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CONTENTS

1	SUMMARY	5	Chart 7	Germany – Ifo index and annual	
_		_		GDP growth	8
2	THE REAL ECONOMY	6	Chart 8	Employment according to the ESA	
2.1	Flash estimate of euro area GDP	6		2010 methodology – trend and	
2.2	Flash estimate of Slovak GDP	6		forecast	9
2.3	'Soft' leading indicators	7	Chart 9	Employment – sectoral contributions	
	THE LABOUR MARKET			to three-month-on-three-month	
3	THE LABOUR MARKET	9		changes in the three-month moving	_
	DDICEC	4.0		average	9
4	PRICES	12	Chart 10	Indicator contributions to the	
_	INDICATIVE MADACT			nowcast for quarter-on-quarter	
5	INDICATIVE IMPACT			employment growth	9
	ON THE FORECAST	14		Unemployment	10
OVED	WEW OF MAIN MACROFCONOMIC			Number of unemployed	10
OVERVIEW OF MAIN MACROECONOMIC			Chart 13	Wage growth by sector based on	
INDIC	ATORS FOR SLOVAKIA	16		monthly figures	11
LICT	NE TABLES		Chart 14	Factor model based wage	
	OF TABLES			determinants	11
Table 1	HICP components – comparison of	4.0	Chart 15	Job-to-job transitions in a tightening	
	projected and actual rates of change	12		labour market	11
Table 2	Selected economic and monetary			HICP inflation and its components	12
	indicators for Slovakia	16		HICP inflation	12
LICT	NE CHARTS		Chart 18	Demand-pull inflation unadjusted	4.0
	OF CHARTS			for methodological revisions	13
	GDP – trend and NBS forecast	6	Chart 19	HICP core inflation broken down	4.0
	Revisions to real GDP	7		by price-change intervals	13
Chart 3	Revisions to annual GDP growth	_		Nowcast for private consumption	14
	figures	7	Chart 21	Nowcast for goods and services	1.4
Chart 4	GDP growth estimate for the euro	-		exports	14
	area in Q4 2017 and Q1 2018	7		Nowcast for employment	14
Chart 5	GDP growth estimate for Germany			Nowcast for GDP in Q4 2017	15
	in Q4 2017 and Q1 2018	8	Chart 24	Nowcast for GDP	15
Chart 6	Economic sentiment indicators for	•			
	Germany	8			



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

Family

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

Foreign demand maintained its favourable trend in the third quarter of 2017. Euro area economic growth was relatively strong (0.6% quarter on quarter) and is expected to have been largely driven by exports. The domestic side of the economy is likely to have softened moderately. Among euro area countries, Germany continued to report the strongest growth, reflecting both robust exports and increasing investment. Leading indicators remain bright, suggesting that euro area GDP growth will remain solid in the last quarter of the year.

The Slovak economy grew in the third quarter by 0.8% quarter on quarter (and by 3.3% year on year).² Looking at monthly data, it may be assumed that domestic demand was the largest contributor to that growth. Hard data point to accelerating growth in investment and probably also in private consumption. Export performance is picking up slowly after weakening in the second quarter, and in an environment of strong import growth, net trade is expected to have had a negative impact on overall GDP growth.

The economy's continuing growth is supporting job creation and therefore further improvement in the labour market situation. Employment in-

creased in the third guarter by 0.6% guarter on quarter (2.3% year on year), with the industry and construction sectors adding the most jobs. In industry, employment has clearly been boosted by incoming investment in the automotive industry. In some cases, the job vacancies being created are proving difficult to fill, and this is causing an increase in job-to-job transitions.3 The labour shortage is being partly mitigated by foreign workers, who in the third quarter accounted for almost one-quarter of the year-on-year increase in headcount employment. The situation in the construction sector reflects the construction boom seen in recent months; As output has picked up, both employment and wages in the sector have increased. The continuing favourable developments in the third quarter were evident in a further fall in the unemployment rate, to a historical low of 7.4%.4

The annual inflation rate in October was the same as in the previous month, at 1.8%. Food prices had a strongly positive impact on inflation. Despite tightening of the labour market, demand-pull inflation is so far not accelerating. With import prices weakened by a strengthening exchange rate, goods prices are having minimal impact on the headline inflation rate.

