment and Risks Prevention; the OPBR fulfils the priorities b, c, d, f

3. Access to Transport and Telecommunication Services in the General Economic Interest - the OPBR fulfils the priority b.

Simultaneously, with respect to solution of the issue of sustainable urban development, the strategy of the OPBR is in accordance with Articles 7.2 and 8 of the Regulation on the ERDF.

7.1.5. EC legislation in the field of the rules of the economic competition

The OPBR is in accordance with the rules of the economic competition - Council Regulation (EC) 1/2003 on the implementation of the rules of the economic competition laid down in Articles 81 and 82 of Treaty on EC establishment.

The Slovak Republic as a Member State of the EU has approximated fully the EC Regulations in the field of state assistance into the national legislation which is currently modified by the Act 231/2001 Coll. on the state assistance as amended.

The Antimonopoly Office of the SR as the central public administration authority conducts supervision on the field of protection and support the economic competition in the SR.

The MA for the OPBR guarantees that any state aid, including scheme aid *de minimis*, is provided within the OPBR in accordance with the procedural and material rules of state aid applicable in time of providing aid from the public resources.

7.1.6. EC legislation in the field of the rules on public procurement

The main principles of the rules on public procurement was based on Treaty and EC Directives for the field of public procurement. This involves the principle of transparency, equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition and proportionality in maintaining the principles of economy in allocation of the financial resources.

The issue of public procurement and commissioning the public orders is arranged according to the approximated legislation through Act 25/2006 Coll. on the public procurement and amendment and supplementing to some acts, introducing the system of public procurement considering the SR obligations as a member of the EU. This Act modifies the process of the public procurement of the orders for delivery of goods, projects for implementing construction works, orders for providing services, concessions for construction works, tender of bids and administration in public procurement.

Through the implementation of this Act, increasing of transparency of the public procurement process as well as increasing of competition and so development of competition and general business environment are being achieved. It contributes to increasing of the control effectiveness of allocation of public resources and limitation of the corruption options. This Act arranges public procurement of the orders for delivery of goods, projects for implementing construction works, orders for providing services, concessions for construction works, tender of bids and administration in public procurement.

The Public Procurement Office is the central authority of public administration for the field of public procurement.

The activities and tasks not related to the application of Act on the public procurement, e.g., market research, are executed according to the Commercial Code through public tenders.

7.1.7. EC legislation in the field of the rules on protection and improvement of the environment

In the course of the OPBR processing, strategic environmental assessment was carried out under Act 24/2006 Coll. on the assessment of impacts on the environment and on amendment and supplementing to some acts in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on environment and applies in assessment of the strategic documents. Chapter 2.3. gives more details on the course of the strategic environmental assessment.

There are anticipated positive impacts on the environment in relation with the proposed activities within the OPBR.

The OPBR implementation will respect EC legislation in the sphere of rules of the protection and improvement of the environment. The criteria of minimalisation of the energetic demand by the renovation of the projects of the regional infrastructure and also by the principles of low energetic demand of the buildings while executing the projects especially within the priority axis 1 Infrastructure. Energy savings by the renovation of the existing objects will be realised based on EP Direction

And Council 2002/91/ES as of December 16, 2002 on the energetic economy of the building (Official Journal EC L 001.4.1.2003) which is demonstrated into the Act no. 555/2005 Coll. on the energetic economy of the buildings and the change and supplement of some Acts valid from January 1, 2006.

The preparation and selection of the projects in the process of the Operational Programme implementation will be performed with respect to following the principles of protection and improvement of the environment under Act 543/2002 on the protection of the nature and country as amended.

7.1.8. EC legislation in the field of the rules on equality of opportunities, gender equality and non-discrimination

The activities during implementing the projects will be arranged in accordance with the EC legislation in the field of keeping the rules on equality of opportunities, gender equality and non-discrimination.

The basic human rights and freedoms are safeguarded in the Slovak Republic through the SR Constitutions. Simultaneously, the Slovak Republic is bound through the international documents which control the implementation of equality of opportunities into its legislation and practice. They are International Labour Organisation Conventions, European Social Charter (ESC), Supplementary Protocol to ESC and others. Several provisions reinforcing the principle of equal treatment with women and men have been included into the SR legal order in relation to the implementation of Acquis communautaire and concurrently several provisions were removed from legislation which were not in accordance with the equality of opportunities principle (e.g., repealing the ban on night work of women).

In 2004, the SR, Act 365/2004 Coll. on the equal treatment in some fields and on the protection against discrimination and amendment and supplementing to some acts (Anti-discrimination Act) was adopted in relation to the implementation of anti-discrimination European legislation into the legal order of the SR. The purpose of Anti-discrimination Act is to ensure for individuals the rights and such a protection against all the forms of discrimination that will guarantee to particular victims the options to claim for the adequate and effective court protections, including compensation for damages and intangible injury. This Act specifies

contents of the provisions of equality and non-discrimination embedded in the SR Constitution and in some international treaties.

Whereas already prior to the adoption of Anti-discrimination Act a number of valid acts included in the so-called anti-discrimination provisions, in the interest of avoiding duplicity, the amendments of the content-related regulations were adopted in parallel with establishing Anti-discrimination Act content related regulations which besides others enforce the principle of the women and men equal treatment.

Since 2000, the SR Government has been regularly adopting the systematic instrument of the prevention and fighting against intolerance and discrimination titled Action Plan on Preventing All Forms of Discrimination, Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Other Demonstrations of Intolerance. (Action Plan for 2006-2008 is already the No. 4 since 2000). The objective of the Action Plan is to assist in establishing of systematic and stabile attention to the issue of observing human rights and prevention of discrimination within the individual ministries and develop cooperation of ministries with separate non-governmental organisations and other entities.

7.2. Compliance with the SR strategic documents and policies

7.2.1. NSRF and the OP

The strategy of the NSRF is fulfilled by the hierarchy set of strategic and specific priorities, comprising the following strategic priorities:

1. Infrastructure and Regional Accessibility
2. Knowledge-based Economy
3. Human Resources

Through the implementation of the OPBR the Strategic Priorities 1 and 2 of the NSRF are supported. At the lower hierarchy level, the strategic priority 1 will be supported through the specific priorities 1.1 Regional Infrastructure, 1.2 Environmental Infrastructure and Protection of the Environment, and 1.3 Transport Infrastructure and Public Passenger Transport. The strategic priority 2 will be supported through the specific priorities 2.1 Informatisation of Society, and 2.4 Support Competitiveness of Enterprises and Services, mainly through Innovations.

The strategy of the OPBR works out the strategy of the NSRF in the field of thematic and territorial concentrations through aiming of interventions into the fields of the territory amenities and increase of effectiveness of related public services, into the field of the resources development of the sustainable economic growth and increasing the competitiveness of industry and services, predominantly into the innovative and cohesion growth poles in the territory of Objective RCE in the SR conditions.

The contributions from the ERDF are predominantly focused on the innovative and cohesion growth poles, respecting the existing distribution of the population. In the specific and justified cases, they can be aimed also at the municipalities not identified as growth poles (e.g., localities or facilities significant from the view of function and type within the region, support information society, etc.). Support will be directed out of the growth poles under the condition that the sufficient number of users capable to use effectively the given facilities and sustainability of investments is declared.

More than 50 % of the municipalities and 95,1 % of the population of the Bratislava Region live in the innovative and cohesion growth centres and in the municipalities which are in their gradient territory. The support resources will be concentrated to the decisive extent into these centres (in accordance with the territorial concentration of the individual measures) while the view of the thematic and financial concentrations are taken into consideration within the support.

The groups of OPBR activities are complementary with the groups of other OPs activities. All the fields of the support have the direct effect on the social and economic development of the region, removing internal regional disparities and increasing competitiveness of the SR.

NSRF PRIORITIES	Priority Axis 1		Priority Axis 2		Comment
	1. 1	1. 2	2. 1	2. 2	
SP 1. INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGIONAL AVAIALBILITY					
SP 1.1. Regional Infrastructure	XX	XX			Regeneration of settlements and regional and urban public transport
SP 1.2. Environmental Infrastructure and Protection of the Environment	X		X		
SP 1.3. Transport Infrastructure and Passenger Public Transport		X			
SP 1.4. Modernisation of Healthcare Infrastructure					
SP 2. KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY					
SP 2.1. Informatisation of Society				XXX	
SP 2.2. Research and Development			X		Innovation and technological transfers
SP 2.3. Infrastructure of Universities					
SP 2.4. Support Competitiveness of Enterprises and Services through Innovations			XX		Innovation and technological transfers
SP 3. HUMAN RESOURCES					
SP 3.1. Modern Education for Knowledge-Based Society					
SP 3.2. Support Growth of Employment and Social Inclusion					
SP 4. Technical Assistance (horizontal)					

Notes:
xxx means strong links
xx means visible links
x means limited links/no direct

7.2.2. Complementarity/synergy with other OPs

Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion (OPESI)

Priority Axis 3 Support Employment and Social Inclusion and establishing capacities within the Bratislava Self-governing Region, Measure 3.1 Support employment growth an employability improvement with specific respect to the educational society, Measure3.2 Support the Social inclusion and harmonisation of the working and family life within the Bratislava Region and Measure 3.3 Establishing capacities and improvement of the public service quality in the Bratislava region.

The support the settlements development with the purpose to solve the high concentration of economic, environmental and social fields and support the investment actions increasing competitiveness of enterprises through the OPBR establishes automatically place for related activities of non-investment character co-financed from the ESF.

Based on analysis through priority axis 3 OP Employment and Social inclusion there will be supported the activities in the sphere of employment and social inclusion within

the territory of the Bratislava Region from the ESF financial sources. Mentioned priority axis is complementary to the priority axes of the OPBR with respect of the global objective of the OPBR.

The financial sources of the third priority axis of the *OPESI* are possible to be used also for support establishing and constructing the Regional Research and Innovative Centre in the Bratislava Region, described in complementarity of the OPBR with Operational programme research and development and Operational programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth.

Operational Programme Research and Development (OPRD under the MEd SR)

Priority axis 2"Reasearch and development in the Bratislava Region, "Measure 2.3 "Transfer of knowledge and technologies resulted from research and development into practice in the Bratislava Region"

This measure is focused on support research and development in the private and public sectors, increasing the rate of cooperation of the research-development institutions with social and economic practice through transfer of knowledge from research and development. The measure for OPRD is complementary with the measure 2.1 of the OPBR that supports development of innovations and technological transfers in SME.

Synergy between the OPBR and the OPRD arises through aiming of both measures, establishing the options for funding the sphere of research, development and innovations in the Bratislava Region in the private as well as public sectors.

Moreover, it is possible to find complementarity of the OPRD and the OPBR instruments in developing activities of the Regional Research and Innovation Centre in the Bratislava region where after its establishment and infrastructural development from the OP Employment and Social Inclusion and the OP Research and Development, SME will be able to use these centres for the activities financed by the OPBR through the separate demand-oriented projects aimed at the innovation activities.

Support the Regional Research and Innovative Centre from OPRD is one of the integrated parts of the project for establishing 7+1 Regional Research and Innovative Centres within the whole territory of the Slovak republic together with support the administrative establishing and operation of Regional Research and Innovative Centre including wage expenses and training activities financed by the OPESI.

The demarcation line between the groups of activities is given on the one hand through the ownership relationships and on the other hand through the aiming of the groups of activities. The OPBR aims at support innovations, technological transfers and introduction of the progressive technologies in SMEs and the OPRD is focused on support research and development of the private and public sectors.

Operational Programme Informatisation of Society (OPIS under the SRGO)

Priority axis 1 "Electronisation of the public administration and development of electronic services"

Electronisation of the central public administration authorities will be financed based on the principle pro rata in the Bratislava Region territory through the measure Electronisation of Public Administration from the national public resources.

Among the given measures of the OPIS and the OPBR measure 2.2 Informatisation of Society aimed at electronisation of the public administration at the regional and local levels, synergy is being formed in the form of electronisation of all the levels of the public administration in the Bratislava Region territory, as assumption of development of the provided services to the citizens and entrepreneurs.

