



NBS Monthly Bulletin

AUGUST 2017

Published by:

© Národná banka Slovenska

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ISSN 1337-9526 (online)



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ABBREVIATIONS

CPI Consumer Price Index

EA euro area

ECB European Central Bank
EC European Commission
EMEs emerging market economies
EONIA euro overnight index average
ESA 2010 European System of Accounts 2010

ESI Economic Sentiment Indicator (European Commission)

EU European Union

EUR euro

EURIBOR euro interbank offered rate

Eurostat statistical office of the European Union

FDI foreign direct investment GDP gross domestic product

GNDI gross national disposable income

GNI gross national income

HICP Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices

Ifo Institute Leibniz Institute for Economic Research at the University of Munich

IMF International Monetary Fund
MFI monetary financial institutions

MF SR Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic

MMF money market fund

MTF NBS's Medium-Term Forecast (published on a quarterly basis)

NACE Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community (Rev. 2)

NARKS National Association of Real Estate Offices of Slovakia

NBS Národná banka Slovenska
NEER nominal effective exchange rate
NFC non-financial corporation

NPISHs Non-profit institutions serving households

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

p.a. per annump.p. percentage point

PMI Purchasing Managers' Index REER real effective exchange rate

SASS Slovenská asociácia správcovských spoločností – Slovak Association of Asset

Management Companies

SME small and medium-sized enterprise
SO SR Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

ULC unit labour costs

ÚPSVR Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny – Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and

amily

ÚRSO Úrad pre reguláciu sieťových odvetví – Regulatory Office for Network Industries

USD US dollar VAT value-added tax

ZEW Das Zentrum für Europäische Wirtschaftsforschung – The Centre for European Economic

Research

Symbols used in the tables

- . Data are not yet available.
- Data do not exist / data are not applicable.
- (p) Preliminary data



1 Summary¹

The positive trends in the euro area continued in the second quarter of 2017. GDP growth increased slightly, quarter on quarter, to 0.6%, in line with signals from relatively favourable monthly indicators. The main driver of growth is expected to have been domestic demand, and in particular private consumption and investment demand. It augurs well for the Slovak economy that all the largest euro area countries maintained relatively strong GDP growth, which, unlike Slovakia's growth, exceeded expectations.

The acceleration of euro area GDP growth in the second quarter did not spur Slovakia's economic growth, which remained unchanged from the previous guarter, at 0.8%. While this rate was consistent with NBS projections, it was also lower than the GDP growth of the other Visegrad Four countries. In contrast to their economies, Slovakia's did not benefit from greater than expected stimuli, but rather experienced a temporary drop in output in certain manufacturing industries (related to plant shutdowns for investment purposes), as well as a slowdown in activity in infrastructure construction. As monthly indicators suggested, the fall in industrial output may have been offset by services growth, accounted for largely by domestic demand. In fact, sales in retail trade and in selected services recorded their highest growth in the post-crisis period.

Consumer demand remains on an upward path, supported by the improving labour market situation. Annual employment growth increased in the second quarter, to 0.6%, with all the principal sectors contributing positively to its acceleration, especially industry and services. Certain sectors continue to report labour shortages, and this situation is increasingly putting upward pressure on wage growth, particularly in the industry and trade sectors.

The annual inflation rate increased in July, to 1.5%, caused mainly by rising food prices and a base effect from energy prices. Non-energy industrial goods inflation moderated, though as a result of exchange rate appreciation. The contribution to the headline rate from core inflation components with a rate of change of more than 1% reached its highest level in four years in June and July.

The economic results were in line with NBS's current projections. The nowcast for GDP growth in the second quarter has increased, owing mainly to the fact that labour market indicators have been slightly more favourable than projected in NBS's 2017 June Medium-Term Forecast and therefore represent an upward risk to the September forecast. With employment growth accelerating in the second quarter, and the unemployment rate falling in July, to 6.8%², the outlook for labour market indicators this year may have to be revised to more favourable levels.

All month-on-month and quarter-on-quarter changes mentioned in the text have been seasonally adjusted using NBS internal models.

² The registered unemployment rate for job seekers available for work, seasonally adjusted.