¹ All month-on-month and quarter-on-quarter changes mentioned in the text have been seasonally adjusted using NBS internal models.

² GDP figures were revised retrospectively from 2014.

³ See Chart 15.

⁴ The registered unemployment rate based on the total number of job seekers, 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 third quarter** was **0.6%**, quarter on quarter, 0.1 percentage point lower than the rate for the previous quarter.⁵ According to short-term indicators, industrial production growth remained strong. On the other hand, retail trade output increased more moderately compared with the previous quarter, and construction output stopped increasing, all of which points to a slight softening of domestic demand amid the continuation of relatively favourable trends in export performance.⁶

Looking at GDP growth in the principal euro area economies, both the German and Italian economies saw growth accelerate (by 0.2 percentage point in each case), while economic growth in both France and Spain moderated (each by 0.1 percentage point). In the Netherlands, the slowdown in GDP growth was greater (by 1.1 percentage point), in contrast to strong growth in the previous quarter.

Germany's economic growth in the third quarter **accelerated to 0.8** %. According to preliminary figures, net trade contributed positively to that result, with export growth outpacing import growth. While private and public consumption remained relatively unchanged from the previous quarter, investment demand had a positive impact on overall GDP growth (owing mainly to increasing investment in machinery and equipment).

In France, GDP growth in the third quarter slowed to 0.5%. Domestic demand (excluding inventories) continued to make a positive contribution, and its level increased due mainly to stronger growth in household consumption. Investment demand growth remained robust, albeit moderately lower compared with the previous quarter, and changes in inventories also had a positive impact on GDP growth. On the other hand, net trade acted as a drag on growth, as import growth accelerated strongly and export growth fell.

2.2 FLASH ESTIMATE OF SLOVAK GDP

Slovakia's GDP increased in the third quarter by 3.3% year on year, and by 0.8% in quarter on quarter terms.⁶ The quarterly growth rate was marginally lower compared with the rate for the second quarter, that figure having been revised up to 0.9% due to an increase in fixed investment. The annual growth rate (3.3%) was also below the corresponding figure for the previous quarter, 3.7%, which was revised up by 0.4 percentage point.⁷ Slovakia's gross domestic product in the third quarter was slightly higher than projected in NBS's September 2017 Medium-Term Forecast.

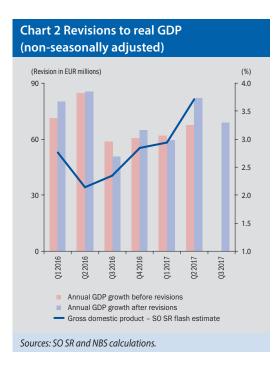
In the NBS September 2017 Medium-Term Forecast (MTF-2017Q3), the GDP growth projection is predicated on the outlook for domestic demand and the expectation of a slightly negative contribution from net trade. Monthly indicators point to an increase in investment demand (the revival of sales growth in the construction sector), as well as in consumer demand (continuing growth in retail sales).



- 5 The second quarter growth rate was revised up by 0.1 percentage point, to 0.7%.
- 6 Details of the composition of euro area GDP growth will be released on 7 December 2017, while the details of Slovakia's GDP growth will be released on 5 December 2017.
- 7 The significant revision of 0.4 percentage point was based largely on net taxes, which increased from an original 3.5 % to 7.5%. Value added (excluding taxes) was revised up from 3.2% to 3.3%.



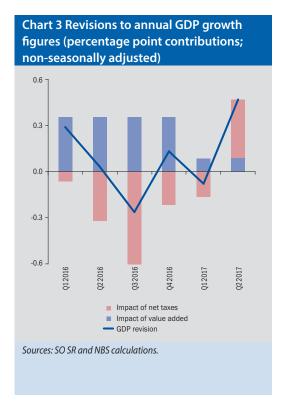
On the other, monthly data for exports show a more hesitant recovery than that projected in the NBS forecast.