The activities of the OPBR measure 2.2 are complementary with the activities supported within the OPIS priority axes (1. Electronisation of the Public Administration and Development of Electronic Services, 2. Development of Memory and Funds Institutions and Renovation of their National Infrastructure, 3. Increasing Accessibility to the Broadband Internet). The demarcation line between the operational programmes is given by the borders of areas eligible for Objectives Convergence and RCE. In case of electronisation of the public administration in the Bratislava Region territory, the regional and local institutions will be supported from the OPBR and based on the priority axis 1 of the OPIS, the central institutions of the public administration will be supported from the national public resources according to the principle pro rata.

Operational Programme Environment (OPEnv under the MEnv SR)

The priority axis 2 "Protection of the Atmosphere and Minimising Adverse Effects due to Climate Changes, including Support the Renewable Energy Resources", the operational objective Minimising Adverse Effects due to Climate Changes, including Support the Renewable Energy Resources.

The activities of the OPEnv will be complementary supplemented to the activities of the measure 2.1 at the level of SME. The demarcation line of the activities of the OPBR measure 2.1 with the given priority axis of the OPEnv, financed from the ERDF, is given by the borders of territories eligible for Objective Convergence and Objective RCE what means that the activities of protection of the atmosphere are supported within the OPEnv in the whole SR territory, except for the Bratislava Region.

Priority axis 4 "Protection and Regeneration of the Natural Environment and Country", operational objective Programmes of Care of Protected Areas, including NATURA 2000 Localities and Programmes of Rescue of Critically Endangered Fauna and Flora Species, including Monitoring of Species and Biotopes.

The demarcation line of the activities of the OPBR measures 1.1 and the operational objective of the OPEnv financed from the ERDF, is given by the border of the territories as in the case of the demarcation line with the priority axis 2, what also means that the activities for protection of the natural environment are within the priority axis 4 of the OPEnv supported in the whole SR territory, except for the Bratislava Region area.

Operational Programme Transport (OPT under the MTPT SR)

The priority axis 4 "Infrastructure of the Integrated Transport Systems" is focused mainly on the integration of the railway public passenger transport, its support and preference within the integrated transport systems in two largest towns of the SR - Bratislava and Košice,

its mutual coordination with the regional and supra-regional railway passenger transport (in case of Bratislava, also cross-border transport).

The activities of the OPT within this priority axis are complementarily supplemented to with the activities of the OPBR measure 1.2 Regional and Urban Public Transport. They will be focused mainly on the operational provision of the Integrated Transport System in the capital town of Bratislava and the surrounding areas, as the single tariff information system, the information system, preference of vehicles of UPT at crossroads, etc.

Complementarity of the OPT with the OPBR is achieved except for the priority axis 4 of the OPT also through the first three priority axes of the OPT financed from the CF (Railway Infrastructure, Road Infrastructure (TEN-T) and Inter-modal Transport Infrastructure) where the area of interest are predominantly the priority projects of European significance No. 17 Railway Axis Paris - Strasburg - Stuttgard - Vienna - Bratislava and the priority project No. 23 Railway Axis Gdansk - Warsaw - Brno/Bratislava - Vienna.

The project No. 17 is divided in the territory of the capital town of Bratislava into three separate sections, supported from the two priority axes 1 and 4 (see above the priority axis 4):

- the new railway connection Bratislava Predmestie [Suburb] - Bratislava Petržalka (Priority axis 4),
- the railway interconnection of the M.R. Štefánik airport, including rail-doubling of the route in the section of Bratislava Petržalka - Kittsee and in the section Bratislava hlavná stanica [main railway-station] - Bratislava Nové Mesto (Priority axis 4),
- electrification of the railway route D. N. Ves - Marchegg (the priority axis 1).
-

The priority axis 5 "Road Infrastructure (the speedways and the 1st class roads)", the priority axis 6 "Railway Public Passenger Transport"

The selected areas of the SR territory, except for the Bratislava Region are supported within these two priority axes of the OPT, financed from the ERDF, focused on the development of speedways, modernisation and development of the 1st class roads and the intelligent transport systems, and renovation of railway mobile means for the suburban, regional and international transport at the electrified and non-electrified routes as well as support the suburb and regional railway passenger transport.

Operational Programme Competitiveness and Economic Growth (OPCEG under the ME SR)

The priority axis 1" Innovations and Growth of Competitiveness" , Measure 1.1 Innovations and technological transfers, Measure 1.2 Support the common services for commercial users and Measure 1.3 Support the innovative activities in the companies, the priority axis 2 "Energy Sector" Measure 2.1 "Increasing the energetic effectiveness on the side of production and consumption and introduction of the progressive technologies in energy sector.

The OPBR reflects the key measures of the three priority axes of the OPCEC financed from the ERDF that will be implemented through the OPCEC in the whole SR territory, except for the Bratislava Region. These operational programmes are very closely interlinked with each other, synergy between these operational programmes is very strong especially in the priority axis 1 of OPCEG and Measure 2.1 of the OPBR while supporting the innovative policy.

Operational Programme Education (OPEd under the MEd SR)

The priority axis 4 "Modern Education for Knowledge-based Society for the Bratislava Region", Measure 4.1 Transformation of the traditional school for modern one in the Bratislava Region and Measure 4.2 Increasing competitiveness ***of the Bratislava Region through the development of the academic and other education.***

The OPBR is complementary with the priority axis 4 of the OPEd financed from the ESF in the priority axis 2 Knowledge-based Economy, specifically within the measure 2.1 Innovation and Technological Transfers through the increase the innovations support in the entrepreneurial sphere, establishing the place for using results of research and development in practice and increase of demand for qualitative outputs of research and development that are directly proportional to the quality of human resources. Complementarity is also demonstrated in relation to the measure 2.2 Informatisation of Society where the use of electronic form of the public administration requires knowledge of using ICT, that are developed in the OPEd within acquiring the key competences with the objective to ensure long-term competitiveness of the Bratislava Region. Besides this, the OPEd supports in the territory of the Bratislava Region the creation of the regional research and innovation structure through the Regional Research and Innovation Centres (RRIC) and following, the OPBR supports implementation of the innovation activities. Implementation of the innovation activities into the regions through the RRICs has been prepared within cooperation of the ME SR with the self-governments, public universities and colleges.

Table 25 Brief overview of the operational programmes related to the BSR

Programme	Priority axes of the OP	Measurs	Fund
OP TRANSPORT	1 Railway Infrastructure	Modernisation and development of railway routes (TEN -T + other routes in accordance with the Regulation on the Cohesion Fund)	CF
	2 Road Infrastructure (TEN -T)	Development and construction of motorways (TEN –T)	CF
	3. Inter-modal transport infrastructure	Construction of network of the basic public terminals of the inter-modal transport	CF
	4. Infrastructure of Transport Systems	Construction of the basic infrastructure for operation of the integrated transport systems in the towns of Bratislava and Košice	CF
OP RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	2 Research and Development in the Bratislava Region	2.3 Transfer of knowledge and technologies obtained through R & D into practice within the Bratislava Region	ERDF
OP EDUCATION	4 Modern Education for Knowledge-based Society in the Bratislava Region	4.1 Transformation of traditional school into modern school for the Bratislava Region	ESF
		4.2 Increasing competitiveness of the Bratislava Region through development of the tertiary and whole-life education	ESF
OP EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	3 Support Employment Growth and Social Inclusion in the Bratislava Region	3.1 Support employment growth and improvement of employment ability with specific respect of Knowledge-based Society	ESF
		3.2 Supporting social inclusion and harmonisation of the working and family life in the Bratislava region	ESF
		3.3 Development of capacities and improvement of the quality of the public administration	ESF
OP ENVIRONMENT	2 Protection of the Atmosphere and Minimising Adverse Effects due to Climate Changes, including Support the Renewable Energy Resources	1. Operational objective "Protection of the Atmosphere"	ERDF
		2. Operational objective "Minimising the Adverse Effects due to Climate Changes, including Support of the Renewable Energy Resources"	

Programme	Priority axes of the OP	Measurs	Fund
	4 Protection and Regeneration of the Natural Environment and Country	1. Operational objective "Ensuring favourable status of biotopes and species through elaborating and implementing programmes of preservation of the protected areas, including NATURA 2000 localities, and rescue programmed for critically endangered fauna and flora species and localities, including implementation of monitoring of species and biotopes."	ERDF
		2. Operational objective "Improvement of the infrastructure of the nature protection and country through building up and development of the facilities for protection of the nature and country, including introduction of monitoring systems for the purposes to meet the national and international commitments	
		3. Operational objective "Improvement of information and environmental awareness of the public, including reinforcement of cooperation and communication with the involved groups"	
OP Informatisation of the Society	1 Electronisation of the self-government administration and development of the electronic services	1. Electronisation of the self-government administration and development of the electronic services on the central level	RDF
OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth	1. Innovations and competitiveness growth	1.1 Innovations and technological transfer	ERDF
		1.2 Support the common services for commercial users	
		1.3 Support the innovative activities in the companies	
	2. Energy sector	2.1 Increasing the energetic effectiveness on the side of production and also consumption and introduction of the progressive technologies in the energy sector	ERDF

7.2.3. Operational programmes within Objective European Territorial Cooperation

It is necessary through completion and modernisation of the basic infrastructure in the suburban and rural areas to enable penetration of the growth effects from the more developed to less developed area of the Bratislava Region in the interest of following balanced development and competitiveness of the Bratislava Region and through this to decrease the internal regional disparities and consequently by the cross-border cooperation to reach synergic effect in the individual fields of development.

A. Cross-border Cooperation Programme Slovakia - Austria

The Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Slovakia – Austria 2007-2013 (CCP SR-AT) has been elaborated together with the Austrian party in the framework of the cross-border cooperation programme in links to Objective European Territorial Cooperation. This Objective is the successor the EU initiative INTERREG IIIA and involves the Bratislava and Trnava Regions.

Complementarity/demarcation line of the OPBR measure 2.1 Innovations and Technological Transfers of the priority axis 2, and the CCP SR-AT measure 1.1 Cross-border Cooperation of SMEs, cooperation in the field of research, technologies and development of the P1 Learning/Knowledge-based Region and economic competitiveness is elaborated in the objective and focus the assistance of both programmes. The CCP SR-AT is heading the interventions with the goal to support and implement the projects with the characteristic cross-border dimension and effects, and the OPBR concentrates itself in this field on the selected parts of the regional economic system that have a potential to contribute significantly to boosting competitiveness of the Bratislava Region through the effective use of innovative, information and communication technologies with emphasis on SME.

The measure 1.1 Regeneration of Settlements is specified within the OPBR in the priority axis Infrastructure that is partially complementary with the goal of the CCP SR-AT P2 Availability and SD with emphasis on the priorities: 2.2 Sustainable Territorial Development and Quality Regional Administration and 2.3 Cooperation and Joint Management of Protected Localities. Interconnections between the OPBR and the CCP SR-AT through projects can deliver synergic effect for both neighbouring regions.

B. Cross-border Cooperation Programme Hungary - Slovakia

The Cross-border Cooperation Programme Hungary – Slovakia 2007-2013 (CCP HU - SR) has been elaborated together with the Hungarian party in the framework of the cross-border cooperation in links to the Objective European Territorial Cooperation. The common strategic priorities have been stated within this programme in contrary to the programme of the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Slovakia - Austria.

The following two strategic priorities are proposed in this programme for 2000-2013: 1. Economy and Society and 2. Environment, Protection of the Nature and Accessibility. The measure 1.2 Environment and Protection of the Nature specified in the OPBR is in accordance with the priority 2 of the proposed Cross-border Cooperation Programme Hungary - Slovakia described in the group of activities 2.2 Environment and Protection of the Nature, and 2.3. Accessibility - Planning and Investment. Similarly, as in case of the CCP SR-AT, the measure 2.1. Innovations and Technological Transfers of the OPBR priority axis 2 is complementary with the field of support 1.2 Cooperation in the Field of R & D and Innovations of the priority axis 1 Economy and Society of the CCP HU-SR. The OPBR measure 1.2 Regional and Urban Public Transport is complementary in relation to the field

of support the CCP HU-SR measure 2.3 Development of Small Roads, Cycle tracks, Public Transport in the field of the urban public transport (development of services for improvement of the regular public transport). The CCP HU-SR ensures through the projects development of both neighbouring regions and through it also synergic impact of the OPBR objectives as well.

