



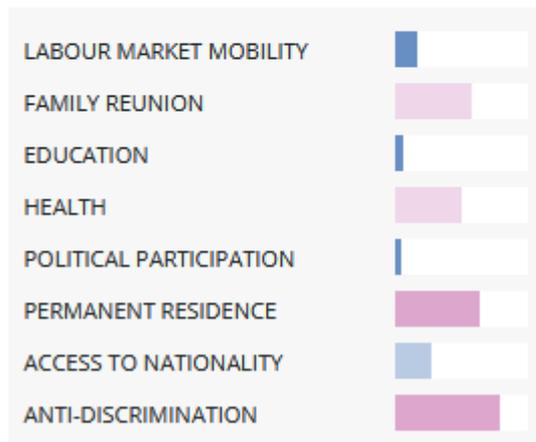
## MIGRANT INTEGRATION POLICY INDEX 2020

### SLOVAKIA



Rank:

MIPEX Score (with Health): **39**



### Changes in policy

Slovakia's MIPEX score improved by +2 points from 2014 to 2019, like the average MIPEX country. Immigrants enjoy slightly more support for equal opportunities and long-term security, due to changes in recognition of academic qualifications and increased support in accessing health care (for asylum seekers).

#### Positive changes on MIPEX indicators:

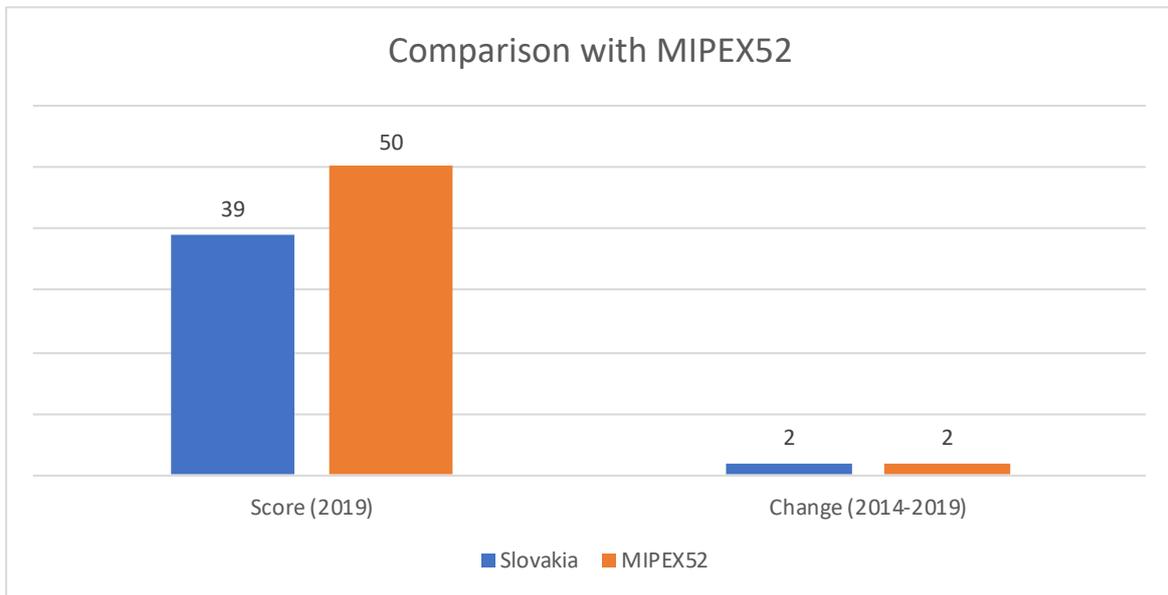
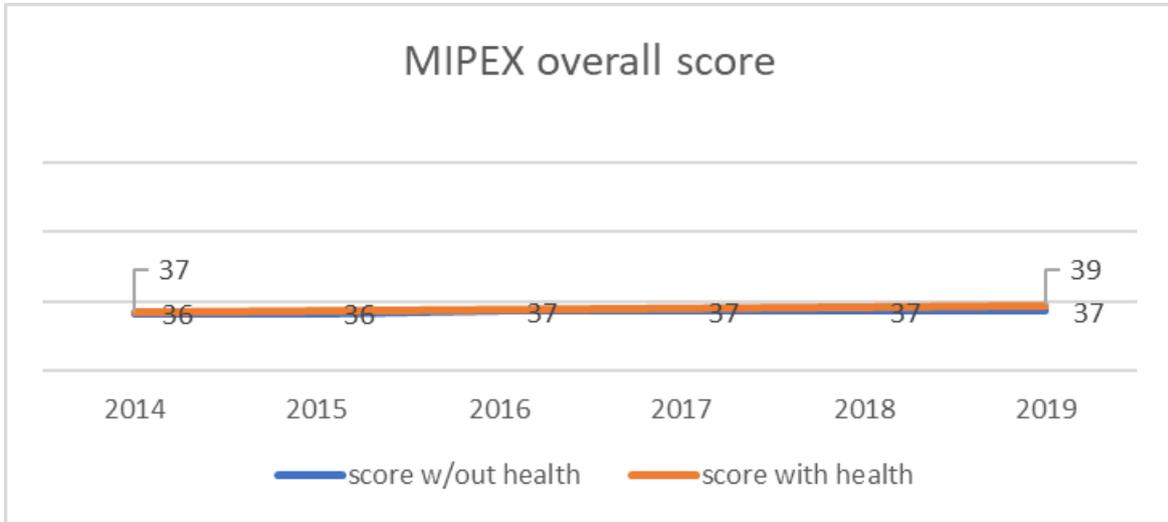
- Recognition of academic qualifications
- Information for migrants concerning entitlements and use of health services
- Involvement of migrants in information provision, service design and delivery