2.3 'SOFT' LEADING INDICATORS

The European Commission's Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI) for the euro area continued to increase in October, reaching its highest level for more than ten years. The ESI for Germany also maintained its upward trend. For both Germany and the euro area as whole, the composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) indicated a pick-up in economic growth in November. The ZEW economic sentiment index for Germany increased in November and the current conditions index was also favourable. The Ifo Business Climate Index for Germany reached an all-time high in November based mainly on favourable expectations for the future development of the economy.

Leading indicators, as well as short-term forecast, suggest that economic growth in both Germany and euro area will remain relatively strong in the fourth quarter of 2017.





CHAPTER 2

Chart 5 GDP growth estimate for Germany in Q4 2017 and Q1 2018 (quarter-on-quarter percentage changes)

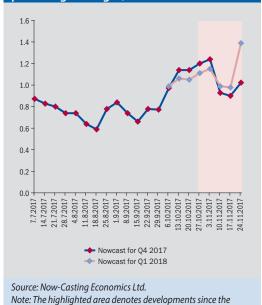


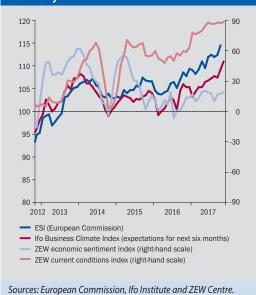
Chart 7 Germany – Ifo index (2005 = 100) and annual GDP growth (percentages)



Sources: Eurostat, Markit, Ifo Institute and NBS calculations. Note: The GDP growth figure for Q3 2017 is Eurostat's flash estimate.

Chart 6 Economic sentiment indicators for Germany

previous Monthly Bulletin.



Note: ESI (long-run average = 100); Ifo index (2005 = 100); ZEW

(balance of responses).



3 THE LABOUR MARKET

According to the SO SR's flash estimate, employment in Slovakia increased in the third quarter by 2.3% year on year (after growing by 2.1% in the second quarter). Headcount employment increased year on year by around fifty-five thousand. In quarter-on-quarter terms, employment growth stood at 0.6%, close to the rate projected in the MTF-2017Q3 forecast. According to monthly data, employment growth in the third quarter was most pronounced in the industry and construction sectors. In manufacturing, employment growth was robust in almost all segments and was highest in the automotive industry (at 8% year on year). Some of the demand for labour is having to be met by foreign workers (around 22% of the yearon-year growth in headcount employment was accounted for by foreign workers). Firms are therefore continuing to expand their workforces and gradually seeking to fill the large number of job vacancies that have been created in the recent period. Employment growth (slightly stronger than projected in the MTF-2017Q3 forecast) is expected to remain robust in the fourth quarter of 2017, with that view based mainly on domestic and foreign soft indicators of economic performance.

Chart 9 Employment – sectoral contributions to three-month-on-three-month changes in the three-month moving average (percentage points)

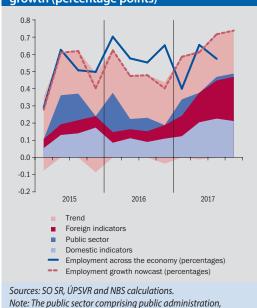


Sources: SO SR and NBS calculations based on monthly figures for employment in the reviewed sectors.

Chart 8 Employment according to the ESA 2010 methodology – trend and forecast (percentages)



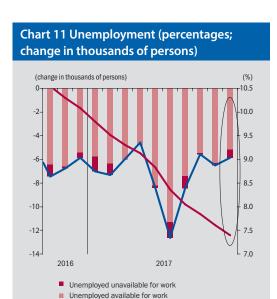
Chart 10 Indicator contributions to the nowcast for quarter-on-quarter employment growth (percentage points)



education and human health as defined in the sections O, P and Q of the NACE statistical classification of economic activities.



The fact that employment growth and the fall in unemployment were both greater than projected in the NBS forecast stemmed also from unemployment developments in October. Head-count unemployment fell in October by around



Overall unemployment rate (right-hand scale)

Unemployed in total

Sources: LIPVSR and NRS calculations.