2 THE REAL ECONOMY

2.1 FLASH ESTIMATE OF EURO AREA GDP

Eurostat's flash estimate for **euro area GDP growth in the second quarter of 2017 was 0.6%**, quarter on quarter, 0.1 percentage point higher than the rate for the previous quarter.³ According to short-term indicators (data for two-months), the acceleration was supported by industrial production, retail trade and construction, which implies upward trends in consumer and investment demand, as well as in export performance.⁴

Looking at GDP growth in the principal euro area economies, both the French and Italian economies recorded the same growth as in the previous quarter. Growth accelerated in the Netherlands (from 0.6% to 1.5%) and in Spain (from 0.8% to 0.9%). Only in Germany was there a marginal slowdown in economic growth, following a revision of the first quarter figures.

Germany's economic growth edged down to 0.6% in the second quarter of 2017, from 0.7% in the previous quarter (the first quarter figure had been revised up from 0.6%). According to preliminary figures, the quarter on quarter GDP growth was driven mainly by domestic demand, including notable increases in the final consumption of both households and general government. Investment demand also picked up, owing mainly to increases in machinery and equipment investment and in construction investment. Net trade, however, according to preliminary calculations, had a negative impact on economic growth, with import growth substantially exceeding export growth.

In France, GDP growth for the second quarter stood at 0.5%, unchanged for a third successive quarter (the first quarter growth had been revised up from 0.3%). Domestic demand (excluding inventories) made a positive contribution, similar to its impact in the first quarter, with household consumption growth increasing slightly and investment demand growth slowing. After its negative impact in the previous quarter, net trade contributed positively to France's GDP growth:

exports recorded relatively strong growth (after falling slightly in the first quarter), while import growth slowed markedly.

2.2 FLASH ESTIMATE OF SLOVAK GDP

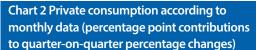
Slovakia's GDP increased by 0.8% quarter on quarter in the second quarter of 2017 (the same as it did in the first quarter), which was in line with the projections of the MTF-2017Q2 forecast. Annual GDP growth (non-seasonally adjusted) increased to 3.3%, from 3.1% in the first quarter.

Overall GDP in the first quarter (amounting to €20,260 million at constant prices after seasonal adjustment) was consistent with the MTF-2017Q2 projection of €20,259 million. The main driver of the GDP growth is expected to have been domestic consumption. Favourable consumption developments are evident from sales in retail trade and in the restaurant sector, since in each case their annual growth rate has reached a post-crisis peak. Foreign trade, by contrast, declined in terms of both exports and imports.⁴



- 3 GDP growth for the first quarter of 2017 has been revised down by 0.1 percentage point (from 0.6%).
- 4 Details of the composition of euro area GDP growth will be released on 7 September 2017, while the details of Slovakia's GDP growth will be released on 5 September







2.3 'SOFT' LEADING INDICATORS

The European Commission's **Economic Sentiment Indicator** (ESI) for the euro area remained broadly unchanged in July, while the ESI for Germany increased. The composite **Purchasing Managers' Index** (PMI) for the euro area rose marginally in August (to 55.8, from 55.7 in July), and the PMI for Germany increased more markedly (to 55.7, from 54.7 in July). Germany's **Zew** economic sentiment index fell in August, but the Zew current conditions index improved. The **Ifo Business Climate Index** for August also decreased slightly, but at the same time continued to show favourable expectations for the next six months.

July's leading indicators, as well as short-term forecasts, point to the continuation of economic growth in the third quarter of 2017.

Chart 3 Monthly indicators of private consumption (annual percentage changes)

Note: The figures for the second quarter of 2017 are NBS

projections.

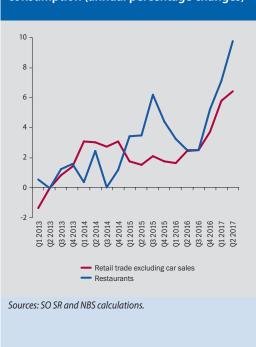


Chart 4 GDP growth estimate for the euro area in Q3 and Q4 2017 (quarter-on-quarter percentage changes)



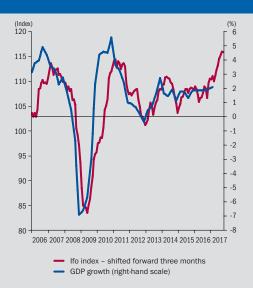
Sources: Now-Casting Economics Ltd and ECB (June 2017 Eurosystem staff macroeconomic projections for the euro area). Note: The highlighted area denotes developments since the previous Monthly Bulletin.

