COUNTRY PROFILE

TAKING OF EVIDENCE BY VIDEO-LINK UNDER THE HAGUE CONVENTION OF 18 MARCH 1970 ON THE TAKING OF EVIDENCE ABROAD IN CIVIL OR COMMERCIAL MATTERS

STATE NAME: Slovakia

PROFILE UPDATED ON (DATE): 12/2021

PART I: STATE

1. Contact details The contact details provided in this section will be	published on the Hague Conference website
CHAPTER I (LETTERS OF REQUEST)	
As with any other Letter of Request under Chapte authority should contact the Central Authority(ies) evidence by means of a Letter of Request, whethe	of the requested State when seeking to obtain
a) Are the contact details of the Central Authority(ies) designated by YOUR STATE up- to-date on the <u>Evidence Section</u> of the Hague Conference website?	 ✓ Yes. No. Please provide the contact details on a separate Word or PDF document for uploading on the Evidence Section of the Hague Conference website.
b) Would Your State be in favour of specifying a person or department within the Central Authority(ies) who would assist in processing Letters of Request where the use of video-links has expressly been requested (e.g., to arrange the video-link or provide technical assistance)?	Yes. If Your State has already done so, please specify the contact details: Ministry of Justice Private International Law Division e-mail: civil.inter.coop@justice.sk Tel.: +421 2 88891549 No.
	Please explain why:
	Comments:
c) What arrangements are there for ensuring that there is a contact person with whom the requesting authority can liaise and who is available on the day of the hearing to operate the video-link facilities (e.g. is there a booking system)?	The central authority (ministry of justice) will contact the local authorities (courts). A video-link test should be carried out prior to the main hearing. The room where the video-link will take place has to be booked in advance.

CHAPTER II (TAKING OF EVIDENCE BY DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS, CONSULAR AGENTS AND COMMISSIONERS)

Permission by a designated authority may be required to apply certain provisions under Chapter II. To know if such a permission is required for a particular State, see the practical information chart (accessible from the <u>Authorities</u> page) AND / OR the declarations (accessible from the <u>Status Table</u> page) of the relevant State available on the <u>Evidence Section</u> of the Hague Conference website.

If permission is not required, applicants should contact the diplomatic and consular mission (Arts 15/16) or the commissioner (Art. 17) to explore whether or not evidence may be obtained by video-link under this Chapter.

If permission is required, applicants should contact the authority that was designated to grant permission AND the relevant diplomatic and consular mission or commissioner, to explore, where necessary, whether or not evidence may be obtained by video-link under this Chapter.

d) Would Your State be in favour of specifying an entity or authority, in addition to the relevant authority / diplomatic or consular agent / commissioner, that would assist in processing applications where the use of video-links has expressly been requested (e.g., to arrange the video-link or provide technical assistance)?	☐ Yes. If Your State has already done so, please specify the contact details: ☐ No. Please explain why: Comments: not applicable
e) What arrangements are there for ensuring that there is a contact person with whom the Court of Origin can liaise and who is available on the day of the hearing to operate the video-link facilities (e.g. is there a booking system)?	not applicable

PART II: RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND COURT SYSTEM

Legal basis	
a) Does Your State, in the application of Article 27 (i.e. internal law or practice), allow for a foreign Court to directly take evidence by video-link?	Yes. Please specify: If the foreign Court requests the direct taking of evidence by video-link, the Ministry of Justice (central authority) will request the competent Slovak court (requested authority) to consider such a request. No. Please specify: Comments:
b) Please indicate the legal basis or applicable protocols (i.e., relevant laws, regulations, practice, etc.) for the use of video-links in the taking of evidence in YOUR STATE, either under the Convention or independent of the Convention (see, e.g. Art. 27 (b) and (c)): Please also attach a copy of, or provide a link to, the relevant provisions, where possible in English or French.	Act No. 160/2015 The Code of Civil Procedure (Art. 175)
c) Does Your State have any agreements with other Contracting States that derogate from the Convention when taking evidence by video-link (see Art. 28 and Art. 32)?	 Yes. Please attach a copy of, or provide a link to, the relevant provisions, where possible in English or French: No. Comments:
Court system	
d) Please indicate which courts permit, or have the facilities for, the taking of evidence by video-link. If possible, indicate where relevant information on videoconferencing facilities in courts can be found online:	 ✓ All courts. ☐ All courts of a specific type / level. Please specify: ☐ Only specific courts. Please specify which courts, or provide a link to/attach a full list: ☐ None. Comments:

PART III: TECHNICAL AND SECURITY ASPECTS (APPLICABLE TO BOTH CHAPTERS)

a) Does Your State use licensed software (which ensures support for technical and security matters) for the taking of evidence by videolink?	
b) What are the specifications of the video-link technology in use in Your STATE, including, if any, the minimum standards or mechanisms used to secure the communications and any recordings made? States are encouraged to provide as much information as possible when responding to this question. As such, it may be useful to consider liaising with the relevant IT experts.	Codec (<i>i.e.</i> , manufacturer, model, transmission speed, bandwidth): -Cisco TelePresence SX80 -Supports H.264 and H.265 Video and audio standards (<i>e.g.</i> Standard Definition, High Definition, etc.): -SX80 delivers up to 1080p60 end-to-end (HD video) -SpeakerTrack 60 dual camera system Type of network (<i>e.g.</i> , ISDN, IP, etc.): Type of encryption for signals in secure transmissions: Webex: -HTTPS -end-to-end encryption uses Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) 128, AES256, Secure Hash Algorithm (SHA) 1, SHA256, and RSA -For audio, video, and screen sharing, system encrypt shared content using the Secure Real-Time Transport Protocol (SRTP). Jabber: -HTTPS -end-to-end encryption uses Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) 128, AES256, Secure Hash Algorithm (SHA) 1, SHA256, and RSA -For audio, video, and screen sharing, system encrypt shared content using the Secure Real-Time Transport Protocol (SRTP).: Split screen capability: Sy80: -supports three screens -also supports switched conferencing for enhanced layouts and use of video on both screens of dual-screen endpoints Document cameras: Multipoint connections: Additional specifications or capabilities:

	Protocols or other practices:
	Comments:
c) Can evidence be taken via commercial providers (e.g., Skype $^{\text{TM}}$)?	☐ Yes. Please specify: ☑ No. Comments:
d) Does Your State have a procedure for testing connections and the quality of transmissions before the hearing?	✓ Yes. Please specify: No.Comments:
e) Does Your State have any requirements as to the hearing room, e.g., should be located in a court, should have a camera view of the whole room or a view of all the parties, etc.?	☐ Yes. Please specify: ☑ No. Comments:

PART IV: USE OF VIDEO-LINKS UNDER BOTH CHAPTERS – LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Restrictions	
a) Must a court order directing the use of videolinks first be obtained from the requesting State (Chapter I) / State of Origin (Chapter II)?	Yes. Please specify: The court order directing the use of video-link must be obtained from the requesting state. If the requesting judicial authority requests the use of video-link, the Central Authority (Ministry of Justice) will request the competent slovak court to consider such a request. No. Comments:
b) Are there any restrictions on what type/s of evidence can be taken by video-link or how it is to be taken?	 ✓ Yes. Please specify: Competent court decides what kind of evidence can be taken by video-link. ✓ No. Comments:
c) Are there any specific restrictions on how evidence gathered via video-link can be handled and distributed, or do the usual rules for evidence obtained in person apply?	 Yes, there are specific restrictions. Please specify: No, the normal rules for evidence apply. Comments:
d) Are there any restrictions on the type of person who may be examined by video-link?	☐ Yes. Please specify: ☑ No. Comments:
e) Is it necessary to seek the consent of the parties to use video-link to take evidence?	Yes. Please specify the conditions under which parties may refuse the use of video-link: No. Comments:
f) Are there any restrictions on the location where the person should be examined (e.g. in a courtroom, on the premises of an Embassy or diplomatic mission)?	✓ Yes. Please specify: The person must be examined in a courtroom.✓ No.

PART IV - LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS (BOTH CHAPTERS)

	Comments:
g) Can a witness / expert be compelled to use video-links to give evidence?	Yes. If so, please specify what coercive measures may be used: fine, summons, bringing before court No. Please explain: Comments:
1) 51 1 1 6 11 11 11 11	
h) Please briefly outline the procedure/s, under Chapter I and Chapter II, for actually notifying or summoning the witness / expert to give evidence by video-link, including any references to relevant laws, regulations or practice.	Chapter I: The Central Authority (Ministry of Justice) will contact the competent slovak court. Also the request of the requesting state for taking of evidence by video-link is sent to the court.
Please also include, where applicable, the differences between notifying or summoning a willing witness / expert and notifying or summoning a witness / expert that is to be compelled.	Differences between notifying or summoning a willing witness / expert and notifying or summoning a witness / expert that is to be compelled:
	The witness/expert is summoned to the court in paper, electronic form, by telephone or telefax and also oral summoning can be given during the active hearing. The summons must include instruction that in case, the person will not appear, the court can order bringing such a person before the court.
	If the witness/expert is summoned and does not come to the court, the court can brought the person before the court. But this can only apply if the summoned person does not appear before the court and at the same time does not provide a court with any excuse. The bringing before the court is carried out by the police.
	Chapter II:
	Comments:
i) The law of which State governs the use of	Chapter I:
privileges?	The law of the Requesting State.
Please tick all that apply.	☐ The law of the Requested State.
See Articles 11 and 21(e) of the Convention	The law of another State. Please specify:
	Chapter II:

