1. **Question:** Please indicate whether in your country there are cases of mistreatment and violence against women during reproductive health care, particularly facility-based childbirth. If so, please specify what kind of cases and describe your country ´s response and any good practices, including protection of human rights.

**Answer:** In 2003, the Ministry set up a group of experts to examine the actual situation with respect to unlawful sterilisations in the Slovak Republic. A report on the findings concerning the unlawful sterilisations in the Slovak Republic prepared by the expert group was subsequently presented to the Human Rights and National Minorities Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic. The Ministry has since 2004 not received information about any new incidents of sterilisations performed without informed consent and/or any new requests to conduct investigation into the provision of health care services in connection with sterilisation (and/or sterilisations performed without informed consent). We may hence assume that the measures implemented by the Slovak Republic are effective.

The proper provision of health care services is supervised by the Health Care Surveillance Authority pursuant to Act No. 581/2004 Coll. on health insurance companies, health care supervision and on amendments to certain acts as amended, as amended by Act No. 220/2013 Coll.

The Ethical Committee of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter only referred to as the “Committee”) has been established by the Ministry pursuant to §5 of Act No. 576/2004 Coll. on healthcare, healthcare related services and on amendments to certain acts as amended (hereinafter only referred to as “Act No. 576/2004 Coll.”). The Committee is an independent expert and advisory body of the Ministry to assess ethical issues arising in the provision of health care, including biomedical research. The Committee adheres to the values and principles of the human rights protection, especially those recognised by the Slovak Republic, the European Union, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations Organization. The Committee respects and applies the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and Slovak laws, as well as other significant conventions and declarations, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.When discharging its official duties, the Committee also acts in compliance with the obligations arising mainly from Article 28 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine, particularly the obligations under Articles 9-12 of the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine, concerning Biomedical Research.

In order to improve health care treatment of marginalised Roma women at the gynecology and obstetrics departments, the Ministry has prepared, as part of the Healthy Communities (*Zdravé komunity*) project, an introduction of health awareness assistants in hospitals (including the gynecology and obstetrics departments). All health awareness assistants come from the Roma population and receive continuous training in the area of health care assistance, including reproductive health. They are key to removing social barriers in the provision of health care services to the Roma minority. The health awareness assistants identify and align the special needs of Roma women with the requirements of health care personnel, taking into account an intercultural approach. This will make it possible to monitor potential signs of segregation of the Roma women in the provision of health care services.

1. **Question:** Please specify if full and informed consent is administered for any type of reproductive health care and if these include childbirth care.

**Answer:** The concept of informed consent has been introduced, as defined in §6 of Act No. 576/2004 Coll. The act universally states that a treating health professional is obliged to provide information about the purpose, nature, consequences and risks of any medical intervention, as well as to provide advice in a comprehensible and considerate manner, without pressure, and with the possibility and sufficient time to make a free decision on informed consent, and in a manner adequate to the intellectual and volitional capacities and health conditions of the person whom he/she should advise. By law, all medical interventions must be recorded in the patient’s medical records, with the informed consent to the provision of health care being an inseparable part of such records.

1. **Question:** Please specify whether there are accountability mechanisms in place within the health facilities to ensure redress for victims of mistreatment and violence, including filing complaints, financial compensation, acknowledgement of wrongdoing and guarantees of non-repetition. Please indicate whether the ombudsperson is mandated to address such human rights violations

**Answer:** The concept of informed consent has been introduced, as defined in §6 of Act No. 576/2004 Coll.

The equal treatment principle in social security, health care, provision of goods and services and education is governed by § 5 of Act No. 365/2004 on equal treatment in certain domains and on the protection against discrimination and on amendments to certain acts (Antidiscrimination Act).

The Slovak Republic has an effective human rights protection mechanism in place, through the independent judiciary, to address the cases of violation of the fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Act No. 274/2017 Coll. on crime victims and on amendments to certain act governs the rights, protection and assistance for victims of crimes, the relationships between the state and entities providing assistance to the victims, and financial compensations for victim of violent crimes.

1. **Question:** Does you health system have policies that guide health responses to VAW and these in line with WHO guidelines and standards on this issue, see link (vo Vašom liste).

**Answer:** All health care workers are required by law to comply with the Code of Ethics for Health Professionals which constitutes an annex to Act No. 578/2004 Coll. on healthcare providers, medical workers, and professional organisations in the healthcare sector and on amendments to certain acts. The mission of a health professional is to practice medical profession conscientiously, dutifully, with a deep human understanding, in compliance with the rights, regulations, available medical and biomedical evidence, and in consideration of technical and material resources of a health care facility in which the health care is provided.

The training of health care workers on the issues of reproductive and sexual health and sexual education, including sterilisations and other contraceptive methods, as well as on the legal aspects of the provision of health care with respect to the need to obtain informed consent and provide prior advice, is included in relevant study programmes for such medical professions as doctors, nurses, midwives, and practical nurses, both as part of their pre-graduate and post-graduate education, and lifelong learning. This topic is also systematically addressed within the health management and organisation studies.