However, the projects within the cross-border cooperation should be implemented in the along-border areas (the Objective RCE involves the Slovakia-Hungarian and the Slovakia-Austrian cooperation) and should develop cross-border cooperation. Projects must have pan-national character of cooperation. Therefore, duplicity does not occur either in any case of the implementation of projects of the above given priorities.

7.3. National Reforms Programme / Action Plans of Competitiveness Development Strategy of Slovakia till 2010

7.3.1. Competitiveness Development Strategy of Slovakia till 2010

For the purposes to join the Lisbon Strategy and to achieve increasing competitiveness of Slovakia through mobilisation of innovations in national economy and development of the scientific-educational activities, the SR Government adopted the Competitiveness Development Strategy of Slovakia till 2010 (the so-called Lisbon Strategy for Slovakia, or National Lisbon Strategy). Its main objective is clear: to ensure that Slovakia as quick as possible achieves the living standards of the most developed EU countries. However, this objective can be achieved only through the fast and long-term economic growth. The state can support it in market economy only so that it will be established the conditions for growth of economic competitiveness of the country.

The National Lisbon Strategy, issues from the basic philosophy of the EU Lisbon Strategy that is development of economic competitiveness through the two basic types of activities: deep reforms (the so-called structural reforms) and the adequate development policies. The strategy and focus of the OPBR is fully in accordance with priority development fields of the Slovakia Competitiveness Strategy till 2010.

The basic objectives of the National Lisbon Strategy are reflected into the goals and focus of the OPBR which through assistance of the financial means from the ERDF in the course of programme period 2007-2013 aims at modernisation and development of the regional public transport in the region territory (business environment), informatisation of society (information society, business environment), innovation and technological transfers (science, research and innovations) as well as support investment into the environment and protection of the nature.

7.3.2. National Reforms Programme (NRP)

The OPBR and its priority axes link up to the priorities of the NRP of the SR for 2006-2008 that links up to the Lisbon Strategy, specifying the visions, goals and policies till 2010, while it is prior concentrated on the following fields: education and employment, information society, science, research and innovation, and business environment. The support the given fields contributes to reinforcement of the innovative potential of the Slovak economy, development of knowledge-based economy and employment. In links to the NRP, the OPBR focuses on completion of the basic conditions for knowledge-based economy and the activities of traditional Cohesion Policy necessary for starting up knowledge-based economy and balanced regional development, especially within the first and second strategic priorities of the NSRF. The more detailed linkage of these two strategic documents, the OPBR and the NRP, and their priorities is obvious within the system of objectives and indicators in the OPBR.		N R P/ L S S			
		Information Society	**Business Environment**	**Education and Employment**	**Science, Research and Innovation**
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME BRATISLAVA REGION	**1 Infrastructure**		X		
	2 Knowledge-based Economy	X	X	X	X
	3 Technical Assistance	X		X	

7.3.3. National Sustainable Development Strategy / Action Plan of Sustainable Development

The National Sustainable Development Strategy sets out eight long-term priorities (integrated goals) of SD of the SR with focus on achieving the SR orientation and its long-term, meaningful and complex aiming at establishing of a society based on the principles of SD and their practical application. This system of the long-term priorities, comparing to the priority axes of the OPBR, has the close relationship as implies from this table.		National Sustainable Development Strategy							
		Developed democratic country	**Modern state and system of the public administration**	**Developed civil society**	**Social solidarity and social protection**	**Balanced territorial development**	**High quality of human and social resources**	**New model of economy**	**High quality of the environment, protection & ration. use of natural resources**
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME BRATISLAVA REGION	**1 Infrastructure**	X	X	X	X	X			X
	2 Knowledge-based Economy							X	X
	3 Technical Assistance		X	X			X		

7.3.4. Slovakia Territorial Development Perspective

The long-term development of the SR is conditioned by maintaining the sound environment and the attractive territory of the SR. This statement is based on the SR legislation conditions as well. The Slovakia Territorial Development Perspective 2001, as adopted by the SR Government, considers the given aspects to the full extent.

The Slovakia Territorial Development Perspective as the document aimed at guiding the SR development in correlation of the scheduled activities with their territorial implementing, based on the National Regional Development Plan, as the basic programming document for regional policy. This conception sets out six basic goals for the territorial planning policy. Moreover, besides setting out the own objectives, emphasises the objective of the National Regional Development Plan determining six global objectives from which 32 specific goals have been formulated.

The OPBR is fully implemented in accordance with the Slovakia Territorial Development Perspective 2001 from which the principles of polycentric development of the SR settlement system (the system of cores and centres of settlement) is taken over. It transforms the given principles of the NSRF into the principles of the territorial concentration of the NSRF applied through the philosophy of the cohesion and innovative growth poles (Chapter 4). The rate of application of the territorial concentration principles is individually given in description of the priority axes.

7.3.5. Other national and sectoral strategic documents

A. SR legislation in the field of support regional development

The SR legislation solves the field of the support regional development through the Act 351/2004 Coll. amending and supplementing the Act 503/2001 Coll. on support regional development. The OPBR, in links to the application of the principle of programming, subsidiarity and partnership is fully in accordance with the above legislative standard. Among the main objectives of the regional development support the following activities belong: to ensure balanced economic and social development of the Slovak Republic, to remove or to mitigate differences in the level of economic development and social development of the regions, to avoid arising new areas with the low economic performance and living standards of citizens, to maintain sustainable economic development and social development of the regions.

B. Regional strategic documents

The OPBR supports in the priority axes 1 the fields that based on the Act 416/2001 on transfer of some competences from the state administration authorities to the municipalities and self-governing regions as amended, fall under competences of the relevant regional and local self-governments in the SR conditions. The development plans of the regional self-governments are contents of the economic and social development programmes of the individual self-governments of the regions but also of some sectoral strategies of the regional self-governments. Through the participation of the representative of the BSR in the Working Group for the preparation of the OPBR the possibility to include the regional strategies into the strategy of the OPBR had been created.

The supported types of the operations for the groups of eligible beneficiaries and other content particularities of the OPBR in the process of the OPBR preparation were set out based on the principle of partnership in cooperation with the representatives of the regional and local self-governments (Authority of the self-governing region, STMA, SR capital town of Bratislava). It is possible to state based on the mentioned facts, the OPBR to the large extent follows fulfilment of regional and local strategies contained in the strategic documents of the regional self-governments.

Respecting the implementation of the partnership principle during the programming period 2007-2013, the Bratislava Sef-Governing Authority is directly involved in the implementation of the Priority axis 1 (as the IBMA) and in the implementation of the Priority axis 2 of the OPBR. The level of its involvement is described in a detailed way in the chapter 9.1.4 of the OPBR.

C. Coherence of the OPBR with the Development Strategy of the BSR

OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES	PRIORITY AXIS 1		PRIORITY AXIS 2		COMMENT
	1 . 1	1. 2	2. 1	2. 2	
SG 1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
P 1. 1. Establishing the conditions for innovative forms of entrepreneurship			XX		
P 1. 2. Development of the competitive industrial base and support the industrial parks establishing					
P 1. 3. Development of the service sector, including transport and trade and their competitiveness		X	XX	X	

SG 2. DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT AND TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE					
P 2. 1. Increasing the technical level and modernisation of the road and the railway transport infrastructure					
P 2. 2. Development of water, air and combined transport					
P 2. 3. Development of passenger suburban, urban and cycle transports		XX			
P 2. 4. Completion of engineering networks of technical infrastructure in municipalities in the region territory					
SG 3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL AREAS AND AGRICULTURE					
P 3. 1. Renovation and development of villages and rural areas as well as maintaining the rural cultural heritage	X				
P 3. 2. Diversification of agricultural and agrarian activities into multifunctional structure and alternative incomes					
SG 4. DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND RECREATION					
P 4. 1. Preservation and accessing the cultural, historic and natural heritage	X				
P 4. 2. Development of core types and forms of tourism					
P 4. 3. Increasing of tourist visits and more-day stays in tourism					
P 4. 4. Growth of business in tourism					
P 4. 5. Growth of tourism competitiveness in the region					
SG 5. PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT					
P 5. 1. Protection of separate components of the environment	X				
P 5. 2. Improvement of waste management aiming to increase utilisation of sewerage and removal of old burdens					
P 5. 3. Protection of the country and SD	XX				
P 5. 4. Environmental informing, upbringing and education					
SG 6. DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT					
P 6. 1. Adjustment of secondary schools to the requirements of the labour market					
P 6. 2. Provision of the adequate living standards of poor, old, handicapped and maladjusted citizens					
P 6. 3. Support the housing development	XX				
P 6. 4. Development of the cultural and sport activities and leisure time activities	X				

Notes:
xxx means strong links
xx means visible links
x means limited links/not direct

7.4. Interconnection to other EU financial instruments

7.4.1. Synergy, complementarity with the programmes financed from the EAFRD and the EFF

National Rural Development Strategic Programme for 2007-2013

Complementarity between the OPBR and the National Rural Development Strategic Programme for the programming period 2007-2013 (hereinafter "NRDSP") is relevant for all the measures the priority axis 3 NRDSP Quality of Life in the Rural Areas and Diversification of Rural Economy. However within the activities focused on renovation and recovery of the rural settlements there is no complementarity of NRDSP with the OPBR because the rural settlements fo the Bratislava region are not supported by the NRDSP while NRDSP supports the rural settlements within the whole territory of the Slovak Republic with exception of the Bratislava Region.

Table 26 Synergy and complementarity with the programmes financed from the EAFRD and the EFF

National Rural Development Strategic Plan 2007-2013	Operational Programme Bratislava Region	
Axis 3 Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of rural economy Priority 3: Renovation and development of the municipalities Measure 3.1 Diversification towards the non-agricultural activities 3.2 Diversification towards the non-agricultural activities Measure 3.3 Education and Information Measure 3.5 Skills acquiring, renewal and execution of the integrated strategies of the area development	OP Bratislava Region (OPBR) Priority Axis 1: Infrastructure Measure: Regeneration of settlements	Demarcation line/complementarity with the OPBR: The NRDSP does not include support the municipalities in the Bratislava Region The NRDSP: Support the private sector in the sphere of agriculture which share of the annual income from the agricultural first production on the total income represents minimally 30% (Measure 3.1) and maximally 30 % (Measure 3.2) - Support the institutions from the sphere of science and other education and commercial subjects which the priority axis 3 (Measure 3.3) relates to Support the public-private partnerships (civic associations, non-profit organisations and interests association (legal entities), measure 3.5

From the point of view of the OPBR, the relevant activities are not supported from the EFF, and therefore, it is not required to define synergy, complementarity, or demarcation lines.

7.4.2. Synergy, complementarity with other EC financial instruments

Innovative instruments of financing

One among the perspective forms of using resources from the Structural Funds is the use of the so-called innovative forms of financing. Article 44 of the General Regulation on the ERDF, the ESF and the CF states participation of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF) referring to financial engineering, establishes the legislative framework for effecting of the UC new initiatives JASPERS, JEREMIE and JESSICA. The MF SR in relation to financing engineering prepared Draft of Innovative Financial Instruments for the NSRF 2007-2013 (the 1st and the 2nd stages), adopted by the SR Government Resolution No. 921 as of 23 November 2005 and No. 836 as of 8 October 2006. The following forms of the support are proposed as follows:

- guaranteed schemes for loans for SMEs

- a scheme of support for starting entrepreneurs
- advantaged loans
- technical assistance in establishing the public-private partnership projects.

With respect to the character of the OPBR, the initiatives JESSICA and JEREMIE appears to be the most relevant. JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas) is an initiative of EC, EIB and the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) creating a framework for enhanced cooperation on financial engineering for sustainable urban development policy. JEREMIE (Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises) is common initiative of the EC, the EIB, the EIF and the ERDF aims at support access to the financial resources for SME, mainly for the fields of science and research, support fulfilling the Lisbon Strategy objectives and the support of the technologies and innovations transfer.

Whereas the micro-financing in the Slovak Republic (in terms of business support) covers current demand several support institutions with the broad scope of product portfolio operate in the commercial sector, the relevant financial instruments of the initiative JEREMIE are not separately mentioned in the OPBR.