CHAPTER 2





Chart 7 Germany – Ifo index (2005 = 100) and annual GDP growth



Sources: Eurostat, Markit, Ifo Institute and NBS calculations. Note: The GDP growth figure for Q2 2017 is Eurostat's flash estimate.

Chart 6 Economic sentiment indicators for Germany

previous Monthly Bulletin.



Sources: European Commission, Ifo Institute and ZEW Centre. Note: ESI (long-run average = 100); Ifo index (2005 = 100); ZEW (balance of responses).



3 THE LABOUR MARKET

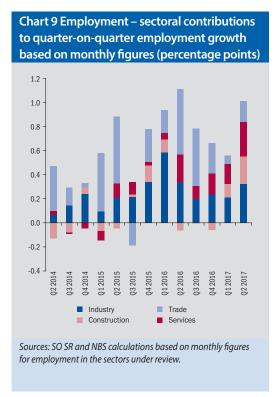
Annual employment growth in Slovakia was the same in second quarter of 2017 as in the first quarter (at 2.1%). In quarter-on-quarter

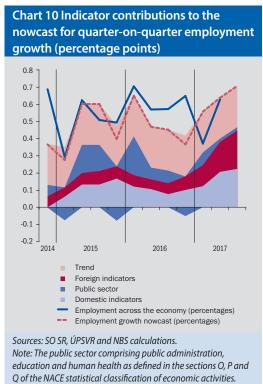
Chart 8 Employment according to the ESA 2010 methodology – trend and forecast (percentages) (thousands of persons) 2.370 1.2 2.350 2,330 2.310 -0.8 2.290 2.270 0.4 2 250 2.230 012016 02 2016 03 20 16 04 20 15 04 20 16 012017 02 201 03 201 02 201 Employment (ESA) – guarter-on-guarter rate of change Employment (ESA) - projected quarter-on-quarter rate of change (MTF-2017Q2 forecast) Employment (ESA) - actual number of people employed (thousands) Employment (ESA) - projected number of people employed (thousands, MTF-2017Q2 forecast)

Sources: SO SR and NBS calculations.

terms, job growth was a strong 0.63% (representing an increase of around 14,800 in the number of people employed). This was marginally higher than the rate projected in the MTF-2017Q2 forecast (0.54%). At the same time, the employment growth rates for each of the three previous quarters were revised up. It therefore appears that the temporary slowdown in output indicators in the second quarter did not deter employers from hiring. According to preliminary monthly data from health insurers, employment growth was also supported by an increase in the number of self-employed. Monthly data pointed to favourable employment trends in all the principal sectors. In the construction sector, employment increased after two years of stagnation.

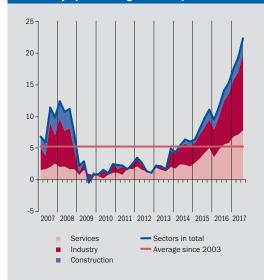
Employers are increasingly meeting their demand for labour by hiring foreign workers, who currently account for almost one-quarter of the year-on-year increase in employment. Despite the greater recruitment of foreigners, however, employer perceptions of labour shortages in Slovakia are continuing to rise.





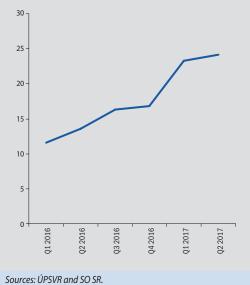






Sources: European Commission and NBS calculations. Note: The time series 'Sectors in total' represents a weighted average of the individual sectors based on the employment levels in each of them.

Chart 12 Share of foreigners in the increase in the number of people employed in Slovakia for the previous four quarters (percentages)



Note: Calculated for the given quarter as the year-on-year headcount increase in the number of foreigners working in Slovakia divided by the total year-on-year headcount increase in employment (according to ESA methodology).

