



## Slovakia

**IT SURVEY:** Only a fifth of girls aged between 14 and 17 are considering IT or similar studies. But of 21 percent, only three percent of girls are determined to do so. This stems from the latest representative survey 'Women in the World of Information Technology' conducted by the Institute for Public Affairs (IVO). According to IVO, one of the solutions to balance this gap is to motivate young girls to study informatics and to pursue a career in the IT sector.

3/7/2019 SITA

**PROCUREMENT:** The Public Procurement Office (UVO) prepared an amendment to the Public Procurement Act, targeting bidders in state tender that may be linked through assets. Under the new rules, a contracting authority will be obliged to examine whether bidders have no assets ties. If the authority has a well-founded suspicion of unfair practices, the bidder can be excluded from the tender. 3/7/2019 SITA

**COAL:** On 4<sup>th</sup> July, the Cabinet approved the Action plan for the transformation of the Upper Nitra Region. Projects should be financed mainly from the EU funds. Action plan envisages the construction of new transport infrastructure, support for innovation, research and development, support for the development of small and medium sized enterprises, and the development of tourism. 3 billion euros are expected to be invested in the region.

4/7/2019 SITA

**ECONOMY:** In the second quarter of 2019, the number of bankruptcies declared in Slovakia fell significantly. As an analysis by CRIF shows, courts opened bankruptcy proceedings in 61 companies, which compared to the same period of the previous year represents a drop of over 10%. In the second quarter of 2018, 68 bankruptcies were declared. From 2006 until late June 2019, 3,988 bankruptcies have been declared in Slovakia. On the other hand, the number of restructurings has grown. In the second quarter of 2019, five restructurings were approved.

10/7/2019 SITA

**ECONOMY:** Slovak economic growth will gradually slow down its dynamics. The European Commission stated this in its current summer macroeconomic forecast. According to the Commission, growth of Slovakia's gross domestic product will fall from 4.1% last year to 3.6% this year and to 3.3% next year. According to Brussels, strong domestic demand will continue to contribute to growth, but it should also slow down compared to 2018.

11/7/2019 SITA

**DIPLOMATS:** The first four Slovak diplomats for innovations will embark on their missions in the coming days. Tibor Bucek will go to China, Milos Koterec to Finland, Peter Sestak will work in the United States, and Milos Bikar in Israel. The role of these diplomats will be to assist Slovak small and medium-sized companies in finding a niche in foreign markets. The commission that selected the diplomats for innovations included representatives of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investments and Informatization, as well as representatives of the Economy Ministry, the Foreign Affairs Ministry, and advisors to Prime Minister Peter Pellegrini.

11/7/2019 SITA

**PROCUREMENT:** Over 45 % of contracts are implemented through a continuously upgraded e-public procurement system (EVO) within the remit of the Public Procurement Office (UVO). In the period from October 18, 2018, since the electronization of public procurement is compulsory to July 11, 2019, as many as 1,158 contracts have been announced through this system. The UVO provided the information based on almost nine-month operation of its own e-public procurement system.

15/7/2019 SITA

**WORK:** According to the Central Office of Labor, Social Affairs and Family almost 73,100 foreigners worked in Slovakia at the end of June, up nearly 1,000 from May and 15,100 from a year ago. The number of foreigners working in Slovakia grew in H1 2019 at a slower pace than a year ago. During the first half of 2019, the increase was close to 4,000 compared with 8,500 registered in the first six months of 2018. reported the data. Serbians, Ukrainians, Romanians, Czechs and Hungarians constitute the most populated groups of foreigners in Slovakia.

23/7/2019 SITA

**IT:** A project for tens of millions of euros that aims to boost the cyber-security of the Financial Administration's systems is a step closer to implementation. After it was approved by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investments and Informatization in June, the authority published the official invitation on Tuesday. The call closes on September 23, 2019. The aim of the 43.4-million-euro project is to protect sensitive data of taxpayers, prevent identity theft, and to modernize the information system of the Financial Administration.

24/7/2019 SITA

**HEALTH CARE:** Slovakia is on the tail in the evaluation of getting value for money in health care. The think-tank INESS has published the Health for Money Index 2019. Out of 26 countries, European members of the OECD, Slovakia placed last but two. INESS analysts processed 23 indicators, including life expectancy, maternal mortality, as well as occurrence of measles from global databases.

26/7/2019 SITA

**ECONOMY:** Slovak entrepreneurs continued to perceive negatively the local business environment in the first half of this year. The Business Environment Index (IPP) compiled by the Business Alliance of Slovakia (PAS) decreased by 2.24% to 42.69 points in the past six months. Compared to the previous half-year, it fell by 0.98 points. Entrepreneurs identified as the top barrier in doing business law enforcement, followed by functioning of the judiciary, bureaucracy, and quality and availability of production inputs and workforce.

