

Preface

This special issue of the CEJPH focuses on selected non-communicable and communicable diseases in Eastern Slovakia. The country and its economy have gone through many important reforms since the Velvet Revolution in 1989 and the disintegration of Czechoslovakia in 1993. The Slovak Republic joined the EU in 2004, and in 2009 the country implemented the Euro currency. Slovakia has an advanced economy with one of the fastest growth rates in the EU and OECD, with a nominal GDP per capita of \$35,094 (2018 est.). Slovakia is structured into 79 districts and eight administrative regions. There are considerable regional differences in the economy, employment and wealth between the western and eastern regions with an impact on the health status of population. Regional differences and different socioeconomic factors in Eastern Slovakia have an influence on the structure and frequency of important health determinants. Regarding non-communicable diseases indicators, our special issue is dealing with many key topics, such as the following: anthropometric impact on blood pressure in children, with important reproductive and pregnancy outcome in Roma and non-Roma mothers; cardiovascular risk in medical students; socio-demographic factors influencing compliance with a gluten-free diet among celiac children; and also with the validation of recommended questionnaires to screen the obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome. On the other hand, communicable diseases in Eastern Slovakia covered in this special issue include topic on tick-borne diseases – Lyme disease, tick-borne encephalitis and its milk outbreak in Košice region. Also, the surveillance of Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease (2004–2016) in Eastern Slovakia showed an increased incidence. The special edition of the Journal also includes fungal infection analysis in the past three years and the treatment of hospital-acquired clostridia infections. Currently, the issue of health inequalities is only implicitly addressed by politicians, and falls within the broader efforts of the government to improve equity overall.

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