



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH
DIRECTORATE A
DIVISION FOR INTERNATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

FACTSHEET

SLOVAKIA

Chapter 24 - Justice and Home Affairs

1. The *acquis* ¹

The *acquis* covers areas such as border control, illegal migration, drugs trafficking, money laundering, organised crime, police and judicial cooperation, data protection and mutual recognition of court judgements. It is important that the candidate countries' administrative capacity meets adequate and acceptable standards, and that an independent, reliable and efficient judiciary and police organisation is established by the date of accession.

Although the Schengen *acquis* is one of the most visible components of the *acquis* in this chapter, accession will not lead to an immediate lifting of internal border controls between old and new Member States, as this will be the subject of a separate Council decision to be taken unanimously at a later stage on the basis of the readiness of the new members. All the candidate countries have prepared a Schengen Implementation Action Plan.

2. The negotiations

The chapter has been closed with ten countries and remains open with Bulgaria and Romania. No transitional periods or derogations have been requested. The accession treaty to be signed with the ten countries that have concluded the negotiations will contain a safeguard clause as regards judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters: in case of inadequate transposition or implementation of any parts of the relevant *acquis* during the first three years after accession, the application of these provisions may be temporarily suspended in respect of new member states and such safeguard measures will run until the deficiencies are remedied.

Chapter opened: June 2001

Status: closed in December 2002 (provisionally closed in June 2002)

Transitional arrangements: none

¹ Information largely drawn from the European Commission, DG Enlargement
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/index.htm>

3. Position of the European Parliament

In its resolution of 4 October 2000¹, Parliament :

- welcomes (*the fact*) that the Slovak government has adopted a National Programme for the Fight against Corruption (NPFAC) and expects Slovakia to intensify its fight against corruption and organised crime - fully aware of the fact that this is an endemic problem in many Central European countries;
- recalls that, as regards the ever increasing trafficking in women, Slovakia is both a country of origin and a country of transit and/or destination; calls on the Slovak government to adopt effective measures to tackle trafficking in human beings and to ensure that the victims of such trafficking are guaranteed concrete and effective support.

In its resolution of 5 September 2001², Parliament:

- notes that Slovakia has made progress in combating crime and corruption by formulating targeted government policy, but increased efforts are needed in particular with regard to the lack of transparency on financing of political parties; welcomes increased international cooperation;
- calls on Slovakia to translate its intentions into specific actions speedily in order to improve Slovakia's otherwise insufficient record in this respect;

In its resolution of 13 June 2002³, Parliament:

- welcomes the Government's determination to fight the still-widespread corruption, including the adoption of conflict of interest legislation; commends the legal and administrative reforms already implemented and urges Slovakia to strengthen implementation of this policy at all levels; welcomes Slovakia's successful participation in the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO);
- calls on the Government and Parliament to increase alignment in the areas of.....justice and home affairs;
- urges the Slovak Government to ensure a good and secure border with Ukraine in compliance with the Schengen Agreement;
- welcomes the fact that the government has committed itself to recruiting more than 1000 new employees in all *acquis*-related areas and supports the government in continuing on this path aimed at strengthening the administrative capacity, especially in the areas ofand justice and home affairs.

In its resolution of 20 November 2002⁴, Parliament calls on the Slovak Government to further strengthen the implementation of the policy against corruption at all levels, in particular of the judiciary and other enforcement bodies; reaffirms that the reform of the judiciary needs to be continued, inter alia, through a reform of the criminal and civil legal procedures and increased training in order to achieve the highest standards of independence and professionalism.

¹ Resolution on the state of negotiations with Slovakia, § 4 & 5: [A5-0244/2000](#)

² Resolution on the state of negotiations with Slovakia, § 27 & 28: [A5-0256/2001](#)

³ Resolution on the state of the enlargement negotiations, § 129, 137, 138 & 139: [A5-0190/2002](#)

⁴ Resolution on the progress of the candidate countries towards accession, § 113: [A5-0371/2002](#)

4. Latest Assessment by the European Commission ¹

In its 1997 Opinion, the Commission concluded that Slovakia appeared to have the administrative capacity and infrastructure to meet the justice and home affairs *acquis* (present and future) in the medium term, but that it would have to demonstrate its commitment to introduce the necessary reforms, notably in the development of visa policy toward the Newly Independent States, border management and migration control, extradition and combating organised crime and corruption.

Since the Opinion, significant progress has been made in terms of legal alignment, in particular over the last two years. Overall, Slovakia is to a significant extent aligned with the *acquis* and administrative structures are generally in place but need to be further strengthened.

Negotiations on this chapter have been provisionally closed. Slovakia has not requested any transitional arrangements in this area. Slovakia is generally meeting the commitments it made in the accession negotiations in this field.

In order to complete preparations for membership, Slovakia's efforts now need to focus on completing legislative alignment (visa, migration, judicial cooperation) and, in particular, on further reinforcing the administrative capacity in order to strengthen border control management, the fight against illegal immigration and organised crime, including trafficking in human beings and drug trafficking, and to improve capacity in combating fraud and corruption.

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¹ European Commission, Regular Report on Slovakia 2002, p. 111 & 112:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/sk_en.pdf