



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
COURT OF AUDIT

AUDIT REPORT

Cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of culture, science and education



2020

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Number: 320-13/2018/29

Ljubljana, 8 June 2020



Summary

The Court of Audit implemented the audit of *effectiveness of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia* (hereinafter referred to as: the Government), *the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in the period from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2019 in meeting the objectives set in the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Field of Culture, Science and Education and in the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Establishment and Operation of the Scientific and Cultural Centres*, namely the review covering the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of culture, science and education.

By the end of 2019, the Republic of Slovenia concluded 51 international contracts respectively bilateral agreements in the field of culture, science and education. After its accession to the European Union, the Republic of Slovenia does not conclude any new cooperation agreements in the field of culture, science and education with Member States of the European Union, except with its neighbouring countries. By the end of 2019, the Republic of Slovenia had 2 educational and cultural centres established abroad, namely in Vienna and Berlin.

This audit was already the second parallel audit the Court of Audit carried out in cooperation with the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia and the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation signed in 2006.

In opinion of the Court of Audit the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport were *effective* enough in meeting the objectives set in both the above mentioned Agreements respectively in carrying out the therein defined activities, nevertheless, the auditees could adopt more systematic approach to monitoring the implemented activities respectively could provide a complete or more thorough framework for monitoring, since this is important not only for monitoring and assessing the achievement of objectives but also for assessing the cooperation between the two States in general. Some objectives agreed between the Governments of the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation were often too general and thus not always measurable since they included mostly general commitments regarding support and promotion of cooperation, which is why the Court of Audit examined their fulfilment on the basis of actually implemented activities. As regards the activities planned as actual events, the Court of Audit established that they were implemented.

Both Agreements lay down that the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation will endeavour to cooperate in the field of culture, science and education. Additionally, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Establishment and Operation of the Scientific and Cultural Centres lays down the establishment of

Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Ljubljana and the possibility of setting up a Centre for Science and Culture of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow. The Russian Federation set up its centre in the Republic of Slovenia in 2011, while the Republic of Slovenia, considering the establishment and operating costs, limited available funds and due to sufficient support provided by the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow for cooperation and carrying out activities, has not yet set up its centre in Moscow.

To implement both Agreements, the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation adopted intergovernmental programmes. The responsibility for harmonising intergovernmental programmes with the Russian Federation is attributed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which, together with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, coordinates harmonisation with the Russian Federation. The intergovernmental programme is afterwards approved by the Government.

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, and other relevant entities carried out activities required for meeting most of the objectives laid down in intergovernmental programmes. However, some objectives, mostly those pertaining to cooperation among entities of both States, were not met. In the period covered by the audit, budgetary sources in the amount of at least EUR 2,518,000 were used for the implementation of both Agreements.

For monitoring the implementation of both Agreements mainly the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport are responsible, namely their subordinated internal organisational units, which are responsible for individual areas of operation of the ministries, monitor the implementation of certain activities. Nevertheless, there is no overall and systematic monitoring of the Agreements at the level of an individual ministry. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well does not carry out overall respectively comprehensive and systematic monitoring of cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation as in accordance with the concerned Agreements, though it is regularly updated on the matter through day-to-day communication, annual reports, special reports prepared for the purposes of bilateral meetings and in the joint committee meetings or sessions. The Government, however, was informed about the implementation of the Agreements only upon the adoption of intergovernmental programmes for the approval of which is responsible.

The Court of Audit proposed to the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport several *recommendations*, but did not demand a submission of a response report. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport implemented some of the measures for improving the effectiveness of operations related to the audit field already during the audit procedure.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Court of Audit implemented the parallel audit of effectiveness of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in meeting the objectives set in the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Field of Culture, Science and Education¹ (hereinafter referred to as: Agreement on cooperation) and in the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Establishment and Operation of the Scientific and Cultural Centres² (hereinafter referred to as: Agreement on centres). This second parallel audit was carried out in line with the agreement concluded with the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation, i.e. the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia and the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation signed in 2006, which represents the basis for the Agreement on the Parallel Audit of the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation and the Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia from 2019, specifying the cooperation between both Supreme Audit Institutions in conducting the respective audit.

The audit was carried out on the basis of the Court of Audit Act³ and the Rules of Procedure of the Court of Audit⁴, and in accordance with the International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions defined by the Instructions for Conducting Audits⁵. The Decision on audit implementation⁶ was issued on 23 November 2018, and the Decision supplementing the decision on audit implementation⁷ was issued on 20 September 2019.

The responsibility of the Court of Audit is, on the basis of the implemented audit, to express a descriptive opinion on the effectiveness of the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in meeting the objectives set in the Agreement on cooperation and the Agreement on centres. The audit was planned and implemented in a manner to obtain sufficient and reasonable assurance for expressing an opinion.

The audit covered the period from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2019.

¹ Official Gazette of the RS – International Agreements, No 10/96 (Official Gazette of the RS, No 36/96).

² Official Gazette of the RS – International Agreements, No 9/11 (Official Gazette of the RS, No 66/11).

³ Official Gazette of the RS, Nos 11/01, 109/12.

⁴ Official Gazette of the RS, No 91/01.

⁵ Official Gazette of the RS, No 43/13.

⁶ No 20-13/2018/3.

⁷ No 320-13/2018/11.

1.1 Audit objective

The objective of the audit the Court of Audit implemented with the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation was to express an opinion on the effectiveness of the auditees, namely the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, in meeting the objectives set in the Agreement on cooperation and the Agreement on centres (audit field).

In order to be able to express the opinion, the key audit question was posed, *whether the objectives set in the Agreement on cooperation and the Agreement on centres were met*. The answer to the key audit question was given by answering the following sub-questions:

- *was planning and monitoring of cooperation in the field of culture, science and education appropriate;*
- *were objectives set in Agreements and defined in programmes pertaining to the field of culture met;*
- *were objectives set in Agreements and defined in programmes pertaining to the field of science and education met.*

The audit opinion on the effectiveness of the auditees in meeting the objectives laid down in the Agreement on cooperation and in the Agreement on centres was formed on the basis of predetermined criteria which are presented in the continuation of this audit report.

1.2 Introduction of auditees

The auditees were selected on the basis of their role and responsibilities pertaining to the respective audit field, namely:

- the Government, which is the contracting party to both Agreements,
- the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is responsible for international cooperation, and
- the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, which are competent bodies responsible for cooperation in the field of culture, science and education.

1.2.1 Government of the Republic of Slovenia

The Government is the body holding executive power and the supreme body of State administration in the Republic of Slovenia which in line with the Constitution, laws and other general enactments adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter referred to as: the National Assembly) defines, directs and coordinates the implementation of national policy. For the purpose thereof, it issues regulations and adopts other legal, political, economic, financial, organisational and other measures necessary for ensuring development of the State and to address the issues within the competency of the State in all individual areas.

The Government is independent in performing its functions within the framework of the Constitution, laws, the State budget and basic and long-term policies respectively commitments of the National Assembly. It is responsible to the National Assembly for the pursued national policy and for the matters and circumstances in all areas within the competency of the State, as well as for the implementation of laws and other regulations of the National Assembly and for the overall functioning of the State administration.

All its members are collectively accountable for the work of the Government, while the competent ministers are accountable for the work of individual ministries through which the Government directs the

State administration. The Government supervises the work of the ministries, provides them with political guidelines for the implementation of laws and other regulations and general enactments, and ensures they perform their functions in a coordinated manner. The Prime Minister heads and directs the work of the Government, ensures the unity of policy and administrative direction of the Government, coordinates the work of ministers, represents the Government and calls and presides over its sessions.

The Prime Ministers directing and heading the Government in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Prime Ministers in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself

Prime Minister	Mandate period
Borut Pahor	Prime Minister until 20/9/2011, until 10/2/2012 performing current business
Janez Janša	from 10/2/2012 to 20/3/2013
mag. Alenka Bratušek	from 20/3/2013 to 8/5/2014, until 18/9/2014 performing current business
dr. Miroslav Cerar	Prime Minister from 18/9/2014 to 20/3/2018, until 13/9/2018 performing current business
Marjan Šarec	Prime Minister from 13/9/2018 to 29/1/2020, until 13/3/2020 performing current business
Janez Janša	Prime Minister from 3/3/2020

1.2.2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs

In compliance with the State Administration Act⁸, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs performs tasks in the field of foreign affairs of the State, economic diplomacy including reconciliation, promotion and safeguarding of the national economic interests abroad, consular protection and international law including conclusion of international agreements/contracts, international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, European matters and in the field of coordinating positions and cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs implements foreign policy of the Republic of Slovenia and performs tasks laid down in the Foreign Affairs Act⁹ and in other regulations and acts pertaining to the concerned field. With its expert views the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participates in the procedures of planning, preparing and drawing up foreign policy of the Republic of Slovenia, as well as takes part in establishing positions of the National Assembly and the Government.

The persons responsible for the operation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself are listed in Table 2.

⁸ Official Gazette of the RS, Nos 113/05-UPB4, 48/09, 21/12, 47/13, 12/14, 90/14, 51/16.

⁹ Official Gazette of the RS, Nos 113/03-UPB1, 76/08, 108/09, 31/15.

Table 2: Responsible persons of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself

Responsible person	Mandate period
Samuel Žbogar	the competent minister until 20/9/2011, until 10/2/2012 performing current business
Karl Viktor Erjavec	the competent minister from 10/2/2012 to 13/9/2018, in the period from 8/5/2014 to 18/9/2014 and from 20/3/2018 to 13/9/2018 performing current business
dr. Miroslav Cerar	from 13/9/2018 to 29/1/2020, until 13/3/2020 performing current business
dr. Anže Logar	from 13/3/2020

1.2.3 Ministry of Culture

In compliance with the State Administration Act, the Ministry of Culture performs tasks in the field of art, culture, cultural heritage, film, mass media, the Slovenian language and religious freedom.

