

STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE HEALTH SECTOR IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Analytical commentary, April 2022

Summary

- The results of the Slovak health sector are not satisfactory. In the female life expectancy at birth, Slovakia ranks fifth worst of the EU27 countries. Similarly, in avoidable mortality, only five countries in the EU27 are worse off.
- The lagging of Slovakia in healthcare performance indicators is long-term and there is no visible trend of approaching the average of the EU27 countries.
- International comparison also indicate underfunding of the Slovak healthcare system, and in this regard, there is no observable positive trend as well.
- The long-standing underperformance of the Slovak healthcare system in both outcomes and funding suggests that Slovakia has had a consistently insufficient strategy in this area for a long time.
- There is no established cycle of regular intake and evaluation of the overall strategy of the Slovak healthcare system.
- The strategy of the Slovak healthcare system is currently covered by the "Strategic framework for health care for the years 2014 – 2030," which was adopted in 2013, meaning it is an eight-year-old document.
- The Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic does not consistently fulfil its role of regularly monitoring the implementation of the "Strategic framework".
- The development of the indicators of the "Strategic framework" indicates that changes and improvements in the Slovak health care system are occurring very slowly and it will not be possible to achieve the set goals if the current dynamics are maintained.
- The Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic has not implemented any system for recording or evaluating strategic documents in the healthcare sector.
- The majority of valid strategic documents from the healthcare sector do not include sufficient descriptions of funding or monitoring the implementation of the strategy.
- It is possible to identify a number of sub-areas of the Slovak health sector that are not covered by the current separate strategic material, despite the fact that this would be desirable.
- The Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic has identified a number of proposals for improving the strategic management of the Slovak health sector. In the first place, it recommends to adopt an up-to-date strategic document covering the health sector, to cover selected sub-areas with separate strategic documents or to ensure the quality and implementation of strategies.