PART IV - LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS (BOTH CHAPTERS)

☐ The law of the State of Origin. ☐ The law of the State of Execution. ☐ The law of another State. Please specify:
Comments:

PART V: USE OF VIDEO-LINKS UNDER <u>CHAPTER I</u> (LETTERS OF REQUEST) – LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legal obstacles	
a) Does Your State consider that there are legal obstacles to using video-link to assist in the taking of evidence under Chapter I of the Convention?	☐ Yes.Please specify:☒ No.
The Special Commission has noted that the use of video-link and similar technologies is consistent with the current framework of the Convention (see C&R No 55 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 20 of the 2014 SC).	Comments:
Direct and indirect taking of evidence	
b) Under Chapter I of the Convention, does Your STATE allow for the direct taking of evidence by judicial personnel of the <i>requesting</i> State (<i>i.e.</i> , the State in which the proceedings are	☐ Yes. ☑ No.
pending)?	Comments: Only judge is allowed to take the evidence.
c) Under which provisions of Chapter I of the Convention is indirect taking of evidence by video-link possible in Your State?	Art. 9(1) – The judicial authority of the requested State obtains evidence (e.g., a witness / expert examination) which is located in a (distant) location within its own State. Art. 9(2) - As a special method or procedure. Please also outline whether any specific conditions must be satisfied: See also questions on presence. Comments:
Legal safeguards for witness / expert	
d) What are the legal safeguards in place for witnesses / experts in YOUR STATE when evidence is taken by video-link under Chapter I (e.g. protective measures for the witness / expert, provision of interpretation, right to legal counsel, etc.)?	general legal safeguards apply (right to interpreter, right to a legal counsel, right to remuneration for witnesses etc.)
Presence	
e) Are the rules for the presence of the parties and their representatives when physically in a single location the same for when evidence is taken via video-link? See Article 7 of the Convention	Yes. If so, please specify if they are allowed to actively participate: There are no specific rules regarding the presence of the parties/their representatives when the evidence is taken via video-link. No.

PART V - LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS (CHAPTER I)

	Comments:
f) Under Chapter I of the Convention, does Your STATE allow for the cross-examination of a witness / expert by video-link by the representatives located in the <i>requesting</i> State (<i>i.e.</i> , the State in which the proceedings are pending)?	☐ Yes. ☑ No. Comments:
g) Does Your State allow for the presence of the judicial personnel of the requesting State via video-link? See Article 8 of the Convention Please note that a declaration may be made under this provision.	Yes. If so, please specify if they are allowed to actively participate: No.
	Comments: Only judge is allowed to take the evidence.

PART VI: USE OF VIDEO-LINKS UNDER <u>CHAPTER II</u> (BY DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS, CONSULAR AGENTS AND COMMISSIONERS) – LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The questions in this Part are only for States application of Chapter II	·
	servation in whole or in part under Article 33. Check this Chapter in the status table, available on the status.
Legal obstacles and legal framework	
a) Does Your State consider there to be any legal obstacles to the taking of evidence by video-link under Chapter II of the Convention?	
The Special Commission has noted that the use of video-link and similar technologies is consistent with the current framework of the Convention (C&R No 55 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 20 of the 2014 SC).	Comments:
b) Under which provisions of Chapter II of the Convention is taking of evidence by video-link possible in Your State?	☐ Art. 15 ☐ Art. 16 ☐ Art. 17 Comments: not applicable
c) Is prior permission from Your State required when taking evidence under Chapter II of the Convention on the territory of Your State?	☐ Yes. Please outline the procedure for seeking such permission, including any specific conditions that must be satisfied: ☐ No. Comments: not applicable
d) Please indicate who administers the oath or affirmation and how perjury and contempt are dealt with when evidence is taken under Chapter II of the Convention on the territory of Your State.	Administration of the oath or affirmation: Dealing with perjury and contempt: not applicable
Direct and indirect taking of evidence	
e) Diplomatic and consular agents are usually located in the State where the witness / expert resides. It may be, however, that a witness / expert is located in a neighbouring country or in a place distant from the Embassy or Consulate. In these circumstances, does Your State consider it possible to use video-link to obtain evidence under Chapter II of the Convention?	☐ Yes. Please specify: ☐ No. Comments: not applicable