Nevertheless, the option is not excluded to use some of the financial instruments of the initiatives JESICA and JEREMIE in case of their suitability for the OPBR. The process of implementation will be carried out in accordance with the schedule of the programme, in particular after arising of an increased demand for such forms of financing. In respect to implementation of the integrated strategies of urban areas development, the possibilities of using the innovative financial instruments suitable for support the relevant types of projects will be continuously examined during the OPBR implementation in cooperation with MF SR. With regard to the aim of the operational programme activities, MA OPBR will actively examine the possibility of including innovative activities resulting from initiative „Regions for Economic change“ (URBACT is part of this network) into the OPBR mainly by enabling participation of the network representative (as an observer) in the Monitoring Committee for the OPBR.

With respect to the fact that while using the innovative instruments of financing a combination of the private and public resources is involved (public-private partnerships), their actual use in practice will be however possible only after the removal of problems in the field of the SR legislation which means after harmonisation and adoption of the relevant legal norms.

8. FINANCIAL PLAN

The Financial Plan formulates a basis for financing the OPBR. The NSRF is the initiative document for the financial framework for using the ERDF resources, adopted by the SR Government Resolution No. 1005 as of 6. December 2006.

In accordance with the SR Government Resolution as of 8 October 2006 to the Strategy of financing from the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for the Programming Period 2007-2013, share of assistance from the ERDF expresses the total eligible expenditures under Article 53, paragraph 1b) of the General Regulation.
The binding amount of financial allocations grossing to EUR 398 057 758 in fixed prices of 2004 (what represents EUR 449 018 529 in current prices) implies for Slovakia for the Objective RCE based on the financial perspective for 2007-2013. Table 27 depicts re-distribution of the financial resources between the OP Bratislava Region, financed from the ERDF, the OP Research and Development, financed from the ERDF, and covering both objectives (Convergence, and RCE), the OP Employment and Social Inclusion and the OP Education (both OPs are financed from the ESF and covering the Objectives Convergence, and RCE).

Table 27 Financial allocations within period 2007-2013 for the separate Operational Programmes and priorities within the objective RCE (Structural Funds) given in EUR in current prices

Objective Regional Competitiveness and Employment		EC contribution
Operational Programme	**Fund**	**Total**
OP Bratislava Region	ERDF	87 000 000
- Transfer to Research and Development	ERDF	326 415 373
OP Employment and Social Inclusion[43]	ESF	17 801 578
OP Education[44]	ESF	17 801 578
In total Funds of Objective RCE for period 2007-2013 in total		449 018 529
Total ERDF		413 415 373
Total ESF		35 603 156

Source: NSRF, 2006

8.1. Financial Plan - Annual liabilities

The financial resources from the ERDF at the amount of EUR 87 000 000 in current prices have been approved for the OPBR based on the analyses of the structure of the financial needs in sectoral fields of the NSRF. Distribution of the financial resources for the implementation of individual priority axes takes into consideration the global objective of the OPBR and significance of fulfilling the objectives of the individual groups activities, while the experience from implementations during the previous programming period was taken into account as well.

Table 28 Re-distribution of the financial resources from the EU Funds for 2007-2013 for the OPBR (in EUR mil.) in current prices

[43] one common OP for both goals: Convergence, and Regional Competitiveness and Employment, sum only for the second Priority Axis

[44] one common OP for both goals: Convergence, and Regional Competitiveness and Employment, sum only for the second Priority Axis

Year	ERDF (current prices)
2007	11 702 539
2008	11 936 592
2009	12 175 323
2010	12 418 829
2011	12 667 207
2012	12 920 550
2013	13 178 960
In total for 2007-2013	**87 000 000**

8.2. Financial plan from the whole programming period according to priority axes and resources of financing

Table 29 Financial Plan of the OPBR according to the priority axes and resources of financing in current prices

Fund: ERDF	EU resources (a)	SR public resources (b)	Total (c) = (a)+(b)	Rate of co-financing (d)= (a)/(c)	EIB contribution (indicative)	Other resources (indicative)
Priority axis 1 Infrastructure	45 932 540	8 105 742	54 038 282	85%	0	0
Priority axis 2 Knowledge-based Economy	37 587 460	6 633 082	44 220 542	85%	0	11 042 465*
Priority axis 3 Technical Assistance	3 480 000	614 118	4 094 118	85%	0	0
In total	**87 000 000**	**15 352 942**	**102 352 942**	**85%**	**0**	**11 042 465**

Note: Rate of co-funding is rounded. It will be precisely set in the EC Decision on the OP.

* In case of other resources it concerns indicated amount of private resources whereby estimated average rate of aid intensity in terms of Community framework for state aid for research and development and innovation (EU C323, Official Journal, 30.12.2006) is 60%..

The SR Government through the document titled Strategy of Financing the SF and the CR for the Programming Period 2007-2013 as of 8 October 2006 decided that the contribution for the EU Funds will be expressed under Article 53, paragraph 1b) to the total eligible expenditures. It concerns the SR Government to the document titled "Strategy of Financing the SF and the CR for the Programming Period 2007-2013 as of 8 October 2006. The given document is fully in accordance with the General Regulation. Under Article 53, paragraph 2 of the General Regulation, the EC contribution from the funds at the level of the operational programmes within the Objectives Convergence and Objective RCE is influenced by the maximum values set in Annex III to that Regulation, i.e., for the SR the percentage value of eligible expenditures is 85 %.

The rules of the Strategy of Financing the SF and the CR for the Programming Period 2007-2013 are selected so that they will be applicable and single for providing assistance from the resources of the SF, the CF and national public resources for the projects of all the objectives. For achievement of the highest possible and the most effective use of the allocated financial resources, it was necessary to determine the meaningful, transparent and easy rules. We make an advise in the relation of the fact that the Government, in relation to the above documents, equally decided that the contribution from the EU Funds is under Article 53, paragraph 1b) to the total eligible public expenditure.

8.3. Distribution of the ERDF contribution into the categories of assistance

Table 30 Indicative distribution of the contribution from the ERDF into the categories of dimension "Priority Theme" in current prices

Code of category	Indicative amount of resources (EUR) within the category
03* - Transfer of technologies and improvement of the networks of cooperation between the small enterprises, the small enterprises and other enterprises and universities, the establishments of higher education of all other educational institutions, regional authorities, research centres and the scientific and technical centres	8 045 224
06* - Assistance for SME for support ecologic product and production procedures	6 033 918
07* - Investments into companies directly related to research and innovation	3 016 959
09* - Other measure for support research, innovation and business in SME	3 016 959
10 - Telephone infrastructures	5 064 000
11* - Information and telecommunication technologies	6 840 000
14* - Services and applications for SME	5 570 400
24* – Cycle tracks	2 000 000
52 - Clean urban transport support	9 200 000
28 - Intelligent transport systems	9 500 000
56 - Conservation and renovation of the natural heritage (including NATURA 2000 localities)	2 107 740
61 - Integrated projects for renovation of towns and rural areas	17 124 800
78 - Infrastructure of housing	6 000 000
85 - Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control (TA)	2 130 000
86 - Evaluation and studies; information and communication (TA)	1 350 000
Total	**87 000 000**
In total categories contributing to the implementation of the Lisbon objectives within the Objective RCE (according to Annex 4 of General Regulation)	**41 723 460**

* Categories contributing to the implementation of the Lisbon objectives

Table 31 Indicative distribution of the contribution from the ERDF into categories of dimension "Form of Financial Contribution" in current prices

Code of category	Indicative amount of resources (EUR) within the category
01- Non-returnable subvention	85 500 000
04- Other forms of financing	1 500 000
Total	**87 000 000**

More information on other forms of financing is in Chapter 7.4.2.

Table 32 Indicative distribution of the contribution from the ERDF into categories of dimension "Supported Territory" in current prices

Code of category	Indicative amount of resources within the category
00 – Non applicable	3 480 000*
01 - Towns	50 112 000
05 - Rural areas	33 408 000
Total	**87 000 000**

* Financial resources for Priority axis 3.

9. SYSTEM OF IMPLEMENTATION

9.1. Management

9.1.1. Central Coordination Authority (CCA)

Based on the SR Government Resolution No. 832 as of 8 October 2006, the MCRD SR as the CCA for the Operational Programmes in the National Strategic Reference Framework of the SR for 2007-2013 ensures the strategic level of the management system of the NSRF. In this relation, the CCA conducts in the field of the assistance management from the structural funds and the Cohesion Fund predominantly the following functions:

- at the NSRF level provides arrangement: programming, monitoring, evaluation, publicity and informing and training of administrative capacities in these fields;
- ensures coordination of the processes of management and implementation of the operational programmes in accordance with the System of management of the structural funds and the Cohesion Fund;
- guides methodologically the entities involved in the management and implementation of the operational programmes;
- is responsible for development, operation and maintenance of the ITMS;
- meets the function of MA for the OP Technical Assistance.

9.1.2. Managing Authority (MA)

The MA of the operational programme represents the operational level of the system of management of the NSRF. The MA is an authority appointed by the Member State based on Article 59 paragraph 1/b) of the General Regulation that is responsible for the management and implementation of the programme in accordance with the EU and the SR regulations. In managing of the operational programme, the MA proceeds in accordance with the methodological instructions of the CCA and the methodological instructions of the Certification Authority and the Audit Authority in the respective fields.
Based on the SR Government Resolution No. 832 as of 8 October 2006, the MA for the OPBR is the MCRD SR.

In accordance with Article 60 of the General Regulation, the MA is responsible for the management and implementation of the respective OP, predominantly as follows:

- elaboration of the operational programme and the programme manual;
- co-financing of the operational programme from the State Budget;
- guiding the beneficiaries;
- monitoring and evaluation of the operational programme;
- management of the MC for the OPBR and elaboration of annual and final reports on implementation, their submissions to the Monitoring Committee and the European Commission;
- publicity on assistance from the EU and information of the public on the Funds from the EU in accordance to Article 69 of the General Regulation;
- collection and recording the necessary data for the financial management, monitoring, verification, audits and evaluation in the electronic form;
- archiving and accessibility of the documents in accordance to Article 90 of the General Regulation;

- receipt, selection and approval of the projects of beneficiaries in accordance to the criteria for evaluation and selection of the projects approved by the Monitoring Committee;
- concluding the contracts with the beneficiaries on the provision of grant;
- verification of the co-financing the separate projects from the beneficiary's resources and from other national resources;
- verification of delivery of the co-financing products and services and verification of the expenditures actually spent;
- provision of the keeping separate accounting system by the beneficiaries and other bodies involved into the implementation;
- verification according to Article 60 paragraph b) of the General Regulation;
- establishing the suitable system of implementation and monitoring the programme
- establishing and ensuring the procedures safeguarding the fact that all the documents related to expenditures and required audits necessary for ensuring the correct revision record are maintained in accordance with the requirements of the General Regulation.

In accordance to Article 71 of the General Regulation, the internal structure and distribution (delegating) of the accountabilities of the MA for the OPBR will be specified in description of the management and control systems which will be submitted by the Member State to the EC prior to the submission of the first application for on-going payment or no later than 12 months since the approval of the OPBR.

9.1.3. Intermediary body under the Managing Authority for the OPBR (IBMA)

Under Article 59, paragraph 2 of the General Regulation, the Member State can designate one or more IBMA for fulfilling some or all tasks of the MA. In accordance with Article 12 of the Implementation Regulation, the system of the structural funds and the Cohesion Fund management , the details are precisely stipulated in the course of delegating competences between the MA and the IBMA. The final responsibility for performing and implementing the programme remains on the MA, also in cases of delegating tasks to the IBMA.

In the programming period 2007-2013, the extent of involvement of the regional structures into the implementation of the OPBR is significantly strengthened, comparing to the shortened programming period 2004-2006. In relation to implementation of the OPBR in the programming period 2007-2013, the tasks of the IBMA are carried out by the Authority of the BSR, representing the NUTS 3 level region. The thematic fields of support which are implemented in the decentralised way by the individual IBMA, are aimed at support the measures of the priority axis 1.

Delegating of conduct of the implementation procedures to the IBMA is implemented in links to the Internal Procedures Manuals of the MA and the IBMA for the OPBR through the bilateral legal act between the MA for the OPBR and individually IBMA. The implementation and control mechanisms for all the measures of the OPBR are subject to the equal rules, detailed described in Internal Procedure Manuals of the involved entities.