In the period covered by the audit, the ministry performing the tasks in the field of culture was reorganised. Upon entry into force of the Act Amending the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Act (ZVRS-F)¹⁰, the Ministry of Culture ceased to operate in 2012. Its tasks were undertaken by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. In 2013, the Ministry of Culture was re-established as an independent and autonomous national body in line with the Act Amending the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Act (ZVRS-G)¹¹.

The persons responsible for the operation of the Ministry of Culture respectively for the operation in the field of culture in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself are listed in Table 3.

¹⁰ Official Gazette of the RS, No 8/12.

¹¹ Official Gazette of the RS, No 21/13.

Table 3: Responsible persons in the field of culture in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself

Responsible person	Mandate period
Majda Širca Ravnikar, Culture minister	until 11/7/2011
dr. Boštjan Žekš, minister without portfolio, performing the function of the Culture minister	from 11/7/2011 to 20/11/2011, until 10/2/2012 performing current business
dr. Žiga Turk, Minister of education, science, culture and sport	from 10/2/2012 to 20/3/2013
dr. Uroš Grilc, Culture minister	from 20/3/2013 to 8/5/2014, until 18/9/2014 performing current business
mag. Julijana Bizjak Mlakar, Culture minister	from 18/9/2014 to 25/4/2016
Gorazd Žmavc, minister without portfolio, performing the function of the Culture minister	from 25/4/2016 to 20/5/2016
Anton Peršak, Culture minister	from 20/5/2016 to 20/3/2018, until 13/9/2018 performing current business
Dejan Prešiček, Culture minister	from 13/9/2018 to 28/1/2019
dr. Jernej Pikalo, Minister of education, science, and sport, performing the function of the Culture minister	from 28/1/2019 to 8/3/2019
mag. Zoran Poznič, Culture minister	from 8/3/2019 to 29/1/2020, until 13/3/2020 performing current business
dr. Vasko Simoniti, Culture minister	from 13/3/2020

1.2.4 Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

In compliance with the State Administration Act, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport performs the tasks in the field of pre-school education, primary, secondary, higher and tertiary education, adult learning, science, research, sport and youth.

In the period covered by the audit, the ministry in line with the Act Amending the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Act (ZVRS-D)¹² until 10 February 2012 operated as the Ministry of Education and Sport; from 10 February 2012, the ministry in line with the Act Amending the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Act (ZVRS-F) operated as the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport; since 20 March 2013, it operates as the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport as in accordance with the Act Amending the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Act (ZVRS-G).

¹² Official Gazette of the RS, No 123/04.

The persons responsible for the operation of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself are listed in Table 4.

Table 4: Responsible persons of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in the period covered by the audit and during the audit implementation itself

Responsible person	Mandate period
dr. Igor Lukšič, Minister of education and sport	until 10/2/2012
dr. Žiga Turk, Minister of education, science, culture and sport	from 10/2/2012 to 20/3/2013
dr. Jernej Pikalo, Minister of education, science and sport	from 20/3/2013 to 8/5/2014, until 18/9/2014 performing current business
dr. Stanislava Setnikar Cankar, Minister of education, science and sport	from 18/9/2014 to 6/3/2015, until 13/3/2015 performing current business
dr. Miroslav Cerar, Prime Minister, performing the function of the Minister of education, science and sport	from 13/3/2015 to 27/3/2015
mag. Klavdija Markež, Minister of education, science and sport	from 27/3/2015 to 1/4/2015, until 9/4/2015 performing current business
dr. Miroslav Cerar, Prime Minister, performing the function of the Minister of education, science and sport	from 9/4/2015 to 13/5/2015
dr. Maja Makovec Brenčič, Minister of education, science and sport	from 13/5/2015 to 20/3/2018, until 13/9/2018 performing current business
dr. Jernej Pikalo, Minister of education, science and sport	from 13/9/2018 to 29/1/2020, until 13/3/2020 performing current business
dr. Simona Kustec, Minister of education, science and sport	from 13/3/2020

1.3 Subject of the audit

The basis for cooperation in the field of culture, science and sport provides the Foreign Affairs Act, which in Article 2 among others stipulates that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinates international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, promotes intercultural dialogue and ensures cultural cooperation in connection to international affairs.

By the end of 2019, the Republic of Slovenia concluded 51 international contracts respectively bilateral agreements in the field of culture, science and education, of which 2 were concluded prior to and 49 after the Slovenian sovereignty. After its accession to the European Union, the Republic of Slovenia has not concluded any new cooperation agreements in the field of culture, science and education with

Member States of the European Union, except with its neighbouring countries. Implementation of agreements is thus ensured through diplomatic representations and consulates abroad. At the end of 2019, the Republic of Slovenia had 2 educational and cultural centres established abroad, namely in Vienna and Berlin.

Cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation is established and defined by 2 agreements ratified with the act of their ratification.

The Agreement on cooperation was signed in November 1995 and ratified in July 1996 with the Act Ratifying the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Field of Culture, Science and Education¹³, with the validity period of 5 years, automatically renewable for additional 5-year period. The Agreement may be terminated in case the notice of termination is given by either Party. The Agreement on cooperation which was still in force during the period covered by the audit foresees strengthening of mutual relations and cooperation between the two signatory States in the field of culture, science and education.

Article 3 of the Agreement on cooperation defines that the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation shall in *the field of culture* endeavour to:

- establish direct cooperation among organisations and institutions in the field of culture, art, literature, libraries, museums, protection of cultural heritage and historical monuments, as well as among societies, associations, culture funds and culture creators of the respective States;
- organise Days of Slovenian Culture in Russia and Days of Russian Culture in Slovenia on the basis of special agreements;
- participate in arts festivals, competitions and other events that shall contribute to the promotion of knowledge of Russian and Slovenian culture;
- host music and theatre groups, as well as individual performers in accordance with the principle of reciprocity;
- enable exchange of art exhibitions on the basis of previously agreed guarantees, if necessary;
- offer additional training and education to culture creators and artists to perfect their knowledge and abilities;
- ensure translations of artistic and scientific works, as well as specialised literature;
- ensure the exchange of books and publications in the field of culture and art;
- present music and dramatic works of the authors of each respective State;
- promote other forms of cooperation that shall enable wider access to the culture of each respective State and development of cultural exchange.

Article 4 of the Agreement on cooperation defines that the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation shall in *the field of science and education* endeavour to:

- expand and broaden comprehensive and direct cooperation among academies of science, scientific research institutes and organisations of the respective States;
- establish and develop direct contacts with educational institutions and organisations on the basis of direct agreements;
- enable the exchange of experts, scientists, academics/university teaching staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, and trainees;

¹³ As set forth in footnote No 1.

- encourage participation in symposia, conferences and other scientific meetings, as well as in joint scientific projects;
- promote the exchange of pupils and students, as well as secondary and vocational school teachers;
- enable the reciprocal exchange of scholarship for undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as for lecturers at universities or colleges and other scientific institutions of the respective States;
- establish other forms of cooperation of mutual interest of both States in the field of science and education.

In the Agreement on cooperation the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation also agreed on the following:

- to consult one other on mutual recognition and equivalence of evidence of formal qualifications and academic titles (academic degrees and academic ranks) gained respectively awarded either in the Republic of Slovenia or in the Russian Federation with the purpose of entering into a relevant agreement;
- to encourage learning and use of the Slovenian language in the Russian Federation and of the Russian language in the Republic of Slovenia, since the spread of knowledge of both languages is crucial element in the mutual cooperation;
- to enable the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia and of the Russian Federation, in line with the existing internal rules, the access to libraries and archives for scientific purposes and to encourage cooperation among archives, libraries and other similar institutions of both States with the purpose of exchanging experts and for the purpose of copying documents;
- to adopt measures for preventing illegal import and export of cultural property in line with the applicable regulations of both States and international conventions, and to ensure mutual cooperation among their competent bodies with the purpose of exchanging information and adopting measures for establishing legitimate property rights over cultural property and their recovery;
- to develop comprehensive cooperation in the field of publishing;
- to encourage cooperation in the field of mutual copyright protection;
- to encourage free flow of information about political, social, cultural and scientific activities of each respective State;
- to promote all forms of cooperation in the field of cinematography;
- to promote the development of tourism to further deepen mutual understanding among the two nations and to acquire better knowledge of their history and culture;
- to promote further cooperation among institutions and organisations in the field of physical education and sport, direct cooperation among sport clubs and associations, organisation of competitions and meetings, exchange of athletes and coaches, as well as scientific and methodological information pertaining to the field of physical education and sport;
- to encourage comprehensive cooperation among young people of both respective States;
- to promote cooperation in the field of cultural heritage protection and restoration of cultural and historical monuments.

The Agreement on centres was signed in March 2011 and ratified in July 2011 with the Act Ratifying the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Establishment and Operation of the Scientific and Cultural Centres¹⁴, with the validity

¹⁴ As set forth in footnote No 2.

period of 5 years, automatically renewable for additional 5-year period. The Agreement may be terminated in case the notice of termination is given by either Party. The Agreement on centres was still in force during the period covered by the audit.

Recitals of the Agreement on centres foresee the establishment of Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Ljubljana and the possibility of setting up a Centre for Science and Culture of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow. Additionally, the two States may agree on setting up their centres in other localities rather than in their capitals. Slovenian respectively Russian centre may be run under the auspices of the head of a diplomatic representation, namely chief of mission. To carry out their activities, the centres may establish direct contacts with the ministries, other governmental agencies and institutions, bodies of local authorities, societies, funds and individuals of the host State.