Chart 12 Number of unemployed (thousands of persons)

450
400
350
400
350
Headcount unemployment according to ÚPSVR
NBS analytical time series of ÚPSVR unemployment Headcount unemployment - three-monthly data from the Labour Force Survey

Sources: SO SR, ÚPSVR and NBS calculations.
Note: The Labour Force Survey unemployment figures for Q3 and Q4 2017 are the MTF-2017Q3 projections. The analytical time series of unemployment is based on ÚPSVR figures and is defined in

the MTF-2013Q3 forecast; the figures for November and December

are imputed using an ARIMA model.

5,900 month on month, meaning that the unemployment rate dropped by 0.22 percentage point to 7.4% (seasonally adjusted). That fall would be lower by around 0.1 percentage point if account were taken of the above average number of people removed from the unemployment register for reasons other than finding work (the analytical time series of unemployment). The number of unemployed participating in training courses has also increased, and the third quarter saw the launch of new initiatives to help the long-term unemployed, which may be why their number fell significantly.

Annual average wage growth across the reviewed sectors fell to 3.8% in September, from 4.7% in August. That slowdown may have been partly caused by the impact of the two public holidays that fell during September, since retail trade workers are now prohibited by law from working on such days and therefore cannot earn extra pay by doing so. Wage growth nevertheless remained relatively strong in several segments of the trade and services sectors (particularly in retail trade, transportation, accommodation and restaurant services), as well as in industry (4.4%). An exception was the IT segment, where wage growth has picked up slowly after being dampened last year by the impact of a decrease in EU funds. Demand for labour remains strong and employers are finding it relatively difficult to fill vacancies. At the same time, inflation is rising moderately and that is an important factor in wage bargaining. Such an environment, in conjunction with increasing public sector wages (September saw these salaries increase 2% on average and an increase in teachers' basic salaries), will support wage growth in the next period. In the MTF-2017Q3 forecast, average annual wage growth in 2017 is projected to be 4.4%, and that figure appears to be realistic.

The current labour market situation is illustrated by job-to-job transitions. The increasing willingness of employers to offer better salary terms is incentivising employees to seek better positions. Such a development is usually seen in the expansionary phase of the cycle or in the run-up to it. At the same time, this is clearly a way to meet the sizeable labour demand created by the significant incoming investment in Slovakia.

⁸ In non-seasonally adjusted terms, the registered unemployed rate decreased month on month by 0.28 percentage point, to 6.14%, and the registered unemployment rate based on the total number of job seekers fell by 0.24 percentage point, to 7.35%.

CHAPTER 3

Chart 13 Wage growth by sector based on monthly figures (annual percentage changes in the three-month moving average)

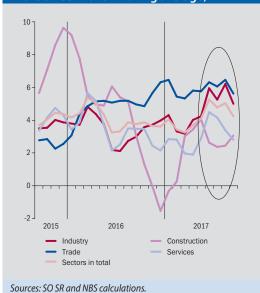


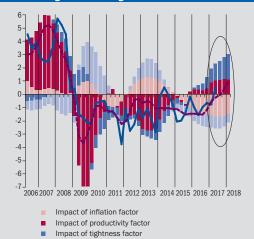
Chart 15 Job-to-job transitions in a tightening labour market (percentage of headcount employment; percentage of respondents)



Sources: SO SR and NBS calculations.

Note: The employment and job-to-job transition figures are based on Labour Force Survey data. The chart shows the sum of transitions over the past four quarters as a share of the four-quarter moving average of headcount employment. The transitions are the sum of the individual cases where an employee changes job between quarter T and T+1.

Chart 14 Factor model based wage determinants (annual percentage changes; percentage point contributions; deviations from long-run average)



Source: NBS calculations.

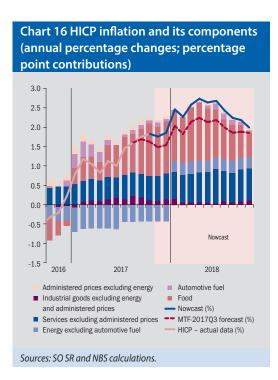
Notes: Long-run average annual wage growth is 4.3% (calculated since 2006). Wages and productivity are given in nominal terms. Further information about the methodology is provided in this Analytical Commentary.