As far as to implementation, the scope of the delegated tasks to the IBMA is specified in accordance with the SR and the EU legislation as follows:

a) cooperation in drafting and publishing calls for submitting the projects;

b) receiving and registering applications for grant;

c) cooperation in appraisal and selecting applications for grant;

d) preparing and reviewing the contracts concluded with the beneficiaries on provision of grant;

e) provision of the conduct of selection of the relevant operations for support in accordance to the set criteria according to the SR legislation and the EU legislation;

f) provision of recording and archiving of detailed accounting entries/records on every operation in computerised form;

g) provision of collecting the data about implementation necessary for the financial managing, monitoring, verification, audit and evaluation;

h) provision of compliance with the requirements for information and publicity laid down in Article 69 of the General Regulation in accordance with the approved Communication Plan;

i) verification of delivery of the co-financed works, goods and services, spending of expenditures declared by beneficiaries and their compliance with the SR legislation and the EU legislation, verifying these facts on the place of the selected operations;

j) ensuring that the beneficiaries and all other entities participating in implementation of the programme keep a separate accounting system or suitable code indication of the accounts for the transactions linked to the operations

k) provision of the procedures ensuring that all the documents concerning expenditures and required audits necessary for the provision of correct revision record are kept in accordance with the requirements of the General Regulation

l) ensuring that the Certifying Authority receives all the required information on the procedures and performed verifications concerning expenditures for the purposes of performing certification

m) drafting the relevant sections for Annual Reports and on-going Reports on implementation, and Final Report on implementation of the relevant priority axis or topic fields of the support.

The proposed system of implementation establishes the increased demands for the administrative capacities and establishing conditions for implementation of parts of the OPBR in the decentralised manner. The MA for the OPBR in the field of delegating conduct of some of its tasks to the IBMA shall do the following:

to provide to the IBMA methodological guidelines for fulfilling the delegated tasks,

to perform coordination of the individual IBMA,

to supervise over compliance of conduct of the individual tasks with the relevant audit trail and internal procedures manuals,

to ensure technical assistance to the material and technical provision of the IBMA within the options of the priority axis 3 of the OPBR,

to arrange compliance of the performance of individual tasks with the SR and the EU legislation,

to make ongoing evaluation the level of meeting the delegated tasks,

to perform the subsequent financial control of the projects implemented by the IBMA.

The detailed description of the processes of management and implementation of the operational programme is described in the Internal Procedures Manuals of the involved entities.

The preparation of compatible Internal Procedures of the MA for the OPBR, the IBMA for the OPBR, Paying Unit for the OPBR and the relevant control units relates closely to the preparation of the administrative capacities of the IBMA for the programming period 2007-2013. The Internal Manual of the MA for the OPBR and the Internal Procedure Manual of the IBMA will be regularly updated during the whole programming period respecting the changes of external character (e.g., legislation), internal character (e.g., organisational changes), recommendations of internal and external audits, etc. The Authority of the BSR modified its organisational structure according to the qualitative and quantitative standards for conduct of decentralised procedures.

Acquisition of administrative capacities of the IBMA, their training and certification is the process linking up to the ongoing systematic audit performed by the MF SR as the Certifying Authority, while the subject of audit is individually every entity, involved into implementation of the OPBR. The individual stages of the preparation of the IBMA up to their certifications and individual delegating competences are stipulated in a framework way in the SR Government Resolution No. 407/2007.

The MA for the OPBR will execute in the half of the programming period the mid-term evaluation process of the Priority axis 1 implementation through the BSR as the IBMA for the OPBR. Based on the results of this evaluation, the possibility of eventual changes of the implementation system and scope of the competencies delegation for the BSR as IBMA for the OPBR Priority axis 1 will be reviewed.

Indicative schedule of the BSR involvement into the OPBR implementation is described in the Annex No. 8.

9.1.4. Task of the authorities of regional and local self-government

The MA for the OPBR in accordance with the principle of partnership given in Article 11 of the General Regulation establishes conditions for the participation of social-economic partners in the preparation and implementation of the OPBR. The authority of the BSR (i.e., the NUTS 3 level) and the local self-government (towns and municipalities) are in the SR conditions one of the players of regional development.

The regional and local structures (the Authority of the BSR and the local self-governments) actively participated in the preparation of the OPBR through the membership in the Working Group for the OPBR preparation. In the process of preparation of the OPBR, there the professional place was established for participation in defining the priority fields of support the OPBR in accordance with the elaborated strategies at the local and regional levels and in links to analysis in the field of the regional infrastructure in the Bratislava Region territory.

The Authority of Bratislava Self-Governing Region participates in the process of the OPBR implementation as the IBMA within the Objective RCE, established at the NUTS 3 level region while it is directly involved into the implementation processes of the Priority axis 1 of the OPBR Involvement of the IBMA at the implementation level comprises the complex activities of project cycle: co-operation on the preparation and publishing of calls, receipt, appraisal and selection of operations, financing of projects, conduct of control processes, monitoring on the level of projects and cooperation in elaborating groundwork documents for monitoring on the level of programme.

The BSR is involved into the implementation of the OPBR Priority axis 2 through Information Centre of the First Contact (hereinafter “ICFC). ICFC plays the significant role during performing the information activities related to the OPBR implementation for the beneficiaries.

ICFC is, on the regional and local level in the sphere of publicity, responsible for the following activities,

- promotion and increasing the public awareness about the OPBR and the methods of the beneficiaries applying for the grant through counselling, consultations and methodological assistance,
- arranging collaboration relating to the information and publicity with the goal of increasing informing the Slovak citizens awareness on the possibility to withdraw the grants from the structural funds as well as transparency and effectiveness of these sources utilization
- providing the information on the possibilities of the ERDF assistance planning and on the conditions which must be fulfilled while applying for the grant by public representatives
- distributing the promotion materials (brochures, leaflets and posters etc.)
- in collaboration with the local self-government and other institutions operating in the sphere of the regional development on the territory of the region, information provision of information to by the MCRD SR on the potential projects as well as the other required information

The BSR within the evaluation process arranges issuing the statements to the submitted applications for the grants with respect of harmonisation with the Programme of Economic, Social and Cultural development of the region. The BSR statement is obliged to be added into the application for the grant.

At the same time, the BSR representatives are the members of the selection committees for assessing the applications for the grant with voting right, or being the observers.

Selection of the individual operations is performed in the final stage (i.e.,after the process of appraisal of individual applications for grant) by the collective bodies, i.e., the selection commissions, where in terms of compliance with the rule of equality of opportunities, representatives of territorial self-government, ministries, NGOs, coordinators of the horizontal priorities and other social-economic partners are represented. The local and regional bodies of self-government are the prevailing majority of eligible beneficiaries within the OPBR. With respect to the fact that the Authority of the BSR is concurrently the establisher of some types of the civil infrastructure facilities supported through the OPBR, the delegating of thematic fields of support to this Authority took into consideration also this aspect important from the view of ensuring equality of opportunities. The scope of delegating competences at the thematic level is an output of application of the principle of partnership, issuing from the system of functioning of public administration at the level of the Member State. The concrete mechanisms preventing from the potential arising conflict of interests are contents of the Programme Manual of the OPBR and the Internal Procedure Manuals of the MA for the OPBR and the IBMA.

In the interest of application of the partnership principle in conducting and implementing the OPBR, participation of the above given spectrum of social-economic partners is ensured in the Monitoring Committee for the OPBR. Through the membership in the Monitoring Committee for the OPBR, the regional self-government and the representatives of local self-governments have options to participate in meeting of tasks of the Monitoring Committee under Article 65 of the General Regulation.

The MA for the OPBR establishes conditions for involvement of the social-economic partners into the process of evaluation of the operational programme through participation in the preparation of contents and structure of the OPBR Evaluation Plan, participation in the process of summarisation of data from the process of monitoring and via options to initiate evaluations

of the programme through attendance at the Monitoring Committee for the OPBR (see section 9.2).

In relation to the activities of information and publicity, a part of communication strategy of the MA for the OPBR is the active cooperation with the regional self-government, entities representing the interests of local self-government and regional development agencies. Section 9.6 gives description of cooperation of the MA for the OPBR with the territorial self-government in the field of information and publicity, and more detailed in the Communication Plan for the OPBR. The regional self-government is involved mainly in the information activities of the regional and local character and its more active involvement in information is expected concurrently in relation to the measures of the OPBR which are implemented in the decentralised manner.

9.1.5. Monitoring Committee

A. Monitoring Committee for the OPBR

In accordance with Article 63 of the General Regulation, the Monitoring Committee (hereinafter "the MC") is established for every operational programme within three months of its approval by the EC. The role of the MC is to supervise effectiveness and quality of implementation of the programme.

The chairperson of the MC for the OPBR is the Minister for Construction and Regional Development of the SR (hereinafter "the Minister") as the representative of the MA for OPBR. The MA for the OPBR fulfils function of the secretariat of the MC. The Minister appoints the MC members. In accordance with Article 11 of the General Regulations, composition of the Monitoring Committee is based on the principle of partnership. Members of the MC for the OPBR, besides the relevant Ministries and the SRGO are also representatives of the regional and local self-governments, the third sector representatives and other social-economic partners concerned by the content of the given operational programme, while it is required to ensure the balanced participation of partners. In addition, the representative of the CCA, the Certifying Authority and the Audit Authority are members of the MC as well. The EC representative attends as observer and counsellor, and the representatives of the EIB and the EIF, too, (where the OPBR uses innovative financial instruments).

The MC meets twice per a year or following the initiative of a member of the MA or more frequently when it is required to discuss matters to which an approval by the MC is inevitable (e.g., proposal for revision of the operational programme).

The Statute and the Standing Order approved by the MC on its first meeting arrange the MC competences and activities.

The main tasks of the MC in accordance with Article 65 of the General Regulation are the following:

- approving the criteria for selecting the projects (within six months from the approval of the operational programme) and reviewing them, if required;
- assessing and approving proposals for change and supplementing the content of the operational programme;
- regular reviewing results of the programme implementation, mainly achieving objectives of the operational programme and evaluation given in Article 48, paragraph 3 of the General Regulation;
- assessing and approving the annual and final reports on the implementation of the programme prior to submitting them to the EC;

- accepting information on the annual control report or its sections relevant to the operational programme and on all the significant comments that the EC can raise after its reviewing;
- proposing revisions or reviews of the operational programme that could enable achieving objectives of the relevant Fund or improvement of the management of the operational programme, including financial management.

B. National Monitoring Committee for the NSRF

The MCRD SR as the representative of the CCA for the NSRF is the chair the National Monitoring Committee for the NSRF (hereinafter "the NMC"). The CCA meets function of secretariate. The NMC approves its Statute and the Standing Order at its first meeting.

The NMC meets twice per a year as minimum. Members of the NMC are the representatives of central authorities of state administration, municipalities and self-governing regions and other social and economic partners. The observers are the EC Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic in Brussels and the Ministry of Agriculture of the SR. The EC has counselling function.

The NMC main activities cover, in particular, the following:

- monitoring of the NSRF implementation;
- approving of changes in the NSRF falling in its competence;
- drafting a Summary annual (or final) report for the NSRF;
- approving of strategic reports prior to the submission to the EC;
- formulating recommendations for the activities of the Monitoring Committees for individual operational programmes with an aim of achieving the effective system of monitoring the Cohesion Policy implementation in the SR;
- approving re-distribution of the resources among the operational programmes
- function of the Monitoring Committee for the Operational Programme Technical Assistance.

9.2. Monitoring

In accordance with the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund system of management, monitoring represents activities involving the systematic collection, sorting, aggregation and storing of relevant information for the needs of evaluation and control of the managed processes. The main objective of monitoring is to monitor regularly implementation of the NSRF objectives, operational programmes and projects using the system of indicators.

The outputs from monitoring ensure for the MA the inputs for decision-making for the purposes of improving the implementation of the operational programme, drafting annual reports and final report on the implementation of the operational programme and groundwork documents for decision-making of the MC (e.g., in relation to a possible revision of the operational programme).

The process of monitoring is based on the structured management model at the levels of the NSRF, OP and on the level of projects. All the entities involved in the management of the

structural funds and the Cohesion Fund and withdrawing resources from theses funds, ensure monitoring and evaluation to the scope of the defined tasks and responsibilities.