Principal activities foreseen in Article 4 of the Agreement on centres shall be:

- participation in the implementation of bilateral programmes of cultural, scientific and technical, and information cooperation;
- participation in the implementation of their respective countries' policy aimed at supporting their citizens abroad to ensure their social and cultural, educational and other legitimate rights and interests, promoting their further consolidation, preserving their native language, national and cultural identity, developing comprehensive bonds between the organisations of both States with their nationals abroad and the associations thereof;
- providing the public of the host State with information on the history and culture of the country, its domestic and foreign policy in the field of culture and cultural cooperation, social, scientific and economic developments;
- facilitating contacts and wider cooperation among artistic, cultural and educational, scientific and professional organisations of the two States;
- promoting the study of languages of the two States;
- using the information capacities of the Centres to establish favourable conditions for wider scientific and technological as well as cultural cooperation between the two States;
- facilitating the establishment and development of partner relations among cities and regions of the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation;
- arranging information and promotion activities in the field of culture, science and technology;
- cooperating with the international institutions promoting national cultures of the peoples residing in the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation.

Additionally, the centres in line with Article 5 of the Agreement on centres shall:

- establish information and reference materials and data banks on cultural, scientific and technological, socio-political and economic development of their respective States, hold conferences, symposia, seminars and consultations on issues pertaining to international scientific and cultural cooperation;
- provide information and consultative support to the interested entities and individuals of the host State on establishing contacts with cultural education, scientific, educational and professional organisations of their respective States;
- engage in cultural education and information activities for compatriots residing in the host State and maintain contacts with their associations;
- organise performances of art companies and individual performers, and provide for broadcasting of television and cinema shows;

- organise exhibitions of works of fine art, applied art, design, architecture, photographs, books, folk art, etc.;
- establish public boards and clubs in various fields of their activities, involving reputable persons representing local and business communities, prominent academic and cultural figures, as well as representations of foreign countries, organisations of both States, and mass media;
- organise courses to study the languages and cultures of peoples of their respective States, study tours for the citizens of the host State, provide methodological assistance to researchers and language and culture teachers working in local scientific and educational institutions;
- assist in selecting citizens of the host State to be sent to study and practice to their respective States;
- assist compatriots' associations and clubs in their activities;
- facilitate the activities of associations and clubs of graduates of educational institutions of their respective States in the host State, contribute to maintaining the ties among such associations and clubs and the relevant educational institutions, as well as organise professional development seminars for the graduates in the host State;
- support the activities of the Centres' libraries and other information services for the interested organisations and individuals in the host State;
- cooperate with friendship associations and societies, educational, cultural and scientific institutions of the host States, and cultural and information centres of other States;
- the respective Centres may engage in other activities consistent with the purposes of this Agreement on centres in accordance with the legislation of the host State.

Cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of culture, science and education is exercised at several levels among different institutions and organisations, often independently of agreements and other possible contracts and arrangements with the respective States. Therefore, it was not possible to assure that all activities and events providing cooperation between the two States were included in the audit.

1.4 Audit approach

The answers to audit questions were acquired mostly from the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, namely the auditees, while some answers were provided by other entities carrying out the activities in the field covered by the audit. In conducting the audit, several qualitative and quantitative auditing methods and techniques were applied.

The concerned audit examined mostly legal bases and operational documents for ensuring cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of culture, science and education. Carried out were the interviews with the auditees and documentation on implementing measures pertaining to the field covered by the audit was reviewed.

2. COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CULTURE, SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

The cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of culture, science and education is formally implemented on the basis of the Agreement on cooperation and the Agreement on centres.

To carry out the Agreement on cooperation, the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation adopt intergovernmental programmes and operating protocols on cooperation among relevant ministries and organisations. To draw up, adopt and implement periodic programmes, the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation may form a joint committee that shall meet alternatively in the Republic of Slovenia and in the Russian Federation as necessary but at least once in 3 years. In the period covered by the audit, the following 4 programmes were adopted:

- Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports for the period 2010-2012¹⁵ (hereinafter referred to as: Programme 2010-2012),
- Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports for the period 2013-2015¹⁶ (hereinafter referred to as: Programme 2013-2015),
- Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports for the period 2016-2018¹⁷ (hereinafter referred to as: Programme 2016-2018),
- Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education, Sports and Youth Policy for the period 2019-2021¹⁸ (hereinafter referred to as: Programme 2019-2021).

Within the framework of operating protocols, the Memorandum on Cooperation in the Field of Physical Education and Sport between the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Ministry of Sport of the Russian Federation was signed on 12 December 2013.

¹⁵ Official Gazette of the RS, No 6/11.

¹⁶ Official Gazette of the RS, No 19/14.

¹⁷ Official Gazette of the RS, No 99/15.

¹⁸ The Programme was adopted at the Government's session as of 7 November 2019, but was not published in the Official Gazette of the RS.

On 21 April 2011, the Russian Federation set up its centre in the Republic of Slovenia, namely the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Ljubljana, which is a representative office of the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo)¹⁹, in order to implement the Agreement on centres.

The Republic of Slovenia has not yet set up its centre in the Russian Federation. As explained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the reason behind was the estimation of establishment and operating costs made in 2012. The assessment was comparable with the costs necessary for the establishment and functioning of a diplomatic representation respectively consulates. Considering the estimated costs and the limited available funds and due to communication on a daily basis between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow, such as written correspondence and/or regular reporting, the Ministry thus decided not to set up its centre in the Russian Federation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also of the opinion that such centre would only provide support to the activities among the States that are already underway. The Court of Audit agrees with the Ministry's position, thereby deriving from the comparison of the activities that the centres should perform with those activities²⁰ that the two States carry out in accordance with the Agreement on cooperation. Assistance to all interested entities is provided by the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow which is evident also from its daily communication with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow regularly briefs about its activities in the field of culture, education and science on social media and on its website²¹, where several links to the relevant Slovenian institutions and organisations operating mainly in the field of culture and education, and some also in the field of science are available.

The programmes that are aimed at implementing the Agreement on cooperation include also the performance of those activities which are defined in the Agreement on centres. This indicates that the programmes in addition to the implementation of the Agreement on cooperation determine also the implementation of the Agreement on centres. It can thus be established that the Court of Audit examined the implementation of activities planned in the two aforementioned Agreements by examining the performance of activities defined in the programmes.

2.1 Cooperation planning and monitoring

In order to answer the audit question, *whether planning and monitoring of cooperation in the field of culture, science and education was appropriate*, the Court of Audit examined what were the roles of individual auditees pertaining to planning and cooperation and whether they reflected in the relevant plan of activities, as well as whether the performance of activities was monitored only through individual activities or comprehensively considering all the adopted plans of activities.

¹⁹ [URL: <http://svn.rs.gov.ru/sl/>], 15/5/2020.

²⁰ The term 'activities' refers to both various individual activities and set of activities contributing to cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation.

²¹ [URL: <http://www.moscow.embassy.si/>], 15/5/2020.

The Court of Audit assessed the adequacy of cooperation planning and monitoring in the field of culture, science and education on the basis of the following criteria:

- whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinated planning of activities both within the framework of the Republic of Slovenia and also in relation to the Russian Federation;
- whether the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport planned their activities in line with arrangements agreed respectively made with the entities implementing the plans of activities;
- whether the Government took note of respectively approved the programmes respectively the plans of activities harmonised with the Russian Federation;
- whether the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport systematically monitored the implementation of activities in the respective fields for which they are competent;
- whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs comprehensively monitored the implementation of activities;
- whether the Government regularly took note of the realisation of the adopted programmes.

2.1.1 Planning of cooperation

Draft programmes are prepared by the Republic of Slovenia or by the Russian Federation; draft programme 2010-2012 was thus prepared by the Republic of Slovenia, while draft programmes 2013-2015, 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 were prepared by the Russian Federation.

When a draft programme is drawn up by the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the basis of a previous programme, together with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and other competent entities, coordinates the preparation of a new draft programme which is then submitted to the Russian Federation for harmonisation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport coordinates the harmonisation of the proposed programme with the Russian Federation until both sides have agreed on the content respectively the text of the programme. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs applies the same coordination practice respectively procedure also in the case when the Russian Federation prepares a draft programme.

Within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the International Relations and European Affairs Department (hereinafter referred to as: designated department of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport) is authorised for coordination of the programme. Its tasks and activities include coordination with competent departments or units within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with internal organisational units within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. The designated department of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport thus summons the internal organisational units to review the programme and to submit relevant proposals for amending the programme. For coordination of activities with the project implementers, the internal organisational units within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport are responsible.

Within the Ministry of Culture, the European Affairs and International Relations Department (hereinafter referred to as: designated department of the Ministry of Culture) is authorised for coordination of the programme. Its tasks and activities include coordination with the competent departments or units within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with internal organisational units within the Ministry of Culture. The designated department of the Ministry of Culture plans respectively coordinates activities on the basis of previous programmes which it reviews and appropriately updates and amends or modifies with the

assistance of professional services of the Ministry of Culture that cooperate with public institutes and organisations in the field of culture and cultural and artistic creation.

Once the programme is harmonised, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in accordance with the explanations provided by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport gives notice on the planned signing of the programme which is later submitted to be discussed by the Government. The programme together with the decision prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is approved by the Government.

The Court of Audit examined, whether the objectives respectively activities defined in the Programme 2010-2012, the Programme 2013-2015, the Programme 2016-2018 and in the Programme 2019-2021 are in line with the objectives respectively purpose of the Agreement on cooperation and of the Agreement on centres. The Court of Audit aimed to establish, whether the programmes included all the objectives set in the two Agreements and whether all the objectives laid down in the programmes were based on the objectives of the Agreements. The comparison was made in accordance with the objectives defined in the Programme 2016-2018²², which was the last adopted and fully realised²³.

Since the programme is considered an international act pertaining to the field of culture, science, education and sport whose key aim is to improve cooperation among different entities of the two States, some objectives defined therein upon agreement of the Governments of the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation are excessively general. Furthermore, they are not always measurable as they include general commitments, which is why the Court of Audit indirectly examined their fulfilment, namely on the basis of actually implemented activities, as described in more detail under points 2.2 and 2.3 of this report.