#### Negative changes on MIPEX indicators:

- None

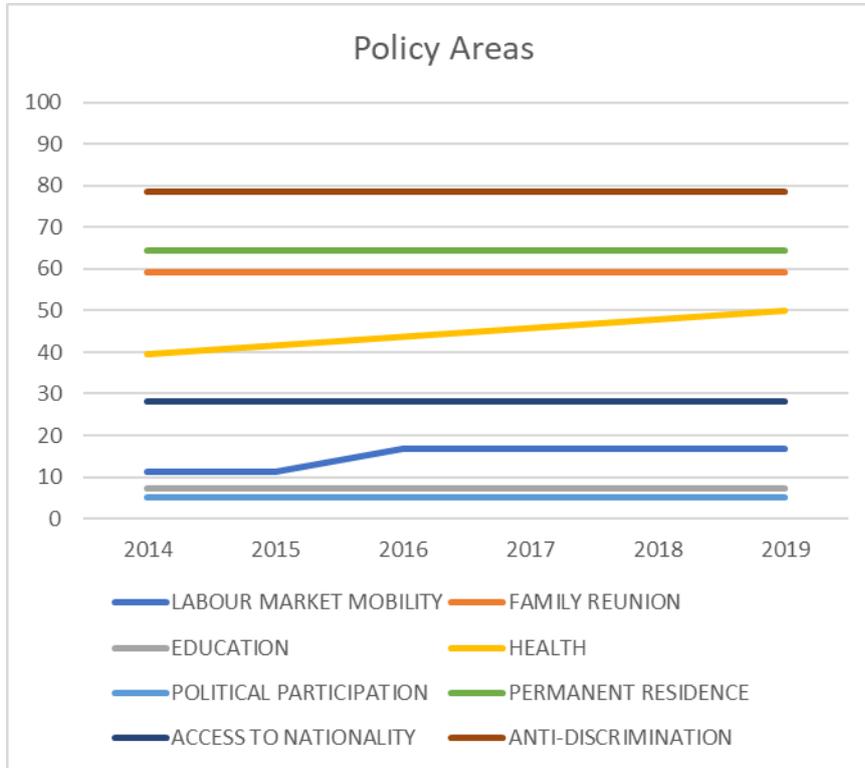


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### Conclusions and recommendations

Non-EU newcomers to Slovakia face many obstacles to integration under Slovakia's slightly unfavourable policies. Slovakia scored 39 on the MIPEX 100-point scale, while the average MIPEX country scored 50.

The Slovak approach to integration is classified by MIPEX as "equality on paper" only. As in most Central and Eastern European countries, immigrants in Slovakia enjoy basic rights and security, but not equal opportunities. Slovakia still needs to strongly invest in policies on equal opportunities and security, as its policies remain below average for MIPEX countries.