In relation to the OPBR implementation, monitoring and evaluation on the level of individual projects is ensured within respective measures by the responsible project managers, either already at the MA or the IBMA. Monitoring at the level of priority axis and the operational programme as a whole is ensured by the respective monitoring and evaluation managers of the MA for the OPBR in cooperation with the respective managers of the IBMA. Results of monitoring on the level of the operational programme or its priority axes are a part of the annual reports approved by the MC for the OPBR.

The data acquired in the process of monitoring represent a significant resources of information for management of the programme and for decision making of the MA for the OPBR and the MC for the OPBR. Concurrently, they are used in the process of evaluation of the programme or its diverse aspects (e.g., priority axis, groups of beneficiaries, etc.). The time and procedural links between the process of monitoring and evaluation at the level of the programme are in section 9.3 of the OPBR.

Monitoring and evaluation are ensured by all the entities participating in the management of the structural funds and the Cohesion Fund to the cope of defined tasks and responsibilities and the entities which withdraw the financial resources from the Funds.

9.2.1. The tasks of the CCA in the field of monitoring

CCA in the field of monitoring:

- is responsible for preparation of the national system of indicators for the NSRF in cooperation with the individual MAs and its possible updating,
- coordinates and methodologically guides of the MAs in the field of monitoring,
- conducts of monitoring on the NSRF level.

9.2.2. The tasks of the MA for the OPBR in the field of monitoring

MA for the OPBR in the field of monitoring:

- proceeds in accordance with the methodology of the CCA in the field of monitoring,
- in cases of the need, submits proposals to the CCA for changes or supplementing the national system of indicators,
- is responsible for data collecting and their analysis on the level of the programme in the field of monitoring through the system of indicators as well as in the field of monitoring on the level of assistance categories,
- is responsible for drafting annual reports and final report on the performance of the operational programme submitted for approval to the MC for the OPBR and subsequently to the EC.

Monitoring (and following evaluation) carries out in two ways: on the basis of the indicator system and on the basis of the assistance categories from the SF.

A. Monitoring through the indicators system

The objective of the NSRF and the individual operational programmes are defined and further quantified in the process of programming through the system of physical and financial indicators (the National System of Indicators for the NSRF). The indicators are binding for all the entities and are a part of the IT Monitoring System. Fulfilling the defined indicators represents the most important instrument for monitoring and evaluation of fulfilling the objectives of the operational programmes and the NSRF.

The indicators of the OPBR on the level of the operational programme are described in Annex 10, and the indicators for the OPBR on the level of priority axis are in chapter 4 and on the level of the priority axes in the chapter No. 5.

Monitoring begins at the lowest level, on the level of the project. For the needs of monitoring, the project is the basic unit, analysed through the relevant collected data. In the contract on providing grant from the Funds, the beneficiary will bind himself/herself to provide data for the purposes of monitoring and reporting on the project. The physical as well as financial indicators of the projects received from the beneficiaries through the individual monitoring sheets are projected into the IT Monitoring System and aggregated upwards, to the level of a group of activities, priority axis and operational programme up to the level of the NSRF.

B. Monitoring through the categories of assistance from the SF

In accordance with Article 9 of the General Regulation and Annex II of the Implementation Regulation, expenditures from the Funds are monitored pursuant to following categories:

- priority topics;
- type of assistance;
- type of territory;
- dimension of economic activity;
- dimension of localisation of assistance.

Every operational programme comprises an indicative planned distribution of contribution from the Funds on the level of the programme within the first three categories. With the category "priority themes" an indicative share of the contribution from the Funds is set in the operational programme to such activities that aim at support competitiveness and establishing jobs so the so-called "Lisbon activities". The given enables to monitor and evaluate benefit or deliverable asset of the operational programme to the fulfilling of Lisbon Strategy and the National Reform Programme in the course of implementation of the programme and after its termination.

In monitoring through the categories of assistance from the SF, the following procedure applies to; at the time of approval of the project, data are stored into the ITMS and after finishing of the project, actual values achieved in the given categories are stored. Data will be aggregated through the ITMS for categorisation from the levels of individual projects into the higher levels of programme structure and are a part of the annual reports.

9.3. Evaluation

In accordance with the system of management of the structural funds and the Cohesion Fund, evaluation represents the process that examines systematically benefits from the implementation of programmes and their compliance with the objectives set in the OPBR and the NSRF, analysing effectiveness of the implementation processes and suitability of the setting the individual programmes and groups of activities, preparing recommendations for increasing their effectiveness.

Under Article 47 of the General Regulation, evaluation can have the strategic character (e.g., examining development of a programme or groups of programmes in relation to the Community priorities and the national priorities), or the operative character (with an aim of supporting the course of the operational programme). Evaluation is executed prior to the beginning of the programming period (*ex ante* evaluation), during it (on-going evaluation) and after the termination of the programming period (final evaluation).

Evaluation is carried out within the responsibility of the Member State (the CCA, the MA) or the EC in accordance with the principle of proportionality. The results are published according to valid regulations on access to information.

***Ex ante* evaluation of the OPBR**

The process of *ex ante* evaluation in relation to the OPBR is described in section 2.2 of the OPBR.

On-going evaluation

The process of on-going evaluation has the form of a series of evaluations of which the objective is to examine continually over the implementation of the programme the scope to which the resources are used and to examine effectiveness and efficiency of programming funds, social and economic impacts and impacts on the priorities of the Community. Concurrently, identifies factors, contributing to success or non-success of the implementation of the operational programme, including sustainability and identification of suitable procedures.

Evaluation is carried out systematically and ongoing over the entire duration of the operational programme up to the submission of Final Report on the operational programme in terms of Article 67 of the General Regulation. The process of evaluation is split from the view of its conduct into internal and external evaluations. The basic assumptions for the preparation of evaluation are the monitoring reports on the projects implemented within the respective operational programme and the annual reports submitted by the MC for the OPBR. The results of evaluation are groundwork document for decisions of the MA for the OPBR and the MC for the OPBR in managing implementation of the programme with aim of achieving required progress in the course of achieving the main economic, social and environmental targets/objectives.

Internal evaluation

Internal evaluation of the OPBR is conducted ongoing on the level of each priority axis and has operative character. Managers for evaluation and monitoring will perform it under the competence of the MA for the OPBR. In addition, the respective administrative capacities of the IBMA contribute to processing and summarisation of the data concerning the priority axes and measures implemented in the decentralised manner. The results of internal evaluation are a part of Annual Reports on the programme.

After approval of the operational programme by the EC, the MA for the OPBR is responsible for the preparation of values of benchmark output and result indicators (benchmarking). The benchmarks are set out as a rate of the financial resources allocated for the given measure

to the key indicator of output or to a result given in the operational programme. For the field of TA of the operational programme, benchmark indicators are prepared with respect to the data of the preceding programme period and data for TA given in the indicator code list.

Subject of internal evaluation is comparison of an achieved progress in meeting the output, result and financial indicators on the level of particular priority axis. Internal evaluation ensures a linkage between monitoring and management of the OPBR and its results can be an impulse for decision taking aimed at remedies of the operational programme.

Regular results of internal evaluation are included into the respective reports of the programme in transparent table form and graphic depiction.

Part of the process of internal evaluation is also collection of context indicators or indicators, which were given in the analytical section of the operational programme with an aim of documenting current social-economic and environmental trends at the respective territorial level.

External on-going evaluation

External evaluation is conducted out ofthe structures of the MA by the independent experts with an aim of identifying mainly relevance and practicality of the supported measures in relation to the set of general objectives of the programme, as well as identified needs. The basic principles of evaluation are: proportionality (size and identified risks of OP), independence (from the MA), partnership (participation of the involvement parties in evaluation) and transparency.

External evaluation can be conducted on the level of priority axis, operational programme, horizontal priority and/or position and conditions of certain target group. External evaluation can have operative or strategic character.

Operative evaluation is aimed on the field of performance with respect to effectiveness of the allocated resources, efficiency of the achieved results and implementation of the programme from the financial and implementation points of views. The operative evaluations imply from the arising of circumstances and the need of their solution and are not a part of Evaluation Plan.

The strategic external evaluation is aimed at the field of relevance of the measures and priority axes to the solution of the identified problems, practicality of the achieved results comparing to the anticipated impact on the target groups and the consistence of support from the SF (complementarity of individual priority axes in achieving the general objectives set of the operational programme and the NSRF). The results of all the strategic evaluations of the operational programme are a part of Annual Report submitted by the MC for the OPBR.

External evaluation should be conducted in the following cases:

1. if the achieved outputs and results on the level of the programme differ based on the findings of monitoring and internal evaluation from the anticipated values more than by values determined in the OPBR The Evaluation Plan with an aim of taking required remedy measures;
2. in case of proposing revision of the operational programme in relation to the social and economic changes in the environment of the programme, significant changes in priorities on the European, national or regional levels or significant problems in implementing the programme (having a financial, material or implementation character).

The results of external strategic evaluations are parts of reports submitted to the MC for the OPBR. Where the MC for the OPBR initiates an external evaluation above the framework of the Strategic External Evaluation Plan, the results of such evaluation are submitted at the following meeting of the MC for the OPBR. The results of evaluations are groundwork document for decision making process in managing the programme.

***Ex post* evaluation**

Subsequently, or *ex post* evaluation of the operational programme will be performed in terms of Article 49 of the General Regulation in close cooperation with the MA for the OPBR. The EC usually appoints an external evaluator to conduct an *ex post* evaluation. *Ex post* evaluation is conducted for every operational programme and examines the scope to which resources were used, effectiveness and efficiency of the programming of the Fund, and social-economic impact, aiming at drafting conclusions for the policy of economic and social cohesion. *Ex post* evaluation identifies the factors contributing to success or non-success of performing the operational programme and determines attested procedures. *Ex post* evaluation is terminated in relation to the programming period 2007-2013 as of 31 December 2015.

Evaluation of each of these three stages must concern a set of specific questions with respect to performance of the programme. Monitoring the indicators represent the main source of information according to which the evaluation should be based. Concurrently, these indicators are subject of the specific evaluations in diverse stages. The Indicative Evaluation Plan is described in Annex No. 9.

9.3.1. Tasks of the CCA in the field of evaluation

CCA in the field of evaluation:

- ensures *ex ante* evaluation of the main strategic document for the programming period after 2013,
- ensures ongoing, theme evaluation on the central level,
- coordinates and methodologically guides MAs in the field of evaluation.

9.3.2. Tasks of the MA for the OPBR in the field of evaluation

MA for the OPBR in the field of evaluation:

- proceeds in accordance with the CCA methodology in the field of evaluation,
- ensures *ex ante* and on-going evaluations of the operational programme and the submission of results of the on-going evaluations to the MC for the OPBR and the EC,
- ensures communication with the EC and inputs for *ex post* evaluation of the OPBR and possible strategic evaluation performed by the EC.

9.4. IT Monitoring System

The IT Monitoring System for the structural funds and the Cohesion Fund (hereinafter "the ITMS") is the central information system serving for recording, processing, exporting and monitoring data on programming, project and financial management, control and audit of the SF and the CF. It comprises the two parallel working sub-systems for the programming periods 2004-2006 and 2007-2013. The sub-systems for the two programming periods closely cooperate, utilising the common database and within it, the common records of objects.

The ITMS use is used within all the operational programmes to the equal extent. The common monitoring system has the task to ensure the single and compatible system of monitoring, management and financial management of the programmes financed from the SF and the CF.

The system comprises of the three main sections:

- the non-public section of the ITMS ensure the programme, project and financial management, control and audit in interconnection to the

Information System of Accounting Funds (hereinafter "the ISAF") and through it to the State Treasury and the Budget Information System,

- the output section, ensures the processing of static and dynamic data exports,
- public section provides arrangement with the beneficiaries, information system of the EC SFC2007 and monitoring systems of the neighbouring countries for the programmes of the cross-border co-operation

The eligible users of the public section of the ITMS can be, based on application, all the entities that have opportunity to submit an application for contribution from the Funds. Communication of the applicants/beneficiaries with the ITMS public section is ensured through the SSL protocol. The CCA elaborates a manual for beneficiaries for using the ITMS public section.
Applicants/beneficiaries of grant from the funds will be enabled through the ITMS public section the following:

- electronic submission and receipt of an application for grant from the Funds;
- acquisition of digest arranged information on status of the processes of their projects, including requests for payment or refunding expenditures;
- other options (updating data on the beneficiary, electronic receipt of requests for payment, electronic receipt of monitoring sheets).

