



Satisfaction with the situation at the country level and with personal circumstances

About 25 and 19 per cent of respondents believe that the economic and the political situation in the Slovak Republic was better in 2016 than four years prior to the survey. The first percentage is above the corresponding figure for Italy (7 per cent) and comparable to the average for the transition region (24 per cent) but below the averages for Germany and for central Europe and the Baltic states (CEB), which were 33 and 30 per cent, respectively. Appreciation for the present political situation is higher than in Italy and Germany but lower than in CEB and the transition region as a whole. Moreover, only 9 per cent of Slovak respondents believe that corruption declined in the four years preceding the survey, a number substantially below the CEB and transition region averages of 23 per cent.

Among Slovak respondents, 28 per cent report that they are satisfied with their current financial situation and 29 per cent believe that households in their country live better in 2016 than they did in the four years prior to the survey.

Life satisfaction decreased from 52 per cent in 2010 to 50 per cent in 2016, but remains above the transition region average (43 per cent) and the corresponding figure for Italy (42 per cent). While all demographic groups experienced a slight decline in life satisfaction, happiness has decreased the most among those in the upper income group. Respondents in the upper income bracket are nevertheless still happier than their poorer counterparts in the Slovak Republic.

Optimism about a better future for the younger generation decreased from 41 per cent in 2010 to 30 per cent in 2016 and is now well below the transition region average of 50 per cent, the average for CEB as a whole (49 per cent) and the corresponding value for Germany (46 per cent). The level of optimism has declined across all age and income groups, but particularly so among those aged 18-39 and those in the upper income group.

Attitudes towards democracy and the market economy

Support for democracy and the market economy decreased significantly from 47 and 35 per cent, respectively, in 2010 to 39 and 29 per cent in 2016. These percentages are now well below the corresponding averages for the transition region and for CEB. Support for democracy in the Slovak Republic is the fifth lowest in the 2016 sample while support for the market economy is the fourth lowest. Furthermore, 27 per cent of respondents feel that an authoritarian system might be preferable to democracy under some circumstances, while 35 per cent of those surveyed believe that a planned economy might be preferable to a market-based one. Lastly, 34 per cent of respondents do not report a clear preference for a specific political system and 36 per cent of interviewed Slovak individuals believe that “for people like me, it does not matter” which economic system is in place.

Despite the apparently quite weak support for democracy, perceptions of the existence of basic democratic institutions in the Slovak Republic vary. When asked which democratic institutions exist in the country, 76 per cent of respondents mentioned peace and stability, followed by free elections, freedom of speech, gender equality, an independent press and law and order at 70, 57, 44, 40 and 39 per cent, respectively.

Priorities for government spending

About 46 per cent of Slovak respondents cite health care as what they think should be the main priority for additional government spending, followed by education (16 per cent), pensions (14 per cent) and assisting the poor (10 per cent). Slovak support for additional spending on health care is the third largest in the sample. However, additional analysis of the LITS III data shows that only

CHART 1. Life satisfaction: percentage of respondents who are satisfied with life, all things considered



21 per cent of Slovak respondents would actually be willing to pay more taxes in order to have better public health care while only 28 per cent would be willing to pay more to assist the poor.

Sources of information

The main daily sources of information for Slovak respondents are the television and the radio, used each day by 57 per cent of the population, and internet and the social media, mentioned by 41 per cent of respondents. Newspapers readership has decreased by 9 percentage points since the last survey, from 22 per cent in 2010 to 13 per cent in 2016, a number that is now lower than the figures in Germany and Italy (31 and 21 per cent, respectively) but still above the averages for CEB and the transition region (12 and 9 per cent, respectively).

Self-assessed health

60 per cent of Slovak respondents report to be in good health, a percentage that is higher than the averages for the transition region and Italy and comparable to the 60 per cent reported for CEB as a whole. On average, compared to 2010, there has been a significant decrease (11 percentage points) in self-reported good health, mainly due to the 20 percentage point decrease among those in the lower income group. Not surprisingly, health is negatively correlated with age. While there are no significant differences between respondents living in urban and rural areas, male respondents are 9 percentage points more likely to report that their health status is “good” or “very good”.