The Court of Audit established that the objectives laid down in the programmes are derived from the objectives defined in the Agreement on cooperation and in the Agreement on centres – objectives from the programmes may refer to several objectives from both Agreements or several objectives from the programmes may refer to 1 objective of one of the concerned agreements. Additionally, it was found that programme objectives cover almost all objectives from both Agreements; the exception is 1 objective from the Agreement on cooperation referring to consultation on mutual recognition and equivalence of evidence of formal qualifications and academic titles (academic degrees and academic ranks) which was included in the programmes 2010-2012 and 2013-2015, but not in the programmes 2016-2018 and 2019-2021.

Explanation of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

The reason for abolishing the objective on consultation on mutual recognition and equivalence of evidence of formal qualifications and academic titles (academic degrees and academic ranks) is the amended respectively modified method of recognition at the international and national level. The Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation are namely the signatories of the Bologna Declaration and the Lisbon Recognition Convention (i.e. the Convention on the Recognition of

²² Objectives laid down in the Programme 2010-2012, the Programme 2013-2015 and in the Programme 2019-2021 may somewhat vary from those in the Programme 2016-2018 but are similar in terms of content.

²³ The Programme 2019-2021 was signed with the Russian Federation on 10 September 2019, [URL: <https://www.gov.si/novice/2019-09-10-predsednik-vlade-marjan-sarec-se-je-sestal-s-predsednikom-vlade-ruske-federacije-dmitrijem-medvedjevom/>], and adopted by the Government on 7 November 2019, [URL: https://www.gov.si/assets/vlada/Seja-vlade-SZJ/2019/11_2019/87.-dopisna-seja.pdf], 15/5/2020.

Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region)²⁴ and members of the European Higher Education Area – EHEA. In the Republic of Slovenia, however, recognition and evaluation of qualifications is carried out in accordance with the Assessment and Recognition of Education Act²⁵, which is why there is no need for bilateral agreements in the concerned field.

2.1.2 Monitoring of cooperation

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport are responsible for the implementation of the Agreement on cooperation. The activities laid down therein are mostly carried out by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport either directly or via other entities.

Within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, its designated department is authorised for coordination of cooperation with the Russian Federation, while individual activities are carried out by other internal organisational units of the Ministry or external contractors. In the period covered by the audit, there was lack of overall respectively comprehensive and systematic monitoring of programme implementation, as determined by the Agreement on cooperation, identified at the level of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. The concerned activities were thus the responsibility of therefor competent and authorised internal organisational units of the Ministry. The assessment of the Court of Audit that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport failed to systematically monitor the implementation of programmes at the level of the Ministry is grounded also on the fact that its designated internal organisational units had to submit the necessary data to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport for the purpose of this audit.

Within the Ministry of Culture, its designated department is authorised for coordination of cooperation with the Russian Federation, while individual activities are prepared and carried out by other internal organisational units of the Ministry or external contractors. Some contractors report on the implemented activities to the Ministry of Culture or to the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow which in some cases arrange the promotion of the events. In the period covered by the audit, there was lack of overall respectively comprehensive and systematic monitoring of programme implementation, as determined by the Agreement on cooperation, identified at the level of the Ministry of Culture. The concerned activities were thus the responsibility of therefor competent and authorised internal organisational units of the Ministry. The assessment of the Court of Audit that the Ministry of Culture failed to systematically monitor the implementation of programmes at the level of the Ministry is grounded also on the fact that its designated internal organisational units had to submit the necessary data to the Ministry of Culture for the purpose of this audit.

Measure taken by the Ministry of Culture

Considering its experience in report preparation for the purpose of this audit, the Ministry of Culture submitted a request for acquiring additional data on international activities of public institutes and entities acting under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture; namely they were summoned to consider and fill in the form regarding the foreseen international activities, projects and exchanges when preparing the proposed plan and programme of work for 2020. The form is intended for collecting data on international cooperation and promotion and enables the acquisition of information on international

²⁴ Official Gazette of the RS – International Agreements, No 14/99 (Official Gazette of the RS, No 45/99).

²⁵ Official Gazette of the RS, No 87/11 (97/11 - corr.), 109/12.

cooperation among public institutes and other entities. The Ministry of Culture expected to gather the required data by the end of February 2020, namely the following information: location and exact date of international cooperation, implementer/contractor from the Republic of Slovenia, foreign partner, arts genres, field of cooperation, content and financial scheme. The acquired data should offer the Ministry of Culture better and full insight into the planned activities and enable ongoing monitoring of cooperation, as well as drawing up better developed reports in terms of content upon the completion of such activities.

The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed in 2019 that the competent Slovenian diplomatic representations and consulates abroad shall, after the projects have already been completed, for the cultural projects implemented with their help and co-financed from the budgetary sources, prepare not only a financial but also a substantive report including evaluation. With this measure the Ministry of Culture aims to improve control over the use of budgetary funds and secure more fair distribution of budgetary funds.

In accordance with the Agreement on cooperation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regularly monitors the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation, but does neither prepare comprehensive reports thereon nor is provided with regular and comprehensive information on the concerned cooperation by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and by the Ministry of Culture. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs does monitor the realisation of cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation through day-to-day communication, annual reports, special reports prepared for the purposes of bilateral meetings and in the joint committee meetings or sessions. Upon individual events, such as visits of Slovenian politicians and/or economists, the relevant ministries prepare the review of current developments which is submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be included into the protocol respectively to be presented to the respective delegation.

Explanation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The scope of work does not enable the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to timely or systematically produce comprehensive/overall evidence of programme monitoring unless specifically required.

Daily monitoring of programme implementation is exercised through day-to-day communication and encompasses all aspects of activity performance. Annual monitoring is carried out within the framework of drawing up annual reports of the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow or of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Political assessment of programme implementation is made at various levels in the bilateral meetings.

The Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow daily informs the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also about events in the field of culture, science and education. The reports are not submitted in a standardised form, however, the Court of Audit assessed that they included all crucial data on the implemented cooperation. Additionally, they are not intended solely for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but also for other potentially interested entities that might consider such cooperation as a motivation for their work, which is an example of best practice in the opinion of the Court of Audit. Since other diplomatic representations as well participate in the daily communication with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the reports prepared by the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow may be submitted to diplomatic representations in other countries. Example of such practice is the Slovenian language teaching which was organised and implemented in the Russian Federation and of which the Slovenian Embassy in Moscow reported and submitted its report thereon also to other diplomatic representations of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Government did not specifically monitor the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation defined by the Agreement on cooperation, but took note thereof upon adopting the programmes for which it is authorised.

It can thus be established that the realisation of programmes is monitored mainly at the level of internal organisational units or other contractors actually responsible for their implementation, nevertheless, it is not comprehensively monitored at the level of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. Moreover, overall monitoring of programme realisation lacks also at the level of the Government or of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who only occasionally take note thereof.

2.2 Cooperation in the field of culture

In order to answer the audit question, *whether the objectives set in Agreements as defined in programmes pertaining to the field of culture were met*, the Court of Audit reviewed whether the objectives were set and activities coordinated and implemented based on them with the intention to help achieving the objectives and whether the achievement of the objectives was monitored.

The Court of Audit assessed the adequacy of cooperation in the field of culture mainly on the basis of the following criteria:

- objectives in the field of culture were defined,
- activities in the field of culture were coordinated and monitored in line with the adopted programmes,
- the achievement of objectives in the field of culture was monitored.

Cooperation programmes pertaining to the field of culture which were applicable in the period covered by the audit defined the cooperation in the following fields:

- culture and art,
- cultural heritage,
- publishing, libraries and archives,
- cinematography and
- mass media.

In the period covered by the audit, i.e. in the period of 10 years, there were at least EUR 2,011,973 of budgetary funds allocated for international cooperation in the field of culture, which also included the funds granted to the International Foundation – Forum of Slavic Cultures (hereinafter referred to as: Forum of Slavic Cultures) amounting to EUR 1,129,693 (more under point 2.3.3 of this report).

The Ministry of Culture provides the necessary funds to the service providers mainly through public tenders implemented on the basis of the Rules on Carrying out Public Calls and Tenders²⁶. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the Ministry of Culture allocates the financial sources to the service providers from the Culture Fund in accordance with the Rules on Co-funding Cultural Projects with the Collaboration of Diplomatic Representations and Consulates of the Republic of Slovenia²⁷.

²⁶ Official Gazette of the RS, Nos 43/10, 62/16.

²⁷ Official Gazette of the RS, No 26/11.

In September 2016, the Slovenian Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation signed joint declaration on carrying out the Season of Slovenian Culture in the Russian Federation and the Season of Russian Culture in the Republic of Slovenia in the years 2017 and 2018.