9.4.1. The ITMS and communication processes of beneficiaries for grant from the Funds on the level of the project are following:

- establishing account, signing an agreement on the use between the MA and beneficiaries of grant from the Funds, activation of account,
- entering data into computerised forms and their transfer into the ITMS public section, forwarding an authorised paper copy of forms by beneficiaries to the administrator and the user of the ITMS non-public section,
- verification of compliance of the information in the electronic form and the paper copy form by the user of the ITMS non-public section,
- other processing the applications after performing control and repairing possible discrepancies in the electronic form and the hard copy form.

9.4.2. Tasks of the CCA in relation to the ITMS

CCA in relation to ITMS:

- is responsible for development, operation and maintenance of the system, providing operation of all the ITMS sections;
- manages the commission in which every MA has its representative; this commission suggests aiming of development, communicating the MA requirements to the CCA, managing and guides users of the system according to the CCA instructions and guidelines, is responsible for the initialisation data of the system ;
- elaborates guidelines for use of the ITMS,
- maintains the initialisation data on the level of the NSRF updated.

9.4.3. Tasks of the MA for the OPBR in relation to the ITMS

MA for the OPBR in relation to ITMS:

- maintain the initialisation data updated of its programme,
- responsibility for entering data on the programme, projects and subordinated structures pursuant to the CCA instructions to use the ITMS,
- responsibility for appointing roles to users pursuant to the internal manuals,
- provide support on the first level to the users of the ITMS public and non-public sections.

9.5. Electronic data exchange with the EC

Under Section 7 of the Implementation Regulation, electronic communication of the Member State with the database EC SFC2007 is compulsory.

The following two options of electronic communications are possible:

- Web interface SFC2007,
- Integration of the monitoring systems of the Members States with SFC2007.

The second option is selected in the conditions of the SR, the integration of the ITMS II with the SFC2007 system. The ITMS II ensures data collection and communication with the SFC2007. It is possible to use the web interface SFC2007, if required by the individual MAs however integrity of the data of both systems will be secured and time for entering the data will be saved through using interface of the ITMS II. Where any failure or defect occurs on the ITMS or on interface, after the approval of the CCA, it is possible to use the web interface for entering data into the SFC2007, however person who enters this data is responsible for harmonising the data in both systems.

Interfaces of the ITMS II and the SFC2007:

- import of breakdowns of allocated amount coming from the SF and the CF for the SR according to the objectives in fixed prices 2004 and in current prices;
- export of the NSRF,
- export of the OP and the priority axes,
- export of the large projects,
- export of OPTA,
- import of the EC Decisions on the OP,
- breakdown of the categorisations of the EU Funds,
- export of estimation of the expected expenditures
- applications for payment to the EC,
- statement on the partial termination of a programme,
- export of description of the management and control systems,
- export of annual reports,
- export of final reports,

- export of final payment,
- settlement according to the rule (n+2), or (n+3),
- export of non-structured data: the NSRF,
- import of non-structured data: the EC Decision on the NSRF and the OPBR.

The provision of the communications of the ITMS II and the SFC2007 is at the level of the systems is secured using a guaranteed electronic signature that is issued for the ITMS II.

The MS Liaison in every Member State is are responsible for identification of the users and the client systems within the SFC2007. As far as to the SR, the role of the MS Liaison for the Funds such as the ERDF, the ESF and the CF is met by the responsible employee of the CCA. All requests for access to the web interface SFC2007 and change in the access rights are sent to the CCA. The MS Liaison communicates with the European Commission concerning the formal and content control while establishing and updating the user account. An access passwords are sent from the European Commission in two parts; the user receives the first part, and the MS Liaison will receive the second part.

9.6. Publicity and information

Information and publicity on the options to obtain support from the SF and impacts of the individual interventions are focused on visualisation of increasing of the EU Cohesion Policy awareness in individual EU Member States implemented through the targeted directing the resources from the SR into priority fields of support.

The Member State and the MA under Article 69 of the General Regulation will provide information for citizens and beneficiaries on the co-financing of programmes with an aim of emphasising the role of the Community and ensuring transparency of assistance coming from the Funds.

For the purposes of ensuring information and publicity, the MA elaborates the Communication Plan for the respective operational programme up to four months from the OP approval and submits it to the EC. In implementing the CP, the MA ensures to carry out all the measures on information and publicity under Articles 5 to 7 of the Implementation Regulation.

The objective of the provision of information and publicity is the following:

- to achieve maximum availability of information,
- to deepen information on the objectives set and options of assistance provided from the SF,
- improvement of transparency in relation to use of the SF,
- to establish conditions for maximum possible success of implementation of the approved programme documents and for increasing the quality of submitted projects within individual operational programmes,
- to reinforce absorption capacity.

In accordance with the rules on implementation of the General Regulation, the MA for the OPBR is responsible for publicity of the OPBR.

The Communication Plan for the OPBR (hereinafter "the CP“) represents the basic framework for the field of publicity and information in relation to implementation of the OPBR in the programming period 2007-2013. Contents and aiming of the CP is arranged in Chapter II

of the Implementation Regulation. Under the given regulation, the CP is submitted for approval to the EC, while the MA for the OPBR in accordance with Article 3 of the Implementation Regulation may conduct activities of information and publicity, which are stated in Articles 5, 6 and 7 of this regulation, also in case, that the final version of the CP does not exist yet.

The CP as document defines detailed strategy of the MA for the OPBR for achieving goals in the field of information and publicity. Concurrently, the CP identifies target groups for information and publicity, describing implementation of activities in accordance with indicative budget and time schedule. In addition, the CP comprises a guide for evaluation of measures in the field of information and publicity as far as visualisation of the operational programme and awareness regarding it and the role played by the Community.

In links to the OPBR implemented during the programming period 2007-2013, one CP is elaborated, that was elaborated by the MA for the OPBR, the IBMA for the OPBR (BSR), regional development agencies and possible other entities. The target groups of the CP are mainly potential applicants for grant, applicants for grant and beneficiaries but also economic and social partners, regional and local self-governments, entrepreneurial sphere, public administration authorities, EC, Monitoring Committee, the public and mass media.

The goal of the CP is following:

- to inform on the roles of the EU, the MA, and the IBMA for the OPBR and the MC for the OPBR,
- to inform on the operational programme, its position and role within the NSRF, as well as its objectives,
- to ensure information for the potential beneficiaries on the OPBR strategy, goals and priority axes, measures and conditions of eligibility that should be met by the beneficiaries for it to be qualified for financing activities or measures within the operational programme,
- to inform on options and advantages provided through the SF in the interest to increase positive image of the SF and the role of the EU played in cooperation with the SR within the structural assistance, on contacts on the national, regional or local levels that can provide information about the operational programme,
- to inform on the options to receive support within the OPBR (current calls, frequent questions, counselling in preparing projects, etc.),
- to provide current, precise and understandable information about already implemented operations, their impacts and current status of implementation of the OPBR according to priority axes and measures and actual status of withdrawal of the financial resources for the operational programme,
- to coordinate all the information activities of the MA for the OPBR and the IBMA for the OPBR,
- to ensure availability of information through diverse communication channels to various target groups.

Implementation of the CP for the OPBR over the entire programming period is ensured by the publicity managers of the MA for the OPBR and at the IBMA for the OPBR level it is financed through the Priority axis 3 Technical Assistance of the OPBR. In addition, other representatives of the MA and the IBMA for the OPBR participate in information and publicity, however mainly the representatives in position of top managers. The given demand for administrative capacities are indicative and can be reinforced operatively from the internal and external resources of the MA or the IBMA.

Description of detailed activities of information and publicity is content of the CP. The framework content of activities is at minimum level set as follows:

- main information activity which will publish launching the OPBR and also in a case of non-existing final version of CP (medial presentation of the OPBR, publishing of the operational programme and, following of programme manual and guide for applicant for grant, regional event linked with presentation of the OPBR for the relevant players of regional development in Bratislava region),
- during the programming period minimally one large information activity (regional conference) per year, as stipulated in the CP, through that results of the operational programme are presented,
- hanging up an European flag for one week since 9 May in front of the premises of the MA,
- publishing a list of beneficiaries, names of operations and amounts of public resources allocated for these operations at the Internet page of the MA for the OPBR, the IBMA for the OPBR and portal www.nsrr.sk and www.strukturalnefondy.sk, ongoing during the whole programming period.

Several entities from the level of the NSRF and individual operational programmes are involved into activities of information and publicity in relation to the Structural Funds in the programming period 2007-2013.

The tasks of the CCA in the field of information and publicity are following:

- elaborating and implementing the Central Communication Plan for the SF and the CF (hereinafter "CCP") comprising the profile activities for all the Operational Programmes,
- coordinating and methodologically guiding the Managing Authorities in the field of information and publicity,
- provision of operation of the integrated information network of regional information centres, coordinating the Working Group for publicity and operating information portal that is a common instrument for all the managing authorities for the operational programmes in 2007-2013, operating the call centre, issuing information bulleting on the SF,
- be a contact body to the European Commission and the Community communication networks and informing the particular Managing Authorities

The tasks of the MA in the field of information and publicity are following:

- elaborating and implementing the Communication Plan for the OPBR,
- submitting the Communication Plan to the European Commission up to four months from the OPBR approval,
- provision of information of all the target groups, minimally on the following:
  a) tasks of the EU, the MA and IBMA and the MC for the OPBR,

b) operational programme, its position and role within the NSRF, as well as its objectives,
c) conditions of eligibility that have to be met by the beneficiaries to become eligible for financing activities or measures within the operational programme,
d) individual steps of the process of acquiring resources from the ERDF, i.e., to publish information on calls, selection commissions, manual for beneficiaries for grant, approved projects, etc.,
e) contacts on the national, regional or local levels which can provide information on the operational programme,
f) actual status of withdrawal of resources within the operational programme,

- including the field of publicity and information into the annual and final reports on the implementation of the OPBR,
- notifying the Monitoring Committee for the OPBR of progress of the Communication Plan implementation as well as activities performed and planned,
- ensuring compliance with the provisions of Article 8 of the Implementation Regulation on the part of the beneficiary (duty to inform the public of assistance provided from the Funds) through sorting out these matters in contracts for provision of grant, signed by the beneficiary and the MA.

The contact persons on the side of the MA for the OPBR responsible for information and publicity under Article 10, paragraph 1 of the Implementation Regulation are the chief programme manager and the publicity manager. The publicity manager is a member of the Working Group for publicity.

The tasks of the IBMA in the field of information and publicity are following:

- ensuring the monitoring of compliance with the provisions of Article 8 of the Implementation Regulation by the beneficiaries (the duty to inform the public about assistance provided from the Funds) through arranging these matters in contracts on providing grant concluded between the MA and beneficiary,
- informing the MA for the OPBR on progress of the implementation of the Communication Plan, about the performed and planned activities.

The regional self-government is involved mainly into the information activities of regional and local character and its more active participation is expected in relation to the OPBR measures implemented in the decentralised manner.

Involvement of other authorities in the field of information and publicity

In accordance with Article 5(3) of the Implementation Regulation, the MA for the OPBR cooperates with the Regional Development Agencies (hereinafter "RDA") of the Bratislava Region to ensure information and publicity on the OPBR. The activity of the partner RDA acting in the Bratislava Region area is mainly focused on information and counselling of a broad spectrum of beneficiaries, applicants for grant, potential applicants for grant and the public in relation to elaboration and submission of applications for grant and in relation to monitoring the projects and submission of requests for payment.

Moreover, the external agency is involved into the activities of information and publicity which require professional approach; this agency was selected in the process of public procurement,

and it participates in the preparation of information publications, medial presentations of the OPBR, organising the regional and local information events and other activities requiring professional approach in the field of public relations.

The main sources of information on the current status of implementation of the OPBR, its priority axes and measures is on the internet page of the MA for the OPBR (www.build.gov.sk) and internet page of the IBMA for the OPBR (www.bratislavskykraj.sk).

9.7. Financial management, control and audit

The System of financial management of the SF and the CF includes a set of mutually linked and interconnected sub-systems and activities, ensuring effective financial planning, budgeting, accounting, reporting, payments to beneficiaries, monitoring financial flows and financial control and audit in implementing assistance from the EC.