Impact of composition effect
 Actual average wage growth (percentages)
 Estimated average wage growth (percentages)



4 PRICES

Slovakia's annual HICP inflation in October stood at 1.8%, unchanged from its level in September. The rate projected in the MTF-2017Q3 forecast was 1.6%. Food prices accounted for most of the difference between the projected and actual rates. In month-on-month terms, the price level increased by 0.3%.





The slight drop in non-energy industrial goods inflation reflected the lagged impact on prices of past exchange rate appreciation. In the category of processed foods, prices of oils and fats increased in October by almost 21% year-on-year and prices of milk and dairy products increased by 8%. Contractions on the supply side are therefore continuing to translate into

Table 1 HICP components – comparison of projected and actual rates of change (percentages; percentage point contributions)												
			Non-energy industrial goods	Energy	Food	Services	НІСР	Demand-pull inflation excluding fuel				
		September 2017 – actual figure	0.9	-2.2	4.5	2.1	1.8	1.6				
hanges	A	October 2017 – MTF-2017Q3 forecast	0.9	-2.8	4.2	2.2	1.6	1.7				
arc	В	October 2017 – actual figure	0.5	-2.5	5.3	2.1	1.8	1.5				
Year-on-year changes	B-A	October – actual figure minus forecast	-0.4	0.3	1.1	-0.1	0.21	-0.3				
Yea	(B-A) * weight	Contribution to overall forecast error ¹	-0.10	0.05	0.29	-0.04	0.21	-0.14				
	Sources: SO SR and NBS calculations. 1) Projections taken from NBS's September 2017 Medium-Term Forecast (MTF-2017Q3).											

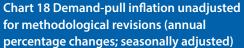




higher than projected processed food inflation. Food inflation is currently the largest contributor to headline inflation (accounting for almost three-quarters of the total). Despite persisting demand-pull and cost-push pressures generated by labour market conditions, services inflation in October was unchanged for a third successive month. It is expected that services

inflation will exceed 2.5% before the end of this year.

In view of current trends and the upside risk that food prices pose to the inflation outlook, the average headline inflation rate in 2017 is expected to be slightly higher than projected in the MTF-2017Q3 forecast.

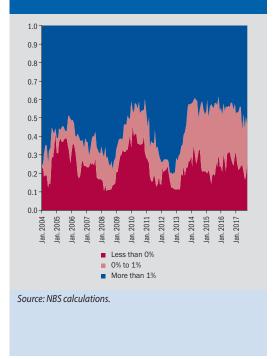




goods. The super-core index comprises sub-items in the HICP for which the output gap has predictive power with statistical

sianificance.

Chart 19 HICP core inflation broken down by price-change intervals

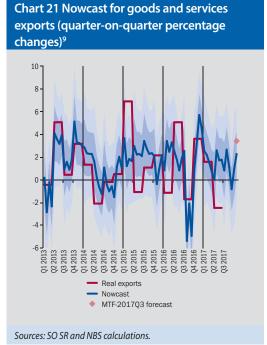


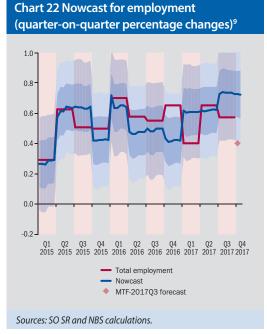


5 Indicative impact on the forecast

The nowcast for GDP growth in the fourth quarter indicates that the actual rate will be slightly higher than the growth rate for the third quarter. The nowcast for consumption growth is in line with the projection made in NBS's September 2017 Medium-Term Forecast (MTF-2017Q3), while the export nowcast is below, but close to, the projection. The employment growth nowcast points to job growth in the fourth quarter being slightly higher than projected in the NBS forecast.