2.2.1 Cooperation in the field of art and culture

The objectives in the field of art and culture as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way²⁸:

- both sides shall promote attendance of groups of artists at international festivals and cultural events held in both countries; both sides shall on the basis of reciprocity coordinate programmes and deadlines of performances of artists;
- both sides shall help to set up and deliver direct cooperation among appropriate institutions of culture and art of the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation; especially among theatres, museums, galleries, libraries and professional institutes for protection and conservation of cultural heritage and monuments; this cooperation shall be conducted on the basis of individual agreements among partners;
- both sides shall in agreement with each other exchange exhibitions from museum collections and exhibitions of modern contemporary art, catalogues, expert literature, information, best practice and knowledge from the field of protection and conservation of cultural heritage; hereby they shall help to organise monothematic exhibitions in Ljubljana, Moscow and St. Petersburg where important artistic work from Slovenian and Russian museums and galleries could be presented; conditions for organising the exhibitions shall be coordinated case-by-case;
- both sides shall promote exchange of experts for music, theatre, visual arts, protection and conservation of cultural heritage and monuments, libraries, museums and archives and experts from cultural institutions in order to be able to attend conferences, symposia and meetings; the number of experts, the field of their expertise and conditions for the exchange shall be coordinated case-by-case;
- both sides shall promote contacts and cooperation between Slovenian and Russian artists and cultural professionals also by organising round tables in Ljubljana and Moscow about the role of the culture in modern society; the Slovenian side proposed that one Russian writer per year attends the meeting of Slovenian PEN Club in Bled and the International Festival Vilenica; organisers and participants shall agree upon the costs;
- both sides shall promote readiness for professional cooperation and training in the field of museums and for sharing exhibitions, i.e. among National Museum of Slovenia, National Museum of Contemporary History, Technical Museum of Slovenia, National Gallery of Slovenia, Museum of Modern Art and other Slovenian museums and institutions under the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation – federal budgetary cultural institution All-Russian Museum Association of the State Tretyakov Gallery, federal budgetary cultural institution State Russian Museum and federal budgetary cultural institution A. S. Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts;
- both sides shall support cooperation of their representatives of culture at the international festivals and other cultural events in the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation; the Slovenian side shall inform the Russian side about major festivals held in Slovenia, such as Ljubljana Festival (July and August each year), Seviqč Brežice (July and August each year), Lent Festival in Maribor

²⁸ Listed are the objectives laid down in the Programme 2016-2018, which may somewhat vary from those in the Programme 2010-2012, the Programme 2013-2015 and the Programme 2019-2021 but are similar in terms of content.

(June each year), Primorska Summer Festival (July and August each year), International Festival of Computer Arts in Maribor (June each year), International Festival Vilenica, international festival of poetry in Ptuj Days of Poetry and Wine; the Russian side shall inform the Slovenian side on important international conferences about cultural heritage and major festivals held in the Russian Federation, such as St. Petersburg International Chorus Festival, Galina Vishnevskaya International Opera Singers Competition, A. P. Chekhov International Theatre Festival in Moscow, NET Festival - New European Theatre (Moscow), International festival – School of Contemporary Art Teritorij (Moscow), Travelling Puppet Theatre Arka Festival, International festival of folk arts and crafts Sadko, International festival of folk creativity Skupnost; both sides shall promote the organisation of events, namely annual festival the Russian Maslenitsa in Ljubljana, festival of Russian children's songs Happy Wind held in different Slovenian towns, annual festival of Russian romance Keep me, my talisman in Škofja Loka; both sides shall promote the organisation and implementation of Slovenian folk and modern music in Moscow, Vladimir and Yaroslavl and the cooperation of Slovenian folk art groups in projects of ethnographic park and museum the Etnomir in Kaluška area;

- both sides shall promote cooperation among appropriate organisations from both sides, their activities aiming at preserving and developing folk arts and crafts; with this purpose the two sides shall help to organise exhibitions of Slovenian traditional crafts in Moscow and Vladimir and of Russian traditional crafts in Ljubljana and Maribor.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of art and culture was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

In the period covered by the audit there were 24 Slovenian art groups on tour in the Russian Federation, while Russian art groups carried out 7 tours in the Republic of Slovenia. Apart from that, there were 22 direct cooperation among institutions of culture and art of the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation, 25 exchanges of experts from the field of culture and 16 exchanges of exhibitions of museum collections and exhibitions of modern art, catalogues, expert literature, information, best practices and knowledge from the field of protection and conservation of cultural heritage as well as 16 expert cooperation from the field of museums and exchange of exhibitions. Slovenian performers cooperated in 6 international exhibitions and cultural events in the Russian Federation, while Russian performers participated in 10 international exhibitions and cultural events in the Republic of Slovenia.

Examples

Choir Carmina Slovenica presented itself at the most prominent Russian festival of performing arts the Golden Mask in Moscow with the production When the mountain changed its clothing and was awarded Golden Mask for the Best Foreign Production, presented in Russia in 2015.

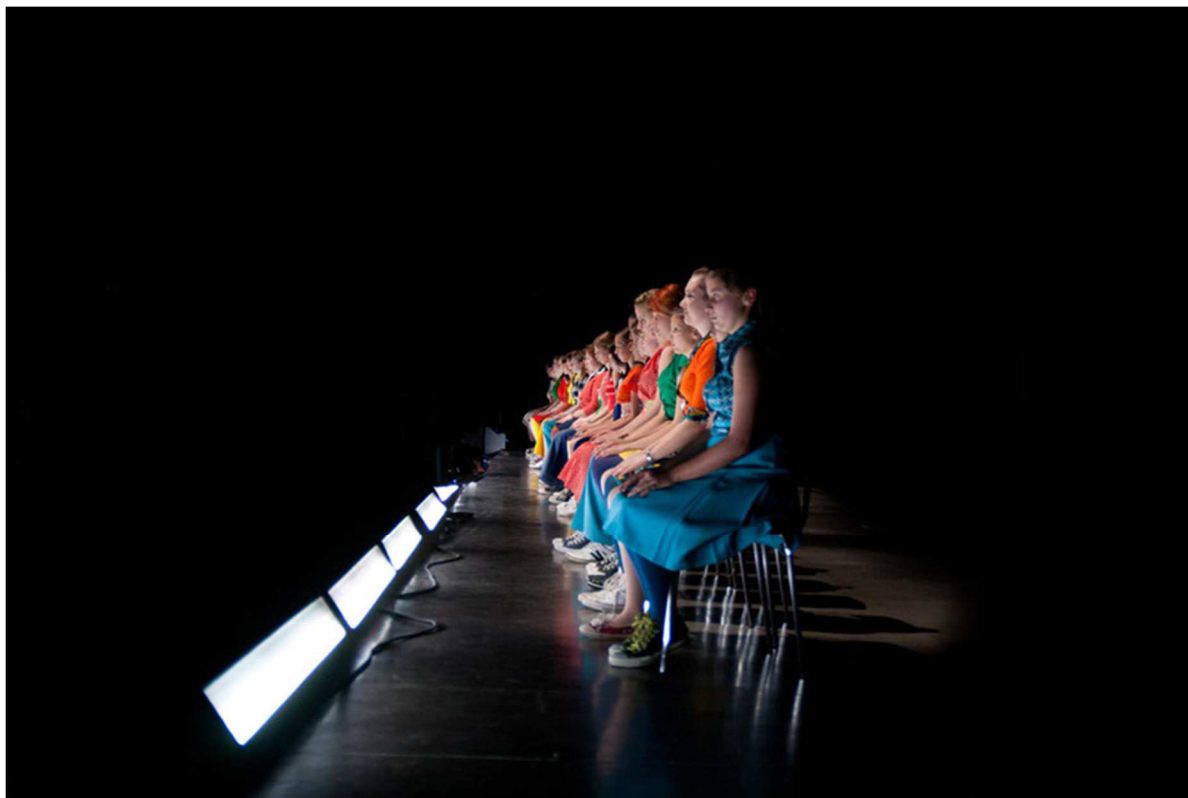


Photo by: D. Šilec Petek

Exhibition of the Museum of Modern Art Ljubljana: NSK from Kapital to Capital held by Museum of Contemporary Art Garage in Moscow received 70,745 visitors.



Photo by: A. Mizerit.

The Ministry of Culture in the period covered by the audit organised neither programmes of exchange with the Russian Federation nor cooperation in the field of folk arts and crafts between the two States.

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Culture and other stakeholders implemented activities to meet almost all objectives defined in the programmes from the field of art and culture respectively the cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Slovenia in the field of art and culture was maintained as agreed upon in the programmes.

Related to monitoring of objectives in the field of art and culture the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Culture did not systematically monitor them, thus there were difficulties to verify their achievement. Some objectives were set in such manner (by using words 'promoting', 'helping') that it was difficult to directly review their achievement.

2.2.2 Cooperation in the field of cultural heritage

The objectives in the field of cultural heritage as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way²⁹:

- both sides shall cooperate in protection of cultural heritage in line with the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing of Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property³⁰ as of 14 November 1970 and in line with legislation of both countries; thus the sides shall adopt appropriate measures to prevent illicit export of cultural property of each country and to promote cooperation of authorised state institutions in exchanging information on the cultural property and to take measures for their recovery;
- both sides shall cooperate in protection and restoration of monuments and in training of experts from the field of cultural heritage, and thus set up direct contacts with the Public Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for the Protection of Cultural Heritage – Restoration Centre and the federal budgetary cultural institution Academician I. E. Grabar All-Russian Art Research and Restoration Centre, federal budgetary cultural institution Isaakiyevskiy Sobor, national museum and monument; both sides shall support the cooperation among other similar institutions;
- both sides shall cooperate in any maintenance works of the Russian Chapel, Vrščič and other Russian monuments in the Republic of Slovenia and any maintenance of Slovenian monuments in the Russian Federation; both sides shall provide mutual assistance in cases of protecting cultural monuments damaged in natural disasters and other circumstances.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of cultural heritage was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

The Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation are members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereinafter referred to as: UNESCO), Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing of Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. In the period covered by the audit, there were no cases of breaching regulations where authorities of both states would have to closely cooperate.

In May 2013, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on War Graves³¹ was signed, for its implementation a joint committee was set up that met twice in the period covered by the audit. Within the committee there were discussions on the memorial to be laid in Moscow for all Slovenian soldiers who died in First and Second World War in Russia; the memorial inauguration was held on 11 September 2019. A Central Memorial to all

²⁹ As set forth in footnote No 28.

³⁰ Official Gazette of the SFRY – International Agreements, No 50/73. The Convention was adopted to Slovenian legislation after its independence on the basis of the Act on Notification of Succession to UNESCO conventions, international multilateral air traffic agreements, ILO conventions, International Maritime Organisation conventions, customs conventions and certain other international multilateral agreements (Official Gazette of the RS – International Agreements, Nos 15/92, 1/97, 17/15 (Official Gazette of the RS, Nos 42/92, 13/97; 105/15)).