Slovakia's approach to integration matters because its policies can influence whether or not integration works as a two-way process. The way that governments treat immigrants strongly influences how well immigrants and the public interact with and think of each other. Slovakia's current policies encourage the public to see immigrants not as potential citizens, but as strangers. Internationally, the 'Top Ten' MIPEX countries treat immigrants as equals, neighbours and potential citizens.



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Many obstacles emerge for immigrants in Slovakia across several areas, especially in the labour market mobility, education, political participation and access to nationality. Restrictive policies like Slovakia's can create a 'vicious circle' of exclusion that reinforces fear and separation. Policies that treat immigrants as threats lead more people to see immigrants as [general threats](#) and treat them in ways that harm integration. Under restrictive policies, the public experiences higher levels of [xenophobia](#) and [islamophobia](#) and lower levels of [social trust](#), which leads them to have [less contact and fewer positive experiences](#) with immigrants.

Slovakia's policies are more restrictive than those of the average EU country, and slightly below the EU13 average (41/100). Its policies are similar to other "equality on paper" countries in Central and Eastern Europe, such as Croatia, Hungary, and Poland. In contrast, policies are more advanced in Czechia and Austria.

- **Labour market mobility:** *unfavourable*: Immigrants face unfavourable policies in Slovakia, which ranks last among MIPEX countries. Even with the introduction of a slight change in the procedure of diploma recognition of TCNs, some categories of immigrants continue to face obstacles in their integration into the labour market. Non-EU citizens - third country nationals, in Slovakia receive little or no targeted support towards their employment needs.
- **Family reunification:** *halfway favourable*: Newcomers in Slovakia have a basic legal right to reunite with their families thanks to EU standards, which Slovakia only follows to a minimum. Most non-EU sponsors can apply through a typically discretionary procedure with more demanding conditions than in most countries. Slovakia limits the opportunities for the social and economic integration of these family members, treating them as temporary dependents of their sponsor.
- **Education:** *unfavourable*: Ranking in the bottom 5, integration strategies and support are missing for immigrant pupils in Slovakia, a weakness across Central Europe (except Czechia). Other than the multicultural education curriculum announced in 2008, schools receive no support to promote social integration and only weak support to help immigrant pupils participate and catch up academically. Only migrant children with permitted residence can access full schooling and general support for disadvantaged students.
- **Health:** *halfway favourable*: Migrant patients in Slovakia continue to face obstacles to their full and uninhibited access to the healthcare system. Slovakia's health system is not strong at responding to migrant patients, which is a problem common to Central European countries. Its policies have gone halfway towards making coverage and services more accessible. Despite recent improvements, for example in the provision of information to asylum seekers concerning their entitlements, services remain unresponsive to migrants' specific health needs.



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- **Political participation:** *unfavourable:* Ranking in the bottom 10, political participation is still missing from integration strategies in Slovakia, which has not made any progress in this area since 2007. Under an incoherent policy, non-EU immigrants with permanent residence in Slovakia are allowed to vote and stand as candidates in local elections, but do not have the right to join political parties, to form political associations or to be consulted. These policies are unfavourable for promoting political participation among immigrants.
- **Permanent residence:** *slightly favourable:* Non-EU immigrants looking for equal rights in integration must pass a relatively discretionary procedure to become permanent residents. Immigrants are confronted with some of the most restrictive conditions in Europe (e.g. concerning accommodation, income, criminal record, and fees).
- **Access to nationality:** *slightly unfavourable:* Immigrants' access to naturalisation in Slovakia continues to be slightly unfavourable due to restrictive requirements. The few eligible must meet some of the most subjective requirements in Europe, and can be rejected by authorities on vague grounds. The 2-year-long procedure and the fee of EUR 700 (only if a positive decision is reached) are among the longest period of time and highest fees in Europe.
- **Anti-discrimination:** *slightly favourable:* Discrimination on national, religious and ethnic/racial grounds is prohibited. Though Slovakia's strength lies in its slightly favourable anti-discrimination policies, there remains much work to be done in ensuring the implementation of its equality policies.



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