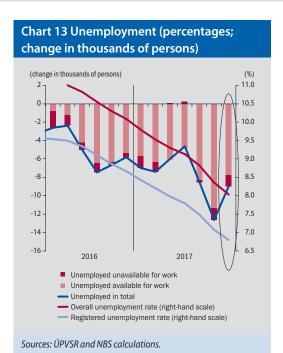
The unemployment rate based on the total number of job seekers fell by 0.33 percentage point in July, to 8%. In headcount terms, the decrease was around 8,900. The registered unemployment rate fell by a similar margin.5 Most of the fall in unemployment is attributable to the upward trend in demand among employers in Slovakia for new employees: the number of people finding work remains far higher than the number of people registering as a job seeker after being made redundant. Another factor in the decrease in unemployment was the removal of people from the unemployment register for reasons other than finding work (such as non-cooperation with the labour office, voluntary deregistration, exceeding the permitted income limit, etc.). This may be a temporary impact of recent legislation that, among other things, has restricted the scope for earning additional income while being registered as unemployed. As a result of this restriction, the analytical time series of unemployment have in recent months fallen more moderately than the ÚPSVR figures, by around 2,000 people per month. Even abstracting from such impact, however, unemployment is showing a marked downward trend.

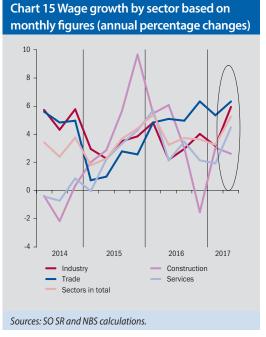
Monthly indicators at the beginning of the third quarter suggest that employment growth will remain strong in the quarter. These indicators include mainly employers' expectations and favourable external demand data, as well as the unemployment figures for July. Such job growth, in conjunction with the upward revision of the employment time series (a seasonal adjustment), indicates that the employment growth forecast for this year may have to be revised slightly up from the MTF-2017Q2 projection.

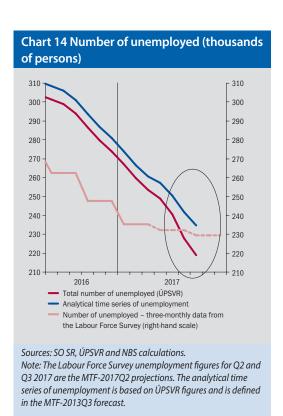
Annual average wage growth across selected private sectors accelerated markedly in June, to 6.3% (from 3.8% in May). The increase was partly caused by strong volatility in energy sector wages between the given months. Nevertheless, even the more stable wage growth data for the second quarter as a whole showed a relatively sharp increase, from 3.3% in the first quarter to 5.3%. This increase was driven by most of the

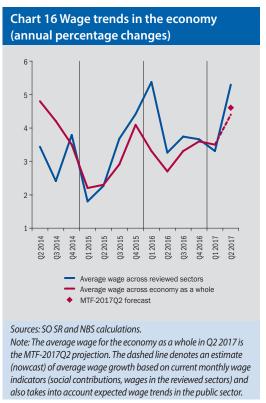
⁵ In non-seasonally adjusted terms, the registered unemployment rate decreased month on month by 0.2 percentage point, to 6.7%, and the registered unemployment rate based on the total number of job seekers fell by 0.23 percentage point, to 7.91%.









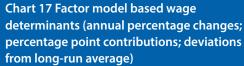


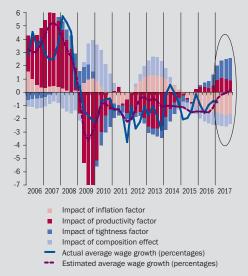
principal sectors, with the exception of construction, in which wage growth slowed to below 3%. In industry, wage growth increased strongly in the second quarter, to 6%, and in trade, too, it surpassed 6%. In services, wage growth climbed

from 2% to 4.5%. Such robust rates indicate that average wage growth across the Slovak economy may be higher in the second quarter than in the first, approximately in line with MTF-2017Q2 projections. According to an analysis of principal



CHAPTER 3





being supported mainly by increasing tightness in the labour market (labour shortages, the persisting need for recruitment) and by a moderate pick-up in labour productivity growth. Ultimately, however, annual wage growth in the second quarter may be slightly lower than that implied by monthly indicators, probably owing to softer wage growth outside the business sector, as well as in smaller enterprises and in the agriculture and financial sectors. These segments of the economy, not included in the monthly data, reported weaker wage growth trends in the first quarter.