³¹ Act ratifying the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on War Graves (Official Gazette of the RS – International Agreements, No 15/13 (Official Gazette of the RS, No 92/13)).

Russian victims of wars taking place in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia was inaugurated in Žale cemetery, Ljubljana on 30 June 2017. In 2017, a non-profit-making establishment of private law was established in Maribor: the International research centre for Second World War. On 30 July 2016, there was the commemoration of the 100th anniversary at the Russian Chapel, Vršič under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Slovenia that was attended by the President of the Russian Federation.

Example

The commemoration at the Russian Chapel under Vršič held every year on last Sunday in July was after the Slovenian independence given more importance and became traditional event of the Slovenian and Russian annual gathering. It is listed in the Register of Cultural heritage of Slovenia as cultural monument of local importance, since 2016 the Russian Chapel is listed in UNESCO's Trial List of World Heritage under Slovenian part Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic – Heritage of the First World War.



Photo by: M. Skledar

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Culture and other stakeholders implemented activities to achieve some objectives defined in programmes from the field of cultural heritage. Some objectives were not met because the cooperation was not undertaken.

Related to monitoring of objectives from the field of cultural heritage the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Culture failed to monitor them systematically, thus there were difficulties to monitor and assess their achievement.

2.2.3 Cooperation in the field of publishing, libraries and archives

The objectives in the field of publishing, libraries and archives as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way³²:

- both sides shall assist in exchange of literary translators;
- both sides shall promote cooperation in preparation and delivery of printed materials; therefore they shall:
 - review possibilities to exchange books, periodical and other publications either commercial or non-commercial;
 - promote direct cooperation among publishers in order to translate and publish works of modern Slovenian literature and Russian literature;
 - support mutual participation in book fairs and similar events held in both countries;
 - review possibilities to exchange exhibitions of printed material, conditions and schedules for the implementation shall be coordinated case-by-case with the interested organisations of each side;
 - promote translation and publishing of works, mainly modern, of authors from both countries;
- both sides shall cooperate in the field of libraries and provide cooperation among national, professional, university and public libraries;
- both sides shall support cooperation of the National University Library in Ljubljana (NUK), Slavic Library within Ljubljana City Library and federal budgetary cultural institution the National Library of Russia, federal budgetary cultural institution M. I. Rudomino All-Russian State Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow, federal budgetary cultural institution Russian State Library of Arts in Moscow, federal budgetary cultural institution the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg, namely in the following areas:
 - exchange of experts and practices related to libraries;
 - exchange of experience in organising library information networks;
 - managing libraries (marketing, financial operations, personnel);
 - preserving documents in electronic form;
 - exchange of library items;
 - joint exhibition projects;
- both sides shall support cooperation of the Archive of the Republic of Slovenia and Federal Archival Agency (the Russian Federation) and on the basis of the Agreement between Archive of the Republic of Slovenia and Federal Archival Agency of Russia on cooperation in the field of archives as of 18 December 1997 they shall contribute to direct cooperation among the archives of both states; the researchers shall be given access to archives for study purposes.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of publishing, libraries and archives was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

In the period covered by the audit, Russian translators attended 10 translation seminars organised by the Slovenian Book Agency, Slovenian translators attended 4 seminars in Russia. From 2010 to 2019 the Slovenian Book Agency supported translation of 20 books into the Russian language and allocated EUR 60,300 therefor. Slovenian authors attended book fairs in the Russian Federation for 4 times. Apart from that, there were several visits of Slovenian authors to the Russian Federation organised and some visits of Russian authors in the Republic of Slovenia.

³² As set forth in footnote No 28.

Example

In 2017, within the 7th International Translation Seminar of Slovenian Literature there was a literary evening with guest Slovenian writers held in Maribor for selected literary translators from all over the world, who translate Slovenian literature.



In 2012, an agreement on cooperation between the M. I. Rudomino All-Russian State Library for Foreign Literature from Moscow and the National and University Library from Ljubljana was signed, thus several meetings were organised as well as book donations undertaken. Archive of the Republic of Slovenia and the Federal Archival Agency of Russia cooperated when preparing joint Compendium of Russian-Slovenian relations in documents from 12th century to 1914, that was presented several times in the period covered by the audit. Slovenian archives participated in 7 events in the Russian Federation, Russian archives participated in 2 events in the Republic of Slovenia in the period from 2010 to 2019.

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Culture and other stakeholders implemented activities to achieve objectives defined in programmes from the field of publishing, libraries and archives.

Related to monitoring of objectives from the field of publishing, libraries and archives the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Culture failed to monitor them systematically, thus there were difficulties to verify their achievement.

2.2.4 Cooperation in the field of cinematography

The objectives in the field of cinematography as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way³³:

- both sides shall support non-commercial exchange of film events (film weeks, premiers, retrospectives) and cooperation in the international film festivals held in each country, in line with their rules; both sides shall promote organization of annual weeks of Slovenian film in the Russian Federation in cooperation with the Slovenian Cinematheque and the Slovenian Film Centre, a public agency of the Republic of Slovenia and they shall promote Russian film in Slovenia in association with film companies Mosfilm and Lenfilm;
- both sides shall promote film coproduction; thus help to organise meetings of Slovenian and Russian cineastes;
- both sides shall help to develop cooperation of the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television of the University of Ljubljana and federal budgetary educational institution for higher and postgraduate professional education S. A. Gerasimov All-Russian State University of Cinematography and federal budgetary educational institution for higher professional education St. Petersburg State University of Film and Television;
- both sides shall contribute to develop the cooperation of the Slovenian Cinematheque, the Slovenian Film Centre, a public agency of the Republic of Slovenia, the Slovenian Film Archive at the Archive of the Republic of Slovenia and federal budgetary cultural institution the Russian Cinema Fund and federal public institution the Russian State Archive of Films: Krasnogorsk Film Archive, Moscow suburbs.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of cinematography was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

In 2018, the Days of Slovenian Film were held in Moscow, where 7 Slovenian films were presented, while in 2019 the Week of Slovenian Film was held in St. Petersburg, where 8 Slovenian films were presented. In 2015, the Slovenian Cinematheque hosted the Week of Russian Film where 6 Russian films were presented. There was no film coproduction of the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation.

Example

The feature film, i.e. documentary-fiction (mockumentary) film by Slovene director Žiga Virc with the title *Houston, we have a problem!* was the first among 7 Slovenian feature films that were presented in the Russian Federation for the first time after the Republic of Slovenia became independent at the Days of Slovenian Film in Moscow in 2018.

The Ministry of Culture stated that on the basis of its data the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television of the University of Ljubljana did not implement any joint project with academies from the Russian Federation in the period covered by the audit. According to the Ministry of Culture, the Slovenian Film Archive at the Archive of the Republic of Slovenia in that period as well failed to cooperate with the Russian Film Archive. Slovenian films were presented at the international film festivals in the Russian Federation for 6 times in the period covered by the audit.

³³ As set forth in footnote No 28.

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Culture and other stakeholders implemented activities to achieve some objectives defined in programmes from the field of cinematography. Some objectives were not met because the cooperation was not undertaken.

Related to monitoring of objectives from the field of cinematography the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Culture failed to monitor them systematically, thus there were difficulties to verify their achievement.

2.2.5 Cooperation in the field of mass media

The objectives in the field of mass media as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way³⁴:

- both sides shall contribute towards the improvement of contacts and the development of cooperation among radio and television organisations, including those participating in the European Broadcasting Union; radio and television organisations shall agree upon direct cooperation and inform each other on art films or series that could be interesting for audiences of both countries, and inform about competitions and festivals in both countries; both sides shall, according to their capabilities, support participation of their delegations in the international radio and television festivals and competitions in the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation; both sides shall support promotion of language teaching and cultural heritage of both countries; both sides shall promote visits of experts in order to acquire better knowledge of culture of both States.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of mass media was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

Related to the cooperation in the field of mass media there were no hosting or exchanges between the two countries in the period covered by the audit, rather they supported program decisions whereby all media in the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation are independent in accordance with the constitution and legislation. In the period from 2010 to 2019 programmes of the Radio Slovenia did not have formal cooperation with the Russian side – not even within the European Broadcasting Union. Radio-Television Slovenia broadcasted 92 topics related to the Russian Federation, in 4 cases there was cooperation related to the European Broadcasting Union.

³⁴ As set forth in footnote No 28.

Example

In 2018, there was a live screening of concert of Russian artists and musicians Nadežda Tokareva (violin) and Evgenij Sinajski (piano) in the Radio Slovenia Programme 3 as a part of the Eastern European Art Dialogue held in Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra in Ljubljana. Both highly experienced and distinguished musicians helped to shape Slovenian musical area for several years.



The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Culture and other stakeholders implemented activities, but only in a lesser extent achieved the objective defined in programmes from the field of mass media.

Related to monitoring of objectives from the field of mass media the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Culture failed to monitor them systematically, thus there were difficulties to verify their achievement.

2.3 Cooperation in the field of science and education

In order to answer the audit question, *whether the objectives set in the Agreements as defined in programmes pertaining to the field of science and education were met*, the Court of Audit reviewed whether the objectives were set and activities coordinated and implemented based on them with the intention to help achieving the objectives and whether the achievement of the objectives was monitored.

The appropriateness of cooperation in the field of science and education was assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- objectives in the field of science and education were defined,
- activities in the field of science and education were coordinated and monitored in line with the adopted programmes,
- the achievement of objectives in the field of science and education was monitored.

Programmes of cooperation that were valid in the period covered by the audit in the field of science and education defined the cooperation in the following areas:

- field of science and education,
- field of sport, tourism and youth and
- other exchanges.

In the period covered by the audit, at least EUR 506,027 were spent for the international cooperation in the field of science and education, namely EUR 53,662 for scholarships and housing of students and EUR 452,365 for cooperation among scientific institutions within the framework of unilateral public calls for bilateral mobility projects³⁵ that were financed on the basis of regulations that in the concerned period governed procedures of co-financing such projects³⁶.

