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# COUNTRY PROFILE

## Slovakia

MARCH 2008

### OVERVIEW

The primary goal for the United States is to maintain Slovakia as a reliable, prosperous partner that is fully integrated into the Trans-Atlantic and European communities. Slovakia joined both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union in 2004.



### Bratislava

The USAID Mission to Slovakia initially closed in September 2000 after providing over \$180 million to support Slovakia's transition to a market-oriented democracy. However, it was quickly apparent that the country needed continued, targeted assistance for a limited period to ensure the consolidation of political and economic reforms. A robust short-term program

with activities ranging from anticorruption/transparency efforts to education reform to municipal economic development work was implemented. Although the USAID Mission in Bratislava closed its doors for a second and final time in March 2003, the legacy of USAID development assistance has endured.

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

#### DEMOCRACY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Along with its neighbors, the Czech Republic and Hungary, Slovakia participated in the \$2.8 million Roma Integration Program (RIP), which provided grants to Roma communities for education, training, and job placement to promote their integration into mainstream society. The poor living conditions of the Roma, an indigenous displaced people, have been a major challenge in the transition of formerly socialist economies. RIP sought to increase Roma participation in economic, political, and social spheres as a means of supporting the development of inclusive, cohesive societies in the region. Community projects have improved access for thousands of beneficiaries to education, health, employment, and other services. In Slovakia, RIP organized working groups and roundtables to address pressing issues such as affordable housing for impoverished Roma, supported diverse media through trainings for journalists and the production of "So Vakeres?" a television program on

#### SLOVAKIA SNAPSHOT

Date of independence:  
January 1, 1993  
Capital: Bratislava  
Population: 5.447 million  
GDP per capita: \$18,200  
(purchasing power parity)

For more information,  
See [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)  
Keyword: Slovakia



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## COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

Roma broadcast on STV2, and trained teachers on multicultural education techniques and tolerance.

### **INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION FUELS ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Established in 1991, the Czech and Slovak-American Enterprise Fund (SAEF) is a private, non-profit U.S. corporation that provides loans to small and medium private companies. During 1996, it was decided that the Fund would focus all new activities exclusively in the Slovak Republic. Providing technical assistance through knowledge transfer and training, the Fund aims to strengthen an enterprise's ability to achieve sustainable economic growth and increase its competitive advantage in the free market. The Slovak American Enterprise Fund is a venture capital and private equity Fund investing its financial sources into small and medium sized enterprises in Slovakia. The Fund provides mid-term financing capital for private companies which present a complete and sound business plan, possess an experienced and credible management team, and have growth and income potential that will have a positive impact on both employment and the environment, thus maintaining competitive advantage in their field of business. Between 1991 and July 2007, SAEF invested approximately \$50 million; of that amount, \$46 million went into 46 Slovak companies in the form of equity or loans under the Direct Investments Program. The Small Loan Program has provided \$4 million to 51 companies in Slovakia.

### **POST-PRESENCE RELATIONS**

#### **A SUSTAINING PARTNERSHIP FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The United States is seeking opportunities to collaborate with Slovakia, now an emerging foreign assistance donor, to promote democracy and economic growth in the region and elsewhere in the world.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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