The following entities are involved in the System of financial management of the Operational Programme:

- Managing Authority,
- Certifying Authority,
- Intermediary Body under the Managing Authority,
- Paying Unit,
- Audit Authority.

The functions of the **MA** are given in section 9.1.2.

The MF of the SR conducts the functions of the **Certifying Authority**. The Certifying Authority ensures, in particular, the following:

- coordination and methodological guidance in links to the financial management of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund including coordination of the Payment Units activities;
- compiling and sending out applications for on-going payments and final payment to the European Commission;
- on-going financial control of the summary application of the Paying Units for payment;
- certificating of verification at all the levels of financial management, including the beneficiary with an aim of ensuring the procedures of the MA, the IBMA and the Paying Units;
- certifying statements of expenses to the EC;
- receipt of the resources from the EU to the specific off-budgetary accounts of the MF SR;
- transfer of financial resources from the EU to the beneficiary through the Paying Unit;
- compiling and submitting an estimate of the expected expenditures for the respective and subsequent year to the European Commission based on the groundwork materials of the MA annually by the end of April;
- keeping Debtor Ledger;

- by 31 March compiling and submitting the statement of amounts as of 31 March of the preceding year that have to be returned back is divided according to years when the proceeding started;
- financial corrections of the resources from the EU based on the requirements of the European Commission;
- returning back the resources non-illegibly used or non-used to the European Commission including interest of delay;
- introducing of the single system of accounting for the Certifying Authority and the Paying Units (i.e., Information System for Accounting Funds - ISAF);
- bookkeeping, reporting and archiving documents;

The MCRD SR provides the function of the Paying Unit. The Paying Unit carries out especially the following actions:

- assessment of beneficiaries' requests for payment submitted by the MA;
- transfer of resources of the EU and the State Budget for co-funding to the beneficiaries;
- filling in and submitting the summary applications for payment and the partial statements of expenses to the Certifying Authority;
- bookkeeping, reporting and saving/keeping documents;
- keeping the partial Debtor Ledger.

Within the MCRD SR, the functions of the MA and the Paying are ensured by organisationally non-interconnected units.

The MF SR provides the functions of being the Audit Authority. The main tasks of the Audit Authority are the following:

a) elaboration of report on outcome from assessment of introducing the systems according to paragraph 2, Article 71 of the General Regulation

b) ensuring that audits are performed with an aim of examining the effective functioning of the system of management and control of the operational programme;

c) arranging that audits of operations are performed on a suitable sample to verify the declared expenditures;

d) within nine months from the approval of the operational programme, submitting to the Commission a strategy of audit covering the entities performing the audits given in letters a) and b), used methodology, method of selection of a sample for audits of operations and an indicative plan of audits, with an aim of ensuring that the main entities are subject for auditing, and auditing is scheduled evenly during the whole programming period. Where the common system applies for several operational programmes, it is possible to submit the single strategy of audit.

e) till 31 December of every year starting from 2008 till 2015 it is responsible for the following activities:

(i) submitting to the EC of annual control reports, comprising of findings of audits performed over the preceding 12-month period ending on 30 June of the concerned year, in accordance with the strategy of audit of the operational programme, stating shortcomings identified in the systems of management and control of the programme. The first report is to be submitted by 31 December 2008, covering the period from 1 January 2007 till 30 June 2008. The information concerning the audits performed after 1 July 2015 is included into the final report that is a basis for the statement on the termination given in letter e);

(ii) based on controls and audits performed under its management to issue positions concerning to that of whether the system of management and control functions enough effectively to ensure the adequate guarantee that the statements of expenditure submitted to the Commission are correct and based on that provide an adequate guarantee that the respective transactions are legal and correct;

(iii) in the cases laid down in Article 88, the statements on partial termination through that legality and correctness of the respective expenditures is assessed. Where the common system applies on several operational programmes, the information given in point (i) can be summarised collectively into a single report, and the position and the statement issued according to points (ii) and (iii) may include all the relevant operational programmes**;**

f) no later than 31 March 2017, the submitting the Commission a statement on the termination that assesses validity of the application for the final payment and legality and correctness of the respective transactions included into the final statement of expenditure attached to the final control report.

The MF SR ensures these functions through the units not organisationally interconnected. The European and International Affairs Section of the MF SR meets function of Certifying Authority and is organisationally subordinated the 1st State Secretary. The International Resources Audit and Control Section of the MF SR meets function of the Audit Authority whose General Director falls under the direct managing competence of the Minister of Finance.

The MF SR as the Audit Authority signs agreements with the individual Ministries, specifying the object of activity of audits which are ensured by the individual independent units at the Ministries and at the Financial Control Administration Authorities no later than at end of August 2007. These units will be managed by the Procedures for Audit of the SF, the CF and the EFF for 2007-2013, elaborated by the he International Resources Audit and Control Section of the MF SR till 31 July 2007. The MF SR will supervise the activities of these authorities; detailed procedures of supervision are part of the Procedures for Audit of the SF, the CF and the EFF for 2007-2013.

9.7.1. System of financial flows

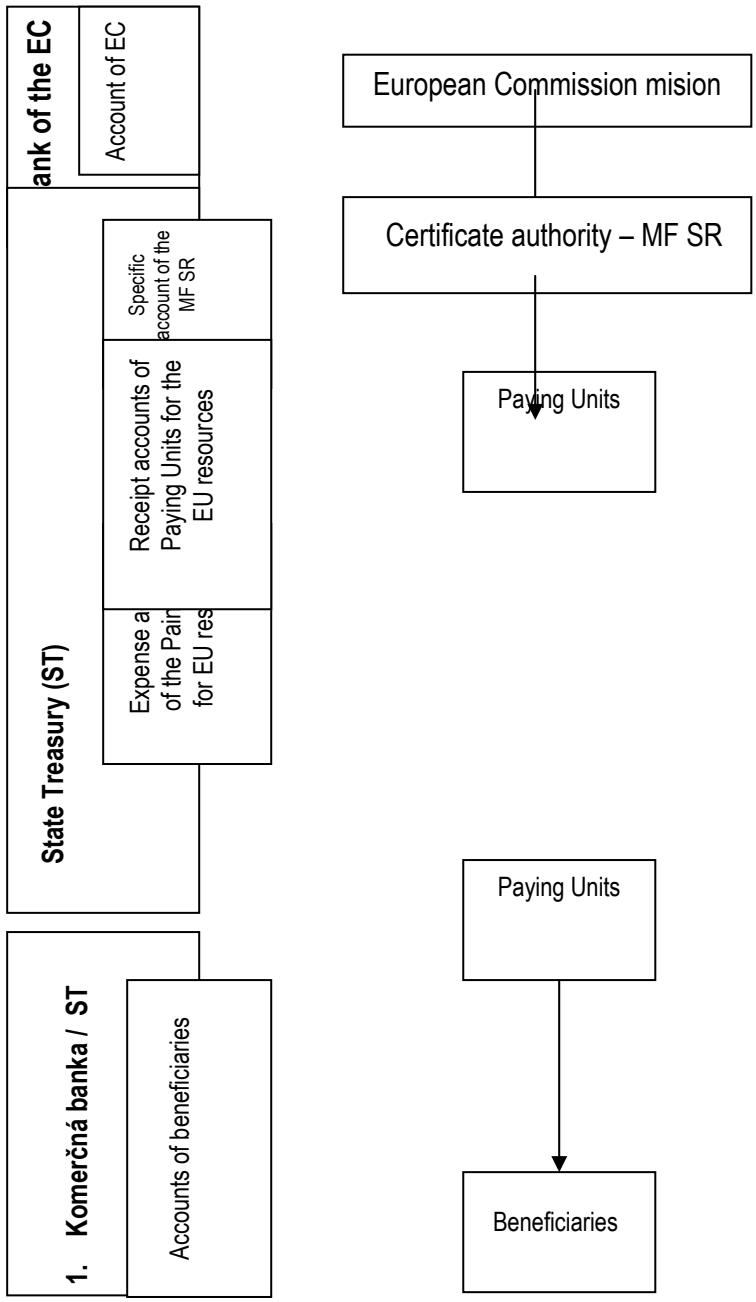
The payments of the financial resources will be transferred from the EC to the specific account of the Certifying Authority kept in the State Treasury within the liability adopted by the European Commission. Payments of the EU financial resources from the EC are made to the beneficiaries through the State Budget.

Financial resources from the EU and resources from the State Budget for co-funding are paid to the beneficiaries through the paying unit concurrently, based on contracts on providing grant (i.e., non-returnable financial contribution), in the respective rate set for the project.

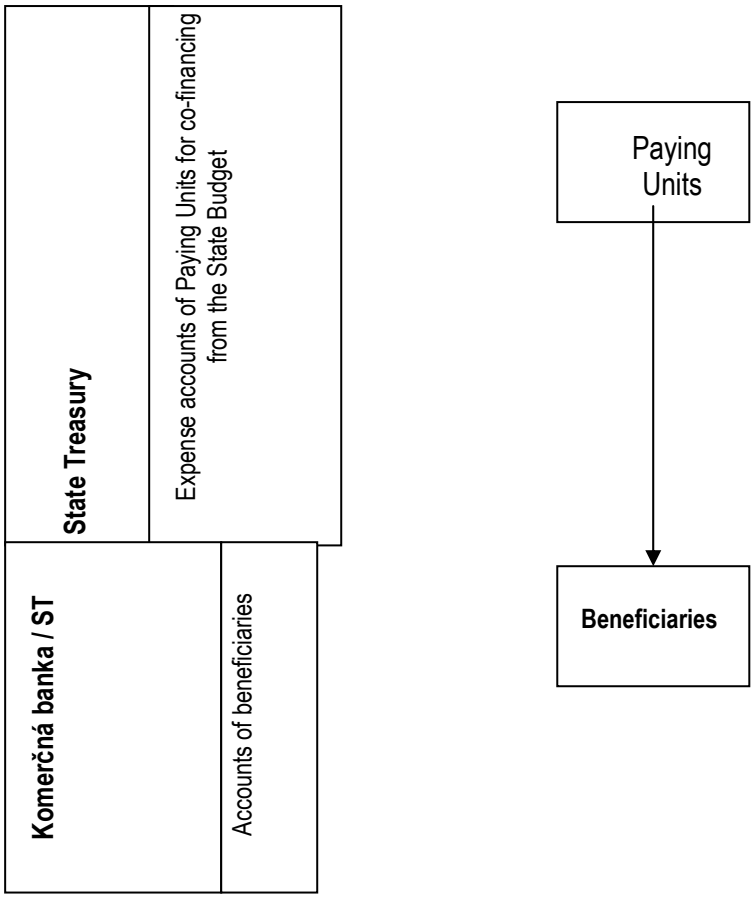
The Paying Unit makes payment of resources of the EU and co-financing from the State Budget to the beneficiaries in an amount approved by the Certifying Authority based on summary payment request in case of the system of refunding. In case of approving advance payments or pre-financing, the Paying Unit makes payments to the beneficiaries in an amount approved in request for advance payment or pre-financing without the preceding consent of the Certifying Authority,

Detailed description of the financial management is elaborated in the Financial Management System of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for the programming period 2007-2013, approved by SR Government Resolution 835/2006 of 8 October 2006 and published at www.finance.gov.sk.

Scheme of the financial flows of resources from the Structural Funds



Scheme of the financial flows of the national co-financing from the State Budget:



10. ANNEXES

Annex 1 Abbreviations

Annex 2 Glossary

Annex 3 References

Annex 4 Working Group for Preparing of the OPBR

Annex 5 A Non-technical summary of the provided information given in the Report on the Assessment of the strategic document

B Final position of the MEnv SR to the SEA on the strategic document

C Position of the MEnv SR to the changes in the OPBR in the sphere of the environment protection after incorporated the EC assessment

Annex 6 Maps to Chapter 3

Annex 7 Methodological approach and the criteria for selection of the innovative and cohesion growth poles

Annex 8 Indicative schedule of involvement of the Bratislava Self-Governing Authority into the OPBR implementation

Annex 9 Evaluation Plan of the Operational Programme Bratislava Region 2007- 2013 (Draft)

Annex 10 The list of the indicators on the level of the Operational Programme