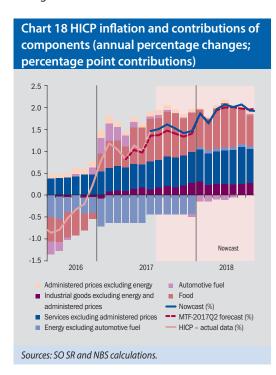
wage determinants, the current wage growth is

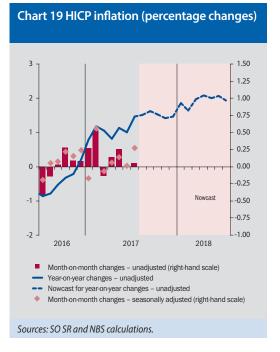
Source: NBS calculations.
Notes: Annual wage growth over the time series (from 2006) averaged 4.3%. Wages and productivity are given in nominal terms. Further information about the methodology is provided in this Analytical Commentary.



4 PRICES

Annual HICP inflation increased in July, to 1.5% (from 1.0% in June). In the MTF-2017Q2 forecast it was projected to accelerate to 1.4%. The main causes of the increase in headline inflation were a significant base effect in gas prices and an acceleration in food price inflation. In monthon-month terms, the price level remained unchanged.





The annual HICP inflation rate in July was slightly higher than projected by NBS, and food price inflation contributed to that difference. In the area of processed foods, notable increases were observed in prices of fats (fresh butter), milk and dairy products. The impact of their rise was not offset even by the seasonal drop in prices of unprocessed foods (vegetables and fruit), and

Table 1 HICP components – comparison of projected and actual rates of change (percentages; percentage point contributions)												
			Non-energy industrial goods	Energy	Food	Services	НІСР	Net inflation excluding fuel				
Year-on-year changes		June 2017 – actual figure	0.8	-4.3	3.2	1.8	1.0	1.4				
	А	July 2017 – MTF-2017Q2 forecast	1.0	-2.2	2.8	2.1	1.4	1.7				
	В	July 2017 – actual figure	0.7	-2.6	3.7	2.1	1.5	1.5				
n-ye	B-A	July – actual figure minus forecast	-0.3	-0.5	0.9	0.1	0.11	-0.1				
Year-o	(B-A) * weight	Contribution to overall forecast error ¹⁾	-0.08	-0.06	0.24	0.02	0.11	-0.07				
Sources: SO SR and NBS calculations. 1) Projections taken from NBS's June 2017 Medium-Term Forecast (MTF-2017Q2).												



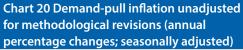
consequently overall food prices in July unexpectedly increased month-on-month.

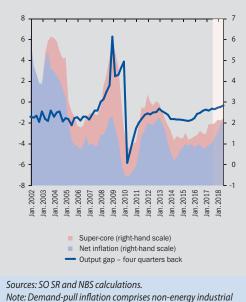
Energy prices accounted for most of the headline inflation rate's acceleration, since gas prices remained unchanged in July 2017 but fell by almost 5% in July 2016. This base effect accounted for 0.2 percentage point of the increase in July's headline rate.

Non-energy industrial goods inflation moderated in July, probably because exchange rate appreciation curbed the acceleration of import

prices. Services prices increased month-onmonth in an environment of strong labour market demand. Services inflation accelerated in July to 2.1%, and if administered prices are excluded, to 2.5 %. There were relatively large increases in prices of health care, personal care services, financial services and insurance, restaurant services, and recreation.

In the light of current trends and the upside risk to the food inflation outlook, the average annual inflation rate for the whole of 2017 is expected to be higher than 1%.

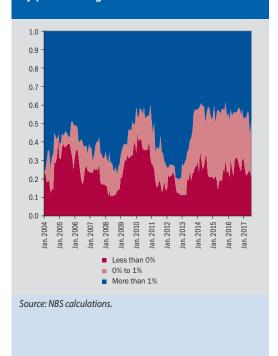




goods. The super-core index comprises sub-items in the HICP for which the output gap has predictive power with statistical

significance.