Quality of public services

The majority of Slovaks report being satisfied with the quality of public services in their country. Overall, 97 per cent of respondents are satisfied with the provision of electricity, heating and pipeline gas, while 93 per cent are happy with the water supply to their dwellings. In addition, 90 per cent of those surveyed are satisfied with their telephone line service and 87 per cent are satisfied with postal services. All these figures are higher than the corresponding averages for CEB, the transition region as a whole, and Germany and Italy. The sole exception is satisfaction with local roads, which sits at 52 per cent: while still higher than the transition region average (45 per cent) and the corresponding level of satisfaction with roads in Italy (47 per cent), the Slovak figure is below the German average (86 per cent).

Social and economic mobility

When respondents were asked from a list of options what they thought were the most important factors for success in life in their country, 37 per cent of Slovaks chose “effort and hard work” and 27 per cent opted for “intelligence and skills”. Another 27 per cent deemed “political connections” the most important factor.

Attitudes towards women

Around 94 per cent of female Slovak respondents and 87 per cent of male Slovak respondents think that women are as competent as men as business executives. Moreover, 30 per cent of Slovak respondents (both male and female) think that a woman should do the household chores, even if her husband is not working. However, only about 54 per cent of respondents believe it important for their daughter to achieve a university education. Other results show that 61 per cent of Slovak respondents believe that men make better politicians than women, while 60 per cent of those surveyed seem to prefer a traditional family arrangement where the man works and the woman takes care of the family.

CHART 2. Optimism: percentage of respondents who are optimistic about the future of the younger generation

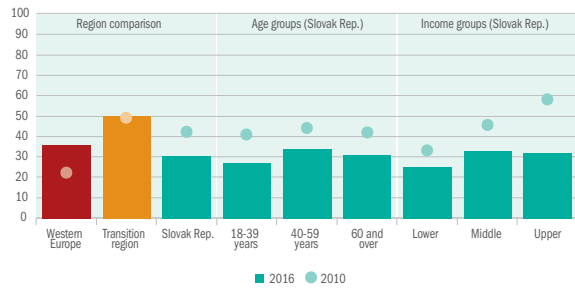


CHART 3. Market economy and democracy: percentage of respondents who prefer a market over a planned economy and democracy over an authoritarian government

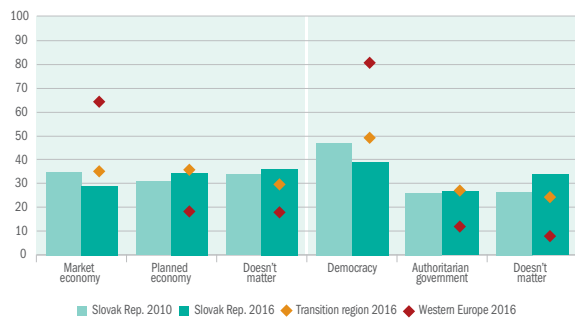


CHART 4. Basic democratic institutions: percentage of respondents who agree that the country has these basic democratic institutions

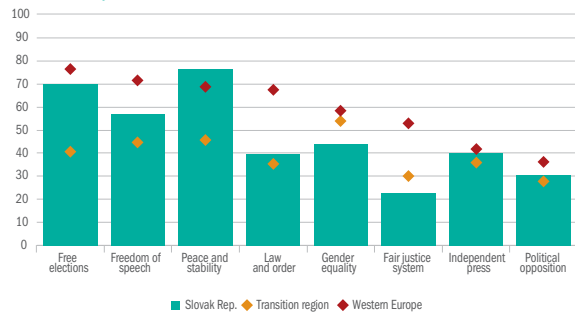
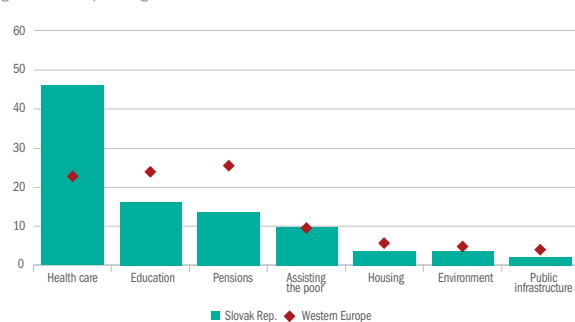