PART VI - LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS (CHAPTER II)

Legal safeguards for witness / expert	
f) What are the legal safeguards in place for witnesses / experts in Your State when evidence is taken by video-link under Chapter II (e.g. protective measures for the witness / expert, provision of interpretation, right to legal counsel, etc.)?	not applicable
Presence	
g) Under the law of Your State, who may be present via video-link when evidence is taken by diplomatic and consular agents ? Please tick all that apply.	☐ The parties. ☐ The parties' representatives. ☐ Judicial personnel. ☐ Someone else. Please specify:
	Comments: not applicable
h) Under the law of YOUR STATE, who may be present via video-link when evidence is taken by commissioners ? Please tick all that apply.	☐ The parties. ☐ The parties' representatives. ☐ Judicial personnel. ☐ Someone else. Please specify:
	Comments:
	Comments: not applicable
Applicable law	
i) The law of which State governs the administration of an oath or affirmation when evidence is taken by video-link under Chapter II?	
i) The law of which State governs the administration of an oath or affirmation when evidence is taken by video-link under	not applicable The law of the State of Origin The law of the State of Execution It depends on whether evidence is taken by a consular or diplomatic agent or a commissioner.
i) The law of which State governs the administration of an oath or affirmation when evidence is taken by video-link under	not applicable The law of the State of Origin The law of the State of Execution It depends on whether evidence is taken by a consular or diplomatic agent or a commissioner. Please specify: Comments:
i) The law of which State governs the administration of an oath or affirmation when evidence is taken by video-link under Chapter II? j) The law of which State governs perjury and contempt when evidence is taken by video-	not applicable The law of the State of Origin The law of the State of Execution It depends on whether evidence is taken by a consular or diplomatic agent or a commissioner. Please specify: Comments: not applicable The law of the State of Origin The law of the State of Execution It depends on whether evidence is taken by a consular or diplomatic agent or a commissioner.

PART VII PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Chapter I: 6 months, in urgent cases the amount of time can be shortened Chapter II: not applicable
Chapter 11. Hot applicable
Chapter I: The requested court is responsible for ensuring the interpreter if needed Chapter II: not applicable
Yes. Please specify: They are required and are on the list of interpreters maintained by Ministry of Justice. The list is publicly available online on website of the ministry No. Comments:
interpretation via video-link does not require any special rules, general rules for interpretation apply, the interpretation is consecutive
 ☑ In the room with the witness / expert. ☐ In the room with those conducting the examination. ☐ Elsewhere in the requesting State (Chapter I) / State of Origin (Chapter II). ☐ Elsewhere in the requested State (Chapter I) / State of Execution (Chapter II). ☐ In a third State. ☐ Other. Please specify: Comments:
Yes. Please specify by whom: court reporter Please also outline the specific rules or regulations, if any, that are applicable to the handling/storage/distribution of the report: General rules on preparing a written report apply. If there is audio, video reporting, written report is not needed, but court still can prepare a written report

PART VII - PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS (BOTH CHAPTERS)

	☐ No.
	Comments:
g) Are facilities and equipment made available in order to record the hearing or testimony?	Yes, with audio and video. Yes, only with video. Yes, only with audio. No, but the recording of hearings/testimonies is permitted. If a recording is produced, please also outline the specific rules or regulations, if any, that are applicable to the handling/storage/distribution of the recording: No, because the recording of hearings/testimonies is not permitted under internal law. Comments:
Documents and exhibits	
h) What arrangements are to be made for showing or referring to documents or exhibits when taking evidence by video-link?	Documents must be attached to the request