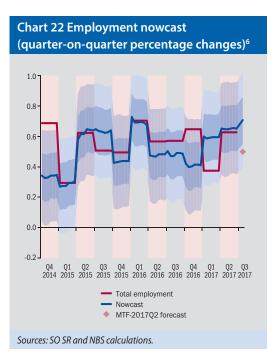
Chart 21 HICP core inflation broken down by price-change intervals

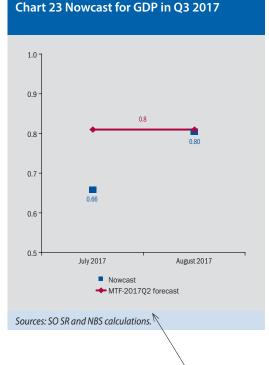


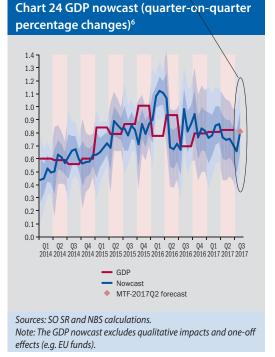


5 INDICATIVE IMPACT ON THE FORECAST

The nowcast for GDP growth in the second quarter has increased and is now on a par with the growth rate projected in NBS's June 2017 Medium-Term Forecast (MTF-2017Q2). The improvement stemmed from favourable labour market developments. The private consumption nowcast has also increased, and the export nowcast remains in line with the forecast. The employment nowcast points to a slight increase in employment growth.



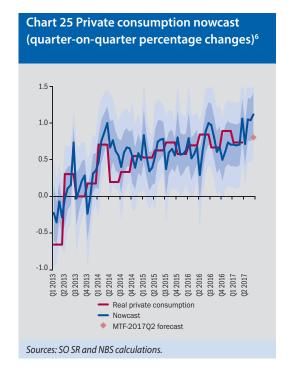


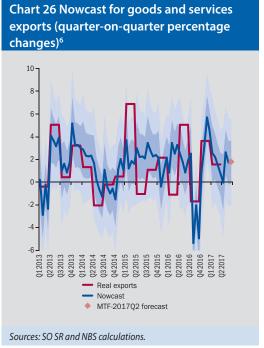


6 The band around the point estimate denotes +/- 1 and 2 times the root mean square error. Nowcasts are calculated using OLS time series models based on selected sets of monthly indicators (for employment, a factor model is used). Nowcasts provide a current estimate of future developments using available monthly figures from the current quarter, their future values forecast with ARIMA models, and their lagged values. The individual model projections are independent of each other and therefore a forecasting error in a past quarter cannot affect current projections. Further details are available in the commentaries on the GDP nowcasts, private consumption nowcasts, export nowcasts and employment nowcasts.



CHAPTER 5







OVERVIEW OF MAIN MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR **S**LOVAKIA

Table 2 Selected economic and monetary indicators for Slovakia

(annual percentage changes, unless otherwise indicated)