CHART 5. Priorities for government spending

Panel A: Percentage of respondents who identify a given area as a priority in terms of government spending



Panel B: Breakdown of preferences for the top priority (health care)

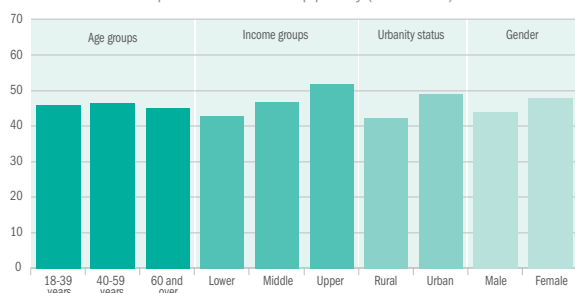


CHART 6. Sources of information: percentage of respondents who use these different sources of information

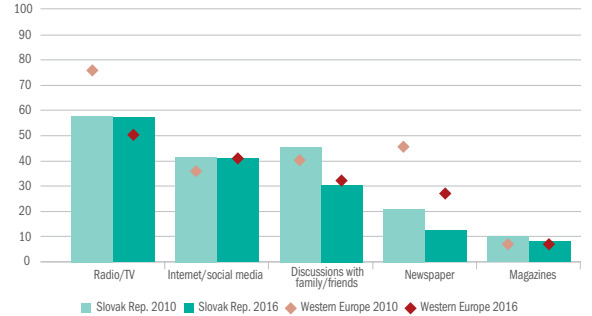


CHART 7. Health assessment: percentage of respondents who report themselves to be in good health (self-assessed)

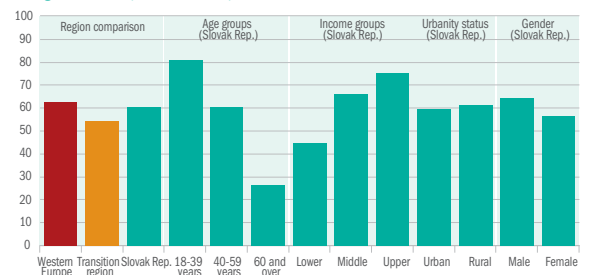


CHART 8. Quality of services: percentage of respondents who are satisfied with the quality of public services, by category

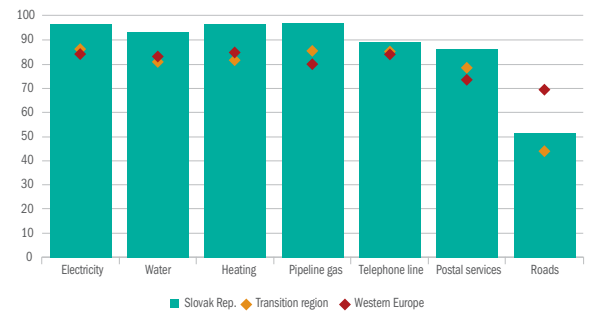


CHART 9. Factors for success: percentage of respondents who identify the given factor as the most important for success, by income level

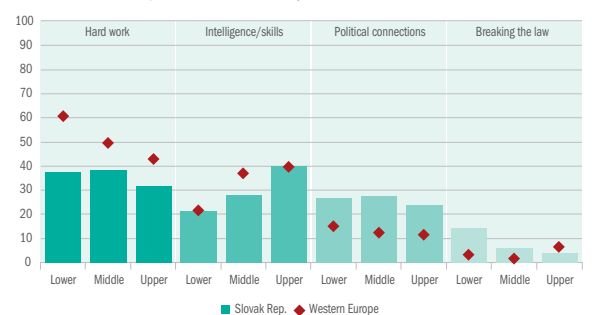


CHART 10. Attitudes towards women: percentage of respondents who agree with the statements below