31/7/2019 SITA

**HEALTH CARE:** Health Minister Andrea Kalavská has submitted the proposal for the reform of Slovak hospitals in a form of the constitutional bill for an interdepartmental review. This reform will require amendments of several related laws and government resolutions. Kalavská is expected to submit the project at the government's session on August 21. She called on coalition and opposition parties to agree to the support of one of the largest reforms in the Slovak healthcare in the past years. If the constitutional law is approved by at least 90 votes, the law will come into force on January 1, 2024.

31/7/2019 SITA

**WAGE:** The Labor Ministry proposes a minimum wage for 2020 of 580 euros. In hourly terms it will be 3.333 euros. According to the ministry, this is a compromise offer as the Trade Unions Confederation (KOZ) requested an increase to 635 euros and employers' representatives offered 552.20 euros per month. Labor Minister Jan Richter sent to the social partners in the tripartite a proposal from the department to adjust the monthly minimum wage for 2020. He did so after the social partners failed to agree on the amount. The proposal will be discussed by the Economic and Social Council of the Slovak Republic on August 19, 2019.

1/8/2019 SITA

## Europe

**EU:** After more than 50 hours of negotiations, EU28 leaders agreed to the four candidates for the top EU posts for the next five years. German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen was nominated for the post of EC president. Belgium Prime Minister Charles Michel was nominated for European Council president. Spanish Foreign Minister Josep Borrell Fontelles was nominated for High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. French Christine Lagarde was nominated for European Central Bank president. Ursula von der Leyen's nomination is expected to be approved by the European Parliament on 16 July. Prime Minister Peter Pellegrini represented Slovakia at the meeting.

3/7/2019 SITA

**DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET:** Following the resignation of Andrus Ansip and Corina Crețu from their respective Commission mandates in order to take up the seats they were elected to in the European Parliament, President Juncker has decided to temporarily transfer their portfolios. Vice-President for Energy Union Šefčovič will take over the Digital Single Market agenda. Commissioner Hahn, in charge of European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, will also lead Regional Policy agenda.

3/7/2019 [European Commission](#)

**SINGLE MARKET SCOREBOARD:** Today's Annual report on Monitoring the Application of EU law sets out how the Commission monitored and enforced EU law in 2018. The online Single Market Scoreboard, also published today, evaluates the performance of EU/EEA countries in the EU single market and identifies the shortcomings where the countries and the Commission should step up their efforts. Depending on their performance in 2018, Member States were given 153 green, 137 yellow and 59 red cards indicating excellent (green), average (yellow) or below average (red) performance. In general, the best performing countries were Portugal, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and Lithuania, while the most red and yellow cards were given to Spain, Italy, Greece and Luxembourg.

4/7/2019 [European Commission](#)

**EP:** European Parliament President David Sassoli decided to pay tribute to all the victims of terrorism in Europe as his first public act as newly elected president. The ceremony took place at 1 p.m. on Friday, at the entrance of Maalbeek metro station, in Brussels, one of the places where the attacks of 22 March 2016 took place as this was the president's first public act since he was elected on 3 July.

5/7/2019 [European Parliament](#)

**EP:** Slovak MEP Monika Benova (SMER-SD) is a new member of the European Parliament's bureau. After Wednesday's election of the new president and vice-presidents, also five quaestors were elected in a secret ballot a day later. One of the elected quaestors who will serve the next two and a half years was also the Slovak MEP Monika Benova. Benova herself informed about her election. "I really appreciate trust they placed in me; to win the second highest number of votes is both honor and a challenge. I am also delighted to have received support from other factions," said MEP Monika Benova.

8/7/2019 SITA

**EP:** We already know in which committees Slovak MEPs will work. Monika Benova (SMER-SD, S&D) will be a member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), along with Martin Hojsik (Progressive Slovakia, Renew Europe) and Michal Wiezik (Together, EPP). The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) will also have three members from Slovakia - Vladimir Bilcik (Together, EPP), Michal Simecka (Progressive Slovakia, Renew Europe) and Milan Uhrík (LSNS). Miroslav Ciz (SMER-SD, S&D) will work in the Committee on International Trade (INTA). Lucia Duris Nicholsonova (SaS, ECR) was elected as the chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) which also includes Miroslav Radacovsky (LSNS). Robert Hajsel (Smer-SD, S&D) will be a member of the Industry, Research and Energy Committee. Eugen Jurzyca (SaS, ECR) and Ivan Stefanec (KDH, EPP) will work in the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee (IMCO). Peter Pollak (OLANO, EPP) will be a member of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT).