	Gross do- mestic prod- uct	HICP	Industrial producer prices	Employ- ment ESA 2010	rate (%)	Industrial produc- tion index	Total sales of sectors ¹⁾	Economic Sentiment Indicator (long-term average=100)	M3 (for analyti- cal use) ²⁾	Loans to private sector ³⁾	Loans to non-fi- nancial corpora- tions ³⁾	Loans to house- holds ³⁾	State budget balance (EUR mil.)	General govern- ment balance (% of GDP)	General govern- ment gross debt (% of GDP)	Current account (% of GDP)	Balance of trade (% of GDP)	usd/Eur exchange rate (average for the period)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
2009	-5.4	0.9	-2.6	-2.0	12.1	-15.5	-16.4	76.9	-2.8	1.1	-3.3	11.0	-2,791.3	-7.8	36.3	-3.4	0.4	1.3948
2010	5.0	0.7	-2.7	-1.5	14.4	8.2	8.0	98.7	7.8	5.3	1.6	12.5	-4,436.1	-7.5	41.2	-4.7	-0.1	1.3257
2011	2.8	4.1	2.7	1.8	13.6	5.2	6.2	98.8	2.9	9.3	7.6	11.1	-3,275.7	-4.3	43.7	-5.0	-0.1	1.3920
2012	1.7	3.7	3.9	0.1	14.0	8.0	4.4	93.9	8.8	3.8	-2.3	10.3	-3,810.7	-4.3	52.2	0.9	3.4	1.2848
2013	1.5	1.5	-0.1	-0.8	14.2	3.8	1.9	90.2	6.4	6.4	1.7	10.3	-2,023.3	-2.7	54.7	1.9	3.9	1.3281
2014	2.6	-0.1	-3.5	1.4	13.2	3.6	2.6	100.4	2.5	7.7	1.9	13.2	-2,923.4	-2.7	53.6	1.1	3.6	1.3285
2015	3.8	-0.3	-4.2	2.0	11.5	7.4	7.4	99.7	11.5	10.7	7.3	13.1	-1,932.6	-2.7	52.5	0.2	2.6	1.1095
2016	3.3	-0.5	-4.3	2.4	9.7	4.8	4.1	101.6	6.1	10.2	4.2	13.4	-980.3	-1.7	51.9	-0.7	2.8	1.1069
2016 Q3	3.0	-0.7	-4.2	2.4	9.5	2.8	2.1	102.4	9.3	9.9	4.4	13.1	-	-0.6	52.4	-1.0	2.2	1.1166
2016 Q4	3.0	-0.1	-2.4	2.6	9.1	4.1	3.6	102.7	6.1	10.2	4.2	13.4	-	-3.1	51.9	-1.8	1.8	1.0789
2017 Q1	3.1	1.0	2.0	2.1	8.7	7.8	6.2	104.3	5.7	11.1	8.0	12.6	-	-0.8	53.5	1.0	2.4	1.0648
2017 Q2	3.34)	1.0	1.9	2.14)		1.2	3.1	101.7	5.9	12.6	10.5	13.3	-					1.1021
2016 Aug.	-	-0.8	-4.8	-	9.4	18.0	9.6	99.9	9.0	10.4	5.4	13.1	13.1	-	-	-	-	1.1212
2016 Sep.	-	-0.5	-3.2	-	9.4	4.2	2.4	103.4	9.3	9.9	4.4	13.1	-33.2	-	-	-	-	1.1212
2016 Oct.	-	-0.3	-2.8	-	9.1	3.3	3.2	102.8	8.7	10.1	5.4	13.0	223.7	-	-	-	-	1.1026
2016 Nov.	-	-0.2	-2.6	-	8.8	3.3	3.2	101.3	8.1	9.4	3.5	13.1	-201.6	-	-	-	-	1.0799
2016 Dec.	-	0.2	-1.8	-	8.8	5.9	4.3	103.9	6.1	10.2	4.2	13.4	-358.1	-	-	-	-	1.0543
2017 Jan.	-	0.8	0.4	-	8.6	7.8	4.7	104.6	6.2	11.4	7.3	13.5	92.3	-	-	-	-	1.0614
2017 Feb.	-	1.2	2.6	-	8.4	2.5	5.4	106.6	6.6	11.9	9.4	13.5	-500.0	-	-	-	-	1.0643
2017 Mar.	-	1.0	3.0	-	8.0	13.1	8.3	101.6	5.7	12.0	8.5	13.8	70.7	-	-	-	-	1.0685
2017 Apr.	-	0.8	2.5	-	7.7	-3.3	4.1	101.6	6.1	12.3	9.6	13.6	-298.2	-	-	-	-	1.0723
2017 May	-	1.1	1.9	-	7.4	5.1	4.4	102.6	5.7	13.0	11.7	13.6	-256.4	-	-	-	-	1.1058
2017June	-	1.0	1.4	-	6.9	1.8	1.0	100.8	5.9	12.6	10.5	13.3	72.6	-	-	-	-	1.1229
2017 July	-	1.5		-	6.7			102.1					53.2	-	-	-	-	1.1511

Sources: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, MF SR, the European Commission and NBS.

More detailed time series for selected macroeconomic indicators http://www.nbs.sk/_img/Documents/_MonthlyBulletin/2017/StatisticsMB0817.xls

¹⁾ Constant prices (seasonally adjusted).

²⁾ Currency in circulation in M3 refers to money held by the public (according to methodology in place prior to 2008).

³⁾ Adjusted for sales and securitisation.

⁴⁾ Flash estimate of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.