

The implementation of politics to reduce preventable maternal mortality and morbidity-position of the Ministry of Health

By a letter sent to the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, the Minister of Health of the Slovak Republic has asked for the postponement of the deadline for the “submission to the Government for discussion of the *National Programme of Care for Women, Safe Maternity and Reproduction Health*” until 30 October 2017. Up until now, the professional community and stakeholders have not reached consensus on a number of specific issues, such as hormonal contraception, in vitro fertilisation, introduction of the abortion pill, restriction in the exercise of the conscientious objection by healthcare professionals, application of eugenic practices, broadening of pre-natal diagnostics in order to identify and terminate pregnancies with foetal abnormalities, as well as the related allocations of funds to individual tasks under the National Health Programme. The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic agreed *to postpone the deadline until 30 October 2017* and communicated his decision in a letter dated 8 September 2015.

The National Programme of Care for Children and Youth in the Slovak Republic for 2008-2015, in its Section 1 ‘Health of Mothers and New-borns contains Objective 3 “Safe Maternity – the objective is to ensure optimal care for pregnant women and new-borns, including the effort reduce maternal mortality and morbidity and improve the health of new-borns by providing equal access to health care, including family planning, with particular emphasis on marginalized Roma communities and other disadvantaged population groups. Paediatricians and general practitioners for children and youth support breastfeeding and healthy nutrition of new-borns. These activities need to be incorporated in the state health policy as a basis for the preparation of programmes designed to develop and provide services and educate, including through awareness campaigns aimed at promoting responsible ‘healthy’ behaviour and eliminate inequalities in healthcare access by supporting community work in the field of health education”.