8/7/2019 SITA

**CLIMATE:** The European Union wants to have more ambitious green goals. This is the message sent to all EU member states following the examination of their national energy and climate plans until 2030. Slovakia received the evaluation of its plan put forward by the economy ministry led by Peter Ziga in June. The countries have been asked to incorporate the comments from Brussels until December 2019. Raising green energy to at least 24 percent by 2030 should find its way to the plan. In addition, the country should set higher ambitions for energy efficiency and cuts and show the list of energy subsidies and the plan for their halt. The final version of the document will include the updated data from the Environmental Strategy 2030 approved by the government in February 2019.

9/7/2019 SITA

**EU-US TRADE TALKS:** EU and US delivered on a significant element of the [Joint Statement](#) agreed by Presidents Juncker and Trump on 12 July 2018. The positive transatlantic trade agenda established in the Joint Statement includes a commitment from both sides to reduce barriers and increase trade in a range of sectors, including pharmaceuticals. Together, EU and US account for more than 80% of global sales of new medicines. As a result of the full implementation of this agreement, both the industry and public authorities on both sides will be able to free resources that could be used to inspect facilities in other large producing countries.

16/7/2019 [European Commission](#)

**EURO AREA TRADE:** The first estimate for **euro area** (EA19) exports of goods to the rest of the world in May 2019 was €203.4 billion, an increase of 7.1% compared with May 2018 (€189.9 bn). Imports from the rest of the world stood at €180.3 bn, a rise of 4.2% compared with May 2018 (€173.0 bn). As a result, the **euro area** recorded a €23.0 bn surplus in trade in goods with the rest of the world in May 2019, compared with +€16.9 bn in May 2018. **Intra-euro area** trade rose to €172.0 bn in May 2019, up by 4.9% compared with May 2018.

16/7/2019 [Eurostat](#)

**EP:** With 383 votes in favor, the European Parliament elected by a paper-thin majority Ursula von der Leyen President of the next European Commission in a secret ballot. She is set to take office on 1 November 2019 for a five-year term. She will send official letters to the member states' heads of state or government inviting them to propose their candidates for members of the Commission. Hearings of the nominees in Parliament's competent committees are scheduled to take place from 30 September to 8 October. The full college of Commissioners then needs to be elected by Parliament, most likely in its 21-24 October session.

16/7/2019 [European Parliament](#)

**CETA:** The EU-Canada summit focused on the free trade agreement (CETA), saving the WTO and doubling investments in research and development for the energy transition. However, the meeting was more symbolic, confirming that Canada, rather than the US, is now the EU's closest ally.

19/7/2019 [Euractiv](#)

**GDPR:** Just over one year after the entry into application of the General Data Protection Regulation, the EC published a report looking at the impact of the EU data protection rules, and how implementation can be improved further. The report concludes that most Member States have set up the necessary legal framework, and that the new system strengthening the enforcement of the data protection rules is falling into place. Businesses are developing a compliance culture, while citizens are becoming more aware of their rights. At the same time, convergence towards high data protection standards is progressing at international level.

24/7/2019 [European Commission](#)

**GDP:** Seasonally adjusted GDP rose by 0.2% in both the euro area (EA19) and the EU28 during the second quarter of 2019, compared with the previous quarter. In the first quarter of 2019, GDP had grown by 0.4% in the euro area and by 0.5% in the EU 28. Compared with the same quarter of the previous year, seasonally adjusted GDP rose by 1.1% in the euro area and by 1.3% in the EU28 in the second quarter of 2019. In the previous quarter, GDP had grown by 1.2% in the euro area and by 1.6% in the EU28.

31/7/2019 [Eurostat](#)

**UNEMPLOYMENT:** The euro area (EA19) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 7.5% in June 2019, down from 7.6% in May 2019 and from 8.2% in June 2018. This is the lowest rate recorded in the euro area since July 2008. The EU28 unemployment rate was 6.3% in June 2019, stable compared with May 2019 and down from 6.8% in June 2018. This remains the lowest rate recorded in the EU28 since the start of the EU monthly unemployment series in January 2000. Among the member states, the lowest unemployment rates in June 2019 were recorded in the Czech Republic (1.9%) and Germany (3.1%). The highest unemployment rates were observed in Greece (17.6% in April 2019) and Spain (14,0%).

31/7/2019 [Eurostat](#)

**SHARED ECONOMY:** Minimum requirements for the rights of the most vulnerable employees with non-standard employment contracts and new forms of employment that arise within the so-called sharing economy are defined by the European Union directive on transparent and predictable conditions in the EU, which is coming into force starting July 31 this year. The directive introduces rights for all workers from the so-called platform economy. In practice, it is a system of companies and their workers who generate their business through digital or online platforms such as Uber, Amazon, Google, Airbnb and many others. The directive will enter into force in 2022, so member states will have approximately three years to implement it in national legislation.

31/7/2019 SITA