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS UNDER CHAPTER I		
Practical obstacles		
i) Does Your State consider that there are practical obstacles to using video-link to assist in the taking of evidence under Chapter I of the Convention?	☐ Yes. Please specify: ☑ No. Comments:	
Identification of all relevant actors		
j) What is the procedure for verifying the identity of the parties, the witness / expert, and all relevant actors in Your State when video-link is used under Chapter I?	The parties, witness/expert and all relevant actors to be examined are requested by the court to submit their ID card or passport before they give their testimony	
Standard Forms		
 k) Do the authorities of Your State use a standardised request form under Chapter I that makes specific reference to the use of video-links? The use of the Model Form of the Evidence Convention is recommended when taking evidence under Chapter I. While the Model Form has no explicit reference to the use of video-link, a request to this effect may be included in item 13 of the Form. I) Does Your State require the inclusion of any particular practical or technical information from the requesting State in the request in order to conduct / arrange a witness / expert examination by video-link under Chapter I? (e.g. contact details for IT support, technical specifications, etc) 	 Yes. Please specify: The standardised form used makes no reference to video-link. No standardised form is used. Comments: Yes.	
Costs		
m) Are there any costs associated with the taking of evidence via video-link under Chapter I in Your State?	Yes. Please provide an approximate estimate of these costs and / or specify the criteria used to determine these costs: No. Comments:	
	the court decides about the costs	

PART VII - PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS (CHAPTER I)

n) Who is responsible for bearing the costs occasioned by the use of video-link under Chapter I in Your State? See Art. 14(2) of the Evidence Convention	 ☐ The moving party (requesting the use of video-link). ☑ The requesting authority (in the requesting State). ☐ The requested authority (in the requested State). ☐ Other. Please specify: Comments:
o) How are these costs generally expected to be paid and/or reimbursed?	☐ Payment in cash ☐ Payment by (credit) card ☑ Electronic/wire transfer ☐ Other. Please specify: Comments:
p) Who pays for the interpretation services under Chapter I in Your State when video-link is used and how are these costs to be paid and/or reimbursed?	The Slovak court pays for the interpretation services, but it may decide the costs will be paid otherway.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS UNDER CHAPTER II		
Only for States that have not excluded in whole the application of Chapter II		
Practical obstacles		
q) Does Your State consider that there are practical obstacles to using video-link to assist in the taking of evidence under Chapter II of the Convention?	✓ Yes. Please specify:☐ No. Comments:	
Identification of all relevant actors		
r) What is the procedure for verifying the identity of the parties, the witness / expert, and all relevant actors in Your State when video-link is used under Chapter II?	not applicable	
Standard Forms		
s) Do the authorities of Your State use a standardised request form under Chapter II that makes specific reference to the use of video-links? Although the use of the Model Form of the Evidence Convention is recommended when taking evidence under Chapter I, it may also be used, with the necessary amendments when applying for permission to take evidence under Chapter II. While the Model Form has no explicit reference to the use of video-link, a request to this effect may be included in item 13 of the Form.	 ☐ Yes. Please specify: ☐ The standardised form used makes no reference to video-link. ☐ No standardised form is used. Comments: not applicable 	
Assistance and facilities		
t) Are the Embassies and Consulates of Your State (acting as the State of Execution) able to assist applicants in arranging a video-link?	 Yes. Please specify how, e.g., via a booking system: No. Please specify who else would assist, if anyone: 	
	Comments:	
	not applicable	
u) Is it possible to hold a video-link session requested under the Convention at the premises of the Embassies or Consulates of YOUR STATE abroad?	Yes.Please specify:No.	
	Comments:	
v) Does Your State require the inclusion of any particular practical or technical information from the State of Origin in the request in order to conduct / arrange a witness or expert examination by video-link under Chapter II? (e.g. the use of interpreters, stenographers, or recording devices)	not applicable Yes. Please specify: No. Comments: not applicable	

PART VII - PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS (CHAPTER II)

Costs		
w) Are there any costs associated with the taking of evidence via video-link under Chapter II in YOUR STATE?	Yes. Please provide an approximate estimate of these costs and / or specify the criteria used to determine these costs:	
	□ No.	
	Comments:	
	not applicable	
x) Who is responsible for bearing the costs occasioned by the use of video-link under Chapter II in YOUR STATE?	 □ The moving party (requesting the use of video-link). □ The State of Origin □ The Diplomatic mission or Consulate in the State of Execution. □ The commissioner □ Other. Please specify: 	
	Comments:	
	not applicable	
y) How are these costs generally expected to be paid and/or reimbursed?	Payment in cash Payment by (credit) card Electronic/wire transfer Other. Please specify: Comments: not applicable	
z) Who pays for the interpretation services under Chapter II in YOUR STATE when videolink is used and how are these costs to be paid and/or reimbursed?	not applicable	