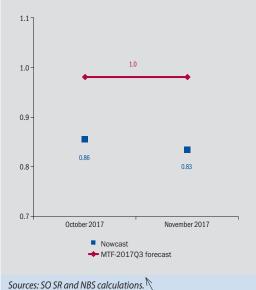


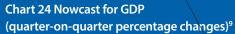


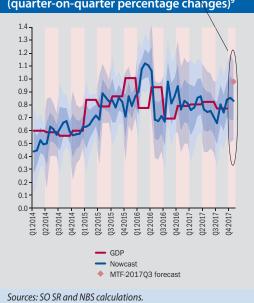
9 The band around the point estimate denotes +/- 1 and 2 times the root mean square error. Nowcasts are calculated using OLS time series models based on selected sets of monthly indicators (for employment, a factor model is used). Nowcasts provide a current estimate of future developments using available 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









Note: The GDP nowcast excludes qualitative impacts and one-off

effects (e.g. EU funds).



Overview of main macroeconomic indicators for Slovakia

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	Unem- ployment 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	General govern- ment gross debt (%	Current account (% of GDP)	Balance of trade (% of GDP)	USD/EUR exchange rate (average for the
														GDP)	of GDP)			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	-16.5	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	8.1	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	5.3	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	2.8	-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	53.5	1.1	3.6	1.3285
2015	3.9	-0.3	-4.2	2.0	11.5	7.3	7.4	99.7	11.5	10.7	7.3	13.1	-1,932.6	-2.7	52.3	-1.7	1.3	1.1095
2016	3.3	-0.5	-4.3	2.4	9.7	4.7	4.1	101.6	6.1	10.2	4.2	13.4	-980.3	-2.2	51.8	-1.5	2.0	1.1069
2016 Q4	3.2	-0.1	-2.4	2.6	9.1	4.1	3.5	102.7	6.1	10.2	4.2	13.4	-	-3.6	51.9	-3.3	0.3	1.0789
2017 Q1	3.0	1.0	2.0	2.1	8.7	7.7	6.0	104.3	5.7	11.1	8.0	12.6	-	-0.8	53.5	0.2	2.3	1.0648
2017 Q2	3.7	1.0	1.9	2.1	8.1	1.8	3.1	101.7	5.9	12.6	10.5	13.3	-	-0.9	51.8	-1.7	2.0	1.1021
2017 Q3	3.34)	1.6	1.6	2.34)		3.4	4.9	104.6	6.4	11.2	9.8	12.0	-					1.1746
2016 Nov.	-	-0.2	-2.6	-	8.8	3.3	3.1	101.3	8.1	9.4	3.5	13.1	-201.6	-	-	-	-	1.0799
2016 Dec.	-	0.2	-1.8	-	8.8	5.8	4.3	103.9	6.1	10.2	4.2	13.4	-358.1	-	-	-	-	1.0543
2017 Jan.	-	0.8	0.4	-	8.6	7.5	4.6	104.6	6.2	11.4	7.3	13.5	92.3	-	-	-	-	1.0614
2017 Feb.	-	1.2	2.6	-	8.4	2.5	5.3	106.6	6.6	11.9	9.4	13.5	-500.0	-	-	-	-	1.0643
2017 Mar.	-	1.0	3.0	-	8.0	13.0	8.2	101.6	5.7	12.0	8.5	13.8	70.7	-	-	-	-	1.0685
2017 Apr.	-	0.8	2.5	-	7.7	-3.1	4.2	101.6	6.1	12.3	9.6	13.6	-298.2	-	-	-	-	1.0723
2017 May	-	1.1	1.9	-	7.4	5.1	4.2	102.6	5.7	13.0	11.7	13.6	-256.4	-	-	-	-	1.1058
2017 June	-	1.0	1.4	-	6.9	3.2	1.1	100.8	5.9	12.6	10.5	13.3	72.6	-	-	-	-	1.1229
2017 July	-	1.5	0.6	-	6.7	9.2	7.0	102.1	5.6	11.9	9.6	13.3	53.2	-	-	-	-	1.1511
2017 Aug.	-	1.6	2.1	-	6.5	-0.4	4.0	104.0	6.7	12.1	10.4	13.3	-227.2	-	-	-	-	1.1807
2017 Sep.	-	1.8	2.1	-	6.4	2.4	3.8	107.7	6.4	12.0	10.3	13.0	-94.8	-	-	-	-	1.1915
2017 Oct.	-	1.8		-				106.3					336.2	-	-	-	-	1.1756

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/StatisticsMB1117.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.