In order to strengthen the cooperation in the field of sport the Memorandum on Cooperation in the Field of Physical Education and Sport between the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Ministry of Sport of the Russian Federation was signed in December 2013.

2.3.1 Cooperation in the field of science and education

The objectives in the field of science and education as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way³⁷:

- both sides shall promote cooperation in the field of education, science and technology among institutions of both countries in line with principles of equality and sovereignty, and to their mutual benefit, mainly cooperation between Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts and Russian Academy of Science on the basis of already made and new agreements and programmes;
- both sides shall stress the importance of knowledge of history and culture of each country, namely in primary and secondary schools, thus both sides shall promote cooperation in development of schoolbooks;
- both sides shall help to develop joint projects related to education, organising and managing systems of education and training of experts and teachers; they shall promote exchange of experts and teachers; they shall contribute to setting up direct contacts among schools and administrative and professional bodies responsible for educational issues; both sides shall promote exchange of employees from educational organisations that provide international and European programmes and exchange of information on international events undertaken by educational organisations;
- the Russian side shall annually propose quotas for education of Slovenian citizens at Russian educational organisations for secondary and higher education as defined by the Government of the Russian Federation;

³⁵ [URL: <http://www.arrs.si/sl/medn/dvostr/drzave/Rusija/rezultati/index.asp>], 15/5/2020.

³⁶ Rules on procedures for financing, co-financing and monitoring the implementation of research activities (Official Gazette of the RS, No 23/09), valid until 22 January 2011, Rules on procedures for financing, co-financing, evaluating and monitoring the implementation of research activities (Official Gazette of the RS, Nos 4/11, 72/11, 45/12, 96/13, 100/13, 92/14), valid until 30 July 2016, and Rules on procedures for financing, co-financing, evaluating and monitoring the implementation of research activities (Official Gazette of the RS, Nos 52/16, 79/17, 65/19), valid from 30 July 2016.

³⁷ As set forth in footnote No 28.

- the Slovenian side shall annually present quota of 16 monthly scholarships for training of Russian citizens at the higher education institutions each in the duration of 3 to 6 months for candidates under 26 years of age;
- the Federal University: Lomonosov Moscow State University and the University of Ljubljana shall support the study of the Slovenian language and literature at Russian higher education institutions and the study of the Russian language and literature at Slovenian higher education institutions, especially lectureships of the Slovenian language at the Federal University: Lomonosov Moscow State University and lectureships of the Russian language at the University of Ljubljana; thus both sides shall propose 2 scholarships to each other per year (all conditions are agreed upon case-by-case) for participation in summer schools of the Slovenian and the Russian language;
- the Slovenian side shall annually allocate and the Russian side shall host Slovenian lecturers of the Russian language at the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute who shall attend summer seminars, as well as students of 3rd and 4th grade studying the Russian language and literature at the University of Ljubljana in accordance with the higher education agreement with the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute;
- both sides shall support additional lessons of mother tongue and culture for children and youth of Slovenian origin in the Russian Federation and of Russian origin in the Republic of Slovenia.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of science and education was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

In the period covered by the audit, the National Education Institute Slovenia each year published public invitation for international cooperation of primary and secondary schools for which funds were provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. Slovenian schools could make connections with Russian schools but in the period covered by the audit such cooperation with Russian partners was not realised. Universities cooperated with Russian partners within the framework of their own bilateral agreements. The cooperation among scientific organisations was organised within the framework of unilateral public calls for bilateral mobility projects published by the Slovenian Research Agency every two years that were financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. In the period covered by the audit the Slovenian Research Agency in 4 public calls offered EUR 750,000 and selected 205 projects of cooperation among Slovenian and Russian scientific institutions, it allocated in total EUR 749,849, and by the end of 2019 on the basis of those calls EUR 452,365 were spent. The Russian Federation financed participants within its own mechanisms.

Example

Among the projects also a Slovenian bilateral research project was selected: Development of experimental methods for determination of rheological properties of polymeric films. The project involved young researchers from Saratov Chernyshevsky State University and Slovenian post-graduate students. The result of the project indirectly contributed to the result published in the prominent science magazine *Energy & Environmental Science*.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Russian side were discussing possibilities for implementation of a joint public call for bilateral research projects that would co-finance exchanges, and for co-financing joint scientific projects that would finance mobility as well as research, nevertheless the realisation did not start. The Slovenian Academy of Science and Art made an agreement with the Russian Academy of Science that enabled visits of the scientists to both countries, but the agreement was implemented for the last time in 2014.

Measure taken by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

In 2019, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport reopened discussions with the Russian side to restore cooperation with bilateral public calls, first for mobility projects. A draft memorandum on cooperation was prepared that shall be the basis for a joint public call in 2020.

In the Republic of Slovenia there are many activities taking place in the field of learning and teaching of the Russian language and promotion of the Russian culture. All activities are detailed in the Declaration on cooperation in promoting the Russian language in primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Slovenia that was signed on 30 May 2007 between the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Slovenia and the Association Slovenia Russia. Its objectives are:

- to upgrade the quality of teaching and learning methods of the Russian language at the primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Slovenia;
- to increase the number of pupils and students studying the Russian language within the regular programme and within additional forms of learning (elective subjects, societies and the like).

Within the Association Slovenia Russia there is Tone Pavček Fund that each year allocates funds in the Republic of Slovenia for projects supporting promotion of the Russian language and culture. The funds for Tone Pavček Fund are contributed by Slovenian companies. The amount of EUR 18,000 per year was spent for 152 projects in the period covered by the audit.

Until 2015, when some projects financed from the European funds were completed, there were guest teachers for the Russian language in Slovenian grammar schools, i.e. 2 per year. Each year, there is a state competition of the Russian language held in Slovenia, and since 2005 the Reading Badge was organised for the Russian literature and children from primary and secondary schools can participate.

The Republic of Slovenia has granted scholarships from study year 2010/2011 to 2018/2019 for the study development of Russian citizens at the Slovenian higher education institutions, namely 132 monthly scholarships, thus 71 participants applied, mainly students of the Russian and Slovenian language. The total amount of the funds for scholarships in the period amounted to EUR 53,662. The Russian Federation in the period covered by the audit each year proposed quotas for Slovenian students and lecturers, namely from 10 to 13 scholarships.

Lectureships of the Slovenian language are held at three universities, namely at the Federal University: Lomonosov Moscow State University, University in Perm and University in St. Petersburg. The Republic of Slovenia entirely finances operations of the Lectureships of the Slovenian language in Moscow. During those years, 2 scholarships were granted for summer language courses, either Slovenian or Russian. The University of Ljubljana provides a regular study of the Russian language.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport organised additional lessons of the Slovenian language in Moscow, but due to lack of interest or problems with personnel they were organised in study years 2016/2017 and 2017/2018, but not in the year 2018/2019. In study year 2019/2020, additional lessons of the Slovenian language in Moscow started. Additional language lessons for children of Russian citizens were held in Ljubljana from 2016/2017 at one primary school and at 2 schools from 2017/2018. The project was financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, every year it was visited by 160 primary school children, some students and pre-school children.

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and other stakeholders implemented activities to achieve objectives defined in programmes from the field of science and education.

Related to monitoring of objectives from the field of science and education the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport failed to monitor them systematically, thus there were difficulties to verify their achievement.

2.3.2 Cooperation in the field of sport, tourism and youth

The objectives in the field of sport, tourism and youth as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way³⁸:

- both sides shall support cooperation in physical education and sport among sport organisations, unions, associations and clubs by exchanging sport delegations, coaches and experts; special attention shall be paid to development of children and youth sport and regular exchanges of teams from Slovenia and Russian regions in different sport fields, such as judo, hockey, football and other;
- both sides shall promote tourist exchanges for improving reciprocal knowledge of cultural and historical values;
- both sides shall promote cooperation among youth organisations and associations of both countries and exchange of information on issues related to youth; thus they shall promote participation of representatives of youth associations in the youth forums and events held by each side.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of sport, tourism and youth was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

In order to strengthen the cooperation in the field of sport the Memorandum on Cooperation in the Field of Physical Education and Sport between the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Ministry of Sport of the Russian Federation was signed in December 2013. It proposed that both sides shall promote exchange by providing mutually interesting programmes, experience and information among sport state organisations, higher education sport organisations, national sport alliances and other renowned sport structures.

³⁸ As set forth in footnote No 28.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport stated that it aimed to help Slovenian sport industry to enter the market of the Russian Federation. Therefore it participated in meetings of joint economic committees and forums where it presented sport infrastructure in the Republic of Slovenia. There were several bilateral discussions (in the period covered by the audit at least 5) with key players in the field of sport in the Russian Federation, thus several possibilities for cooperation of the two countries or sporting events were considered.

Slovenian skiing experts actively cooperated in preparations of the Russian Federation for the Winter Olympic Games 2014 in Sochi, namely as expert advisors for investments in sport infrastructure, for training of Russian athletes for their performance at the Olympic Games as well as for the preparation of ski jumping venues.

Example

At the Winter Olympic Games 2014 in Sochi the Slovenians played an important role. Radio-Television Slovenia broadcasted all competitions in ski jumping and Nordic combined. The ski jumping venue was prepared by 20 members of the Planica Organisational Committee.

The youth organisations of public interest in youth sector have possibilities to cooperate with the Russian partners within the framework of regular public calls for co-financing of programmes. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport failed to monitor international cooperation of youth organisations in projects with different countries.

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and other stakeholders implemented activities to achieve objectives defined in programmes from the field of sport, tourism and youth.

Related to monitoring of objectives from the field of sport, tourism and youth the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport failed to monitor them or to monitor them systematically, thus there were difficulties to verify their achievement. Some objectives were set in such manner that it was difficult to directly review their achievement.

