

Bratislava, 18/12/2023

Appeal of independent regulatory authorities in Slovakia

We, the chairs of the regulatory and supervisory authorities in Slovakia, ask all members of the government, members of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, as well as other institutions not to adopt such measures or legislative changes that fundamentally weaken the professional autonomy and resistance of regulatory institutions and that are contrary to the public interest, EU rules including its directives and regulations, and contrary to the Constitution of the Slovak Republic.

The quality of life in Slovakia is significantly influenced by the level of services provided by public authorities to the public. Regulatory authorities protect competition and prevent the emergence of monopolies that harm consumers through high prices. They oversee the efficient use of public resources. In the public health sector, they oversee the correct provision of healthcare, the solvency of health insurance companies as well as the implementation of the hospital network optimisation reform, which is important for drawing funds from the Recovery Plan.

The quality of state regulation depends on the quality of professionals, on particular civil servants who issue the decisions. A pre-condition for successful recruitment of professionals for long-term work in the public administration is the degree of their self-fulfilment. Professional and functional public administration constitutes a stabilising element in the society and strengthens the trust of citizens in the state. Public authorities that are subject to arbitrary political decisions weaken this trust.

From this point of view, the proposed changes to the "Competence Act", which amends the Act on Competition or the Act on Health Insurance Companies, are a step backwards. They do not increase the professional requirements on chairs of regulatory authorities, on the contrary, they make them dependent on the political will of the government.

We point out that the system of checks and balances which protects, in a democratic society, from abuse of power, should also apply to the mechanisms which shape public administration in terms of personnel and competence.

To conclude our appeal to the members of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, we would like to draw attention to crude verbal attacks against some public servants, which we condemn and regard as departure from professionalisation. We stand for a polite and objective dialogue with the government. We expect the relevant trade unions and professional organisations to support it, too.

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Chair of the
Health Care
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