2.3.3 Cooperation in the field of other exchanges

The objectives in the field of other exchanges as foreseen in cooperation programmes are defined in the following way³⁹:

- both sides shall help to develop cooperation within the framework of the Agreement on centres;
- both sides shall promote direct cooperation within the framework of events of the international organisations and programmes of the respective States;
- both sides shall support the exchange and cooperation of the UNESCO national committees;
- both sides shall inform each other on preparations and implementation of events intended for all-Slavic cultural traditions and cultural heritage organised by each side, furthermore they shall participate if possible, both of them shall support activities of the Forum of Slavic Cultures;

³⁹ As set forth in footnote No 28.

- both sides shall within their powers promote partnership and cooperation at the regional and local level among the municipalities of the Republic of Slovenia and republics, towns, regions, cities and raions of the Russian Federation.

In the period covered by the audit, the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of other exchanges was maintained in different forms as described in the following paragraphs.

Within the framework of the Agreement on centres the Ministry of Culture with other stakeholders that are active in the field of culture at least in 8 cases cooperated with the Russian Centre of Science and Culture in the period covered by the audit; mainly by providing equipment, lectures or by organising other events. In 2 cases the Slovenian Film Centre presented 2 films in the Russian Federation within the framework of the European Film Promotion.

Both UNESCO national committees cooperate on regular basis. In 2016 and 2017, there was a close cooperation with the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education in Moscow. A representative of the Slovenian UNESCO Office within the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport attended the international conference in the Russian Federation in 2018. Each year, representatives of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project participated in the international events organised by the UNESCO Russian National Committee. In the period covered by the audit, there were 7 events with the Slovenian participants.

Example

The UNESCO of the Russian Federation organised 2 events in 2018 along the celebration of the 65th anniversary of the Associated Schools Project. At the event the national coordinator presented work of the UNESCO network Associated Schools Project in the Republic of Slovenia and the endeavours of the Republic of Slovenia to implement new rules developed by the UNESCO for the Associated Schools Project.



The Republic of Slovenia constantly financially supports the Forum of Slavic Cultures by membership fee and by other means of funding, thus in the period covered by the audit, i.e. in 10 years, the support amounted to EUR 1,129,693. The Management Board of the Forum of Slavic Cultures decides upon content, working programmes, financial programmes and activities and its operations. The Forum of Slavic Cultures carries out joint cultural, educational and research projects in order to promote knowledge about Slavic cultural heritage and creativity. Furthermore, it preserves and revitalises Slavic cultural identity by approving and financing initiatives for cultural projects and cultural tourism, exchange and visiting of all Slavic speaking countries and by active search for appropriate partners in all countries. It organised festivals, exhibitions, conferences, concerts and other events that represent Slavic cultural heritage and creativity⁴⁰.

In 2019, there was a Programme of cooperation between the Government of the Moscow and the Municipality of Ljubljana for the period 2019-2021 signed. It included culture and art as priority fields, namely 1 of 7 priority cooperation fields. Furthermore, in 2019 an agreement on cooperation between the Municipality of Šmartno pri Litiji and Russian town Rylsk was signed.

The Court of Audit established that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the Ministry of Culture and other stakeholders implemented activities to achieve objectives defined in programmes from the field of other exchanges.

Related to monitoring of objectives from the field of other exchanges the Court of Audit found out that the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Ministry of Culture failed to monitor them systematically, thus there were difficulties to verify their achievement. Some objectives were set in such manner that it was difficult to directly review their achievement, other objectives were not directly linked to auditees.

⁴⁰ [URL: <https://fsk.si/sl-si/Strani/kdo-smo>], 15/5/2020.

3. AUDIT OPINION

This performance audit was carried out in order to express an opinion on the effectiveness of *the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport* in the period from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2019 in achieving the objectives set in the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the Field of Culture, Science and Education and in the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Establishment and Operation of the Scientific and Cultural Centres; namely to foster cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of culture, science and education. The audit was implemented as a parallel audit with the *Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation*.

The Court of Audit established that the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport were *effective* enough in achieving the objectives set in both Agreements respectively when implementing activities, nevertheless, they could monitor the implemented activities more systematically or could provide a complete or more thorough framework for monitoring the implemented activities. Since this significantly affected not only monitoring and assessing the achieved objectives but also the assessment of the cooperation between the two States. It is necessary to point out that some objectives that were agreed between the two Governments were too general and could not be measured, since they included general commitments to support and promote cooperation, thus their achievement was reviewed on the basis of actually realised activities. Whereas, those activities that were planned as actual events were also realised.

Both Agreements defined that the States should promote cooperation in the field of culture, science and education. In addition, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Establishment and Operation of the Scientific and Cultural Centres foresaw the establishing of the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Ljubljana and the possibility to establish the centre of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow. The Russian Federation set up its centre in the Republic of Slovenia in 2011. Meanwhile, the Republic of Slovenia due to assessed costs of the establishment and operation, limited available funds and sufficient support to the cooperation and implementation of tasks by the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow has not yet set up its centre in Moscow.

The Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation adopted intergovernmental programmes in order to plan and monitor the implementation of both Agreements. The objectives set in the intergovernmental programmes origin in the objectives defined in the two Agreements. The Court of Audit also established that objectives in the intergovernmental programmes included all objectives of the two Agreements except for 1 objective that from 2016 was no longer included in the intergovernmental programmes.

The draft intergovernmental programmes were developed either by the Republic of Slovenia or by the Russian Federation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for the coordination with the Russian Federation, thus in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport coordinated harmonisation of content of intergovernmental programmes with the Russian Federation. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport coordinated and harmonised the intergovernmental programmes with internal organisational units and stakeholders, whereby the ministries in some cases learned about the implementation of past intergovernmental programmes. An intergovernmental programme was approved by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

Activities or objectives defined in the intergovernmental programmes were implemented by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport mainly through other stakeholders. Thereby several objectives defined in the intergovernmental programmes were related to the support and promotion of cooperation among different entities or stakeholders, therefore the Court of Audit reviewed their achievement on the basis of implemented cooperation or activities. It was found out that the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and other stakeholders implemented activities to achieve most of the objectives defined in the intergovernmental programmes. Nevertheless, the Court of Audit believes that some objectives, in particular those linked to the cooperation among entities from both countries, were not met.

The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport were responsible to monitor the implementation of both Agreements, i.e. each in its field. At the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport there are internal units that monitor the implementation of the activities, namely they cover certain fields, while the implementation of both Agreements is not monitored systematically and thoroughly at the ministerial level. Since the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport failed to monitor the implementation of programmes systematically at the ministerial level, they had to obtain data on implemented activities from individual internal units during the audit implementation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs failed to systematically and thoroughly monitor the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation based on the two Agreements. Nevertheless, it was informed about the implementation through day-to-day communication, annual reports, special reports developed for the purpose of bilateral meetings and in meetings of joint committees. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia was informed about the realisation of the Agreements only upon the adoption of intergovernmental programmes for approving of which it is responsible.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the field of culture, science and education related to the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation the Court of Audit recommend to *the Government of the Republic of Slovenia* to:

- upon the confirmation of the Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports for the next period consider the realisation of the past Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports.

In the field of culture, science and education related to the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation the Court of Audit recommend to *the Ministry of Foreign Affairs* to:

- provide assistance through the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Moscow in order to strengthen the cooperation with the Russian Federation in the field of culture, science and education;
- obtain data on cooperation on the basis of the Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports also from the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport at least when preparing and coordinating the Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports.

In the field of culture, science and education related to the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation the Court of Audit recommend to *the Ministry of Culture* to:

- before the preparation and coordination of the new Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports also on the basis of received reports of service providers develop an assessment of the realisation of the past Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports;
- define measurable objectives in the Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports, and to be able to impact their achievement;
- continue to support and implement cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of culture.

In the field of culture, science and education related to the cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation the Court of Audit recommend to *the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport* to:

- before the preparation and coordination of the new Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports also on the basis of received reports of service providers develop an assessment of the realisation of the past Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports;
- define measurable objectives in the Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the Government of the Russian Federation in Culture, Science, Education and Sports, and to be able to impact their achievement;
- continue to support and implement cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the Russian Federation in the field of science, education and sport.

Legal notice


This report on the basis of Paragraph 3 of Article 1 of Court of Audit Act cannot be challenged before the courts and other state bodies.

Tomaž Vesel,
Auditor General

Sent to:

1. Government of the Republic of Slovenia, by registered mail;
2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by registered mail;
3. Ministry of Culture, by registered mail;
4. Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, by registered mail;
5. Borut Pahor, by registered mail;
6. Janez Janša, by registered mail;
7. mag. Alenka Bratušek, by registered mail;
8. dr. Miroslav Cerar, by registered mail;
9. Marjan Šarec, by registered mail;
10. Samuel Žbogar, by registered mail;
11. Karel Viktor Erjavec, by registered mail;
12. Majda Širca Ravnikar, by registered mail;
13. dr. Boštjan Žekš, by registered mail;
14. dr. Žiga Turk, by registered mail;
15. dr. Uroš Grilc, by registered mail;
16. mag. Julijana Bizjak Mlakar, by registered mail;
17. Gorazd Žmavc, by registered mail;

18. Anton Peršak, by registered mail;
19. Dejan Prešiček, by registered mail;
20. mag. Zoran Poznič, by registered mail;
21. dr. Igor Lukšič, by registered mail;
22. dr. Stanislava Setnikar Cankar, by registered mail;
23. Klavdija Perger, by registered mail;
24. dr. Maja Makovec Brenčič, by registered mail;
25. dr. Jernej Pikalo, by registered mail;
26. National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia; by registered mail;
27. archive.



Watching over public money

Računsko sodišče Republike Slovenije
The Court of Audit of the Republic of Slovenia
Slovenska cesta 50, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija
tel.: +386 (0) 1 478 58 00
fax: +386 (0) 1 478 58 91
sloaud@rs-rs.si